



Balwyn Historical Society Newsletter

October 2019

Meetings

Thursday 10 October 2019 – Annual General Meeting 8 pm

Speaker: Dr Ros Otzen

**Topic: From Ragged School to Modern Academy:
Melbourne City Mission's "Hester Hornbrook Academy"**

Dr Ros Otzen will speak about Hester Hornbrook, one of the founders of the Melbourne City Mission which was set up in 1854 to assist the poor and those in need. She managed the Mission from 1856 to 1862. She also founded nine Ragged Schools for the children of the poor in Melbourne between 1859 and her death in 1862.

Thursday 14 November 2019 – 8pm

Speaker: Pete Smith OAM

Topic: "From vaudeville to radio, TV and beyond".

Pete Smith has had a long and illustrious career on radio and television. He is well known for his work as announcer, compere, quiz program host and comedian. He worked on numerous shows such as *New Faces*, *Sale of the Century* and Bert Newton's *Tonight* program.



**Please stay and join us for a special Christmas supper at
the end of this meeting**

**Meetings are held at the Balwyn Evergreen Centre,
45 Talbot Avenue, Balwyn**

Email: balwynhistory@gmail.com website: www.vicnet.net.au/~balwynhs

Balwyn Historical Society – President’s Report September 2019

Balwyn Historical Society (BHS) has had a busy year. Boroondara Council are proceeding with the development of the Canterbury Hub. This is an exciting and challenging proposal. It is planned that three local historical societies – Balwyn Historical Society, Canterbury History Group and Surrey Hills Historical Society will eventually be housed in the former Canterbury Library building on Canterbury Road. The Hub will offer BHS several advantages particularly in regard to archival storage. Other advantages will be exhibition space, meeting rooms, research facilities and a small research library on the premises. It is anticipated that there will be about ten other community groups housed in the larger premises of the Canterbury Hub. Boroondara Council are busy with plans to undertake renovations and further building.

However, these changes are unlikely to affect Balwyn Historical Society in the short term given the Hub may not be ready before the end of 2020. As I have mentioned before, your committee has decided that we will still hold our meetings in Balwyn. The development of the Hub has meant many meetings for committee members to meet with Council officials. At the most recent meeting we discussed concept plans with the architect.

We have a small but hard-working committee and there are numerous demands on them. We belong to the Boroondara Association of Historical Societies and were involved in August, 2019 in their Valuation Day held at the Hawthorn Community Centre. We are regularly contacted by Council on a number of issues and are pleased to report that our submissions on heritage overlay of a number of houses in Balwyn seem to have been successful as they have been gazetted by the Victorian Government. Our committee members are also involved with affiliated historical societies. Pam Herrington volunteers at the Royal Historical Society of Victoria (RHSV) and has attended meetings of the Association of Eastern Historical Societies (AEHS).

A relatively new and growing demand has been web-based inquiries from the public usually about family history or property in Balwyn. Pat O’Dwyer and I probably respond to at least one per week. These inquiries come from many places and some from overseas.

We hold nine meetings per year with some very interesting speakers on a variety of topics. For example, at the end of 2018 Gerry Robinson spoke on Banjo Paterson and Henry Lawson and Irene Kearsey on La Trobe’s First Immigrants. This year we heard the new and interesting research undertaken by Bob Kerr (a BHS member) on Henry Elgar and the Elgar Special Survey, John Barnao on the fruiterers of Box Hill and Dr Max Lay on the roads and streets of Balwyn.

One disappointing aspect of our society is the dwindling membership. We have lost a number of our older members including Bill Pritchard who was a founding member of BHS and president for a number of years. Dwindling membership makes it difficult to ask interesting speakers to come to speak at our meetings if the audience numbers are very small. Our recruitment of new members is slow and not at replacement level. I would like to urge all of you to tell your friends, family and neighbours about our society and persuade them to come to our meetings and to join BHS.

I would like to thank our volunteers who are rostered for our meetings and do a fantastic job. They are - Heather Alford, Merrick Beesley, Joyce Cheetham, Val Goldsworthy, Eleanor Newton, June Stockman, Tony and Jan Watkins, Deidre and Lynette Woolley. Thank you so much, your work is greatly appreciated.

I would also like to thank the BHS committee. Pat O'Dwyer continues to do a great job as secretary and organising our meetings, Barbara Russell our treasurer, Pam Herrington our archivist and Matthew ETTY-Leal for stepping in last year to be our newsletter editor. Thank you so much for your support, your hard work and dedication.

Associate Professor Marilyn Poole

Recent Speaker: Dr Rosemary Francis

Dr Francis spoke about Italian migration to Victoria in the second half of the nineteenth century through the story of two relatives Ferdinando and Federico Gagliardi, who came from Pisa and after visiting New Zealand arrived in Melbourne in February 1877.

Rosemary gratefully acknowledged the value of Trove in gathering information about Federico, her great grandfather, and his brother, Ferdinando. Italians started arriving in Australia in 1770 and 1788 and by the 1850s, 3,500 Italians and Swiss-Italians had made Australia their home, often becoming timer cutters and labourers. Between 1876 and 1900 a further 300,000 left Italy. In 1871 Italy became a unified country, largely reflecting the contribution of Giuseppe Garibaldi, a military leader. Garibaldi's son, Ricciotti, also a soldier, also came to Melbourne in 1877, and became involved in establishing various small businesses over the next five years.

Federico fled Pisa after being involved in a duel in 1875, and on arriving in Melbourne wrote letters about Australia, initially thinking it would be very primitive. He noted that migrants were energetic, worked hard, often with pick and shovel, reflecting that the Chinese were excellent farmers and miners. He also wrote about the Melbourne Town Hall and the Melbourne Cup won in 1877 by Chester. Federico saw the opportunity for more trade between Italy and Australia and was involved in the Melbourne International Exhibition at the Exhibition Buildings in 1880. He married (as did his brother) in 1881, and one of his seven children, Electra, born in 1885, was Rosemary's grandmother. A book containing his letters was published in Italy in 1881, and was finally translated in 2016 by Colin McCormack. Federico finally returned to Italy in 1914.

Matthew ETTY-Leal

Balwyn Historical Society - Contact details

Balwyn Historical Society is a program of the Balwyn Evergreen Centre. Phone – 9836 9681

President Marilyn Poole 9857 7565
Secretary Pat O'Dwyer 9836-3652
Treasurer/ Barbara Russell
Membership
Archivist Pam Herrington
Newsletter Matthew ETTY-Leal 9830 4673

Web manager Sharon Bondy
Resource Assistants - Heather Alford
Lynette Woolley,
Deidre Woolley

Balwyn Heritage Overlay

On 23 July 2019, the Minister for Planning approved amendment C276 to the Boroondara Planning Scheme. This amendment includes 9 individual properties and two precincts to be added to the Heritage Overlay on a permanent basis viz:

86 Balwyn Road , Balwyn – St Barnabas Anglican Church
224 Belmore Road , Balwyn–AKA 4 Collins Court, Balwyn (house)
950 Burke Road Deepdene – (maisonettes)
231 Whitehorse Road , Balwyn– Palace Balwyn Cinema
192 Doncaster Road , North Balwyn (house)
32 Winmalee Road, Balwyn – (house)
146-148 Winmalle Road, Balwyn – (house)
17-19 King Street,- Balwyn – (pair of houses)
48 Narrak Road - Balwyn – (house)
19 -33a Maud Street, North Balwyn – (Maud Street Maisonette Precinct)
208-308 Whitehorse Road, – (Commercial Precinct)
347-377 & 397-425 Whitehorse Road, Balwyn – (Balwyn Village Commercial Precinct)

You can view a copy of the amendment documentation during office hours at the City of Boroondara Planning Counter, Level 1, 8 Inglesby Road, Camberwell.

For more information contact Nick Brennan, Senior Strategic Planner phone: 9278 4535 email: Nick.Brennan@boroondara.vic.gov.au



17 King St (above) 19 King St (below) Photos P. O'Dwyer

