



Balwyn Historical Society

June 2021

**The June meeting for the afternoon of the
10th June, 2021 is CANCELLED
due to Victorian Covid-19 lockdown restrictions**

**Guest Speaker Gillian Yang speaking on Mary Reibey
and Thomas Meagher will be rescheduled to another
time.**

*We also remind you that there is no Balwyn Historical Society
meeting in July as usual.*

**We hope you will enjoy this newsletter and in a special July
Newsletter, there will be another interesting story by
Bill Mackie**

April 2021 - Guest Speaker: Dr Roz Otzen

This presentation was about the wonderful women who created Melbourne's social supports in the 1800's for the children of less fortunate families. It underlined their important contribution that largely went unlauded.

Hester Hornbook's work began with the setting up of schools on the Collingwood Flat. She was in her 70's then and was one of the founders of the Melbourne City Mission being in charge from 1856 to 1862, the year of her death. She was born in Jamaica in 1785, married at the age of 15 and had a child at 17. It is possible that her husband, Captain Hornbrook may have been killed in war, as she was a widow for many years.

Hester had taken over the Melbourne City Mission from a Joseph and Sarah Greathead. Joseph produced little Tracts for the children of Collingwood Flats and the children loved them. Unfortunately, Joseph was sacked for being seen coming out of a Public House! Very few of the religious Tracts have survived: they were the only reading materials available for the poorer people. The Tracts that did survive were printed in 'The Age' due to the generosity of the founder of that paper.

Hester was subsequently spurred to do something for the children as Scottish Evangelicals believed children needed to read so they could read the Bible. Hester's group of women formed an association called Ragged Schools. Initially Hester called them Free Scriptural Schools, but similar London Schools were known as Ragged Schools and the name was adopted here. Hester trained the women in charge, found a building and a teacher. Altogether she founded 9 schools. One of her teachers was Simona Harber, the first teacher at Sydney Street School on a salary of 52 pounds a year. She was a widow who lived near her school.

The names of Hester's group appeared in the Melbourne City Mission reports. One was Isabella MacLoughlan, a Scot who started the Presbyterian Ladies Visiting Society in 1845, a precursor of the Melbourne Ladies Benevolent Society. Other women listed were Margaret Peppers, Ann Browning, Carolyn (Long) Clarke, Jane Cairns Harper, Jessie Cairns, Jessie Butchart and Eliza Fraser. Another supporter of these schools was Mr Alexander Morrison, Principal of Scotch College, located in East Melbourne. Rules for the schools were drawn up very like the state schools later.

After Hester died, 3 more schools were set up, which included Little Lon and Cumberland Place Ragged School in 1884, Victoria Street School with 200 children and 2 teachers and Duke Street Prahran School which is still operating as a Children's centre and Kindergarten. The link between church and the Melbourne City Mission later became an ecumenical group with all denominations involved.

Balwyn Historical Society – 45 Talbot Avenue, Balwyn 3103

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May 2021 - Guest Speaker: Meg Goulding - Archaeologist

This presentation on “Archaeology and interesting discoveries below the streets of Melbourne” was a fascinating and educative experience on archaeology and its bridge between the past and present. Meg emphasised the tangible value of preserving the past which tells of people’s values and compliments historical records. We learned about Stratigraphy, that each sight excavated has five strata to explore. Cess pits in particular are an archaeologist’s treasure trove for information. In Australia, all Heritage sites are protected by both the Heritage Act and the Aboriginal Heritage Act. It was interesting to learn that there are 800 heritage sites in the Melbourne CBD of which about 200 have been excavated. Frequently, when a site is cleared the excavation extends below concrete slabs. The many materials that survive include stone, brick, pipes and, where there is water, seeds, nuts, textiles and leather are found to be better preserved.

This major excavation project at the corner of Swanston and Flinders Street was directed by Meg Goulding before the Victorian Government commenced its major transport infrastructure project. It involved excavation of 4 sites between May and December 2018, each with their own site director. These 4 sites had been the occupation of McDonalds, a Tourist business, KFC and the CBA branch at 21 Swanston Street, Melbourne.

The projects aim was to get down to the surface of 1835. The workforce included 26 Archaeologists, at least four artifact processing personnel and a conservation team including archaeology students. It was one of the biggest excavations in Victoria with evidence that Aboriginals had occupied the site pre-1835.

There was also evidence that a Corroboree had been held. Many stones 20–30 cm indicated tools and other ‘domestic’ items. Prior to 1838, John Batman bought an allotment on the Young and Jacksons site and built a house which was later let out to a Mrs Nicola Cooke, where she set up the first Girls School on Melbourne. 1850’s records also indicated where the kitchen and cess pits-closets were located. On one of the four sites, the location of the Gippsland Hotel showed evidence of the cellars. Another was a dentist business where hundreds of teeth and part dentures were found and a Butchers site revealed animal bones. In total, more than 460,000 artifacts were discovered and catalogued. Many crockery items were painstakingly assembled by students volunteers

The excavation report will run to 8 volumes, due to be released on the 28th December, 2021. We are hoping to hear further from Meg following this report.

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Vale

Eric Humphris

Members who were present at our May meeting were saddened to learn of Eric's recent passing. Eric was an enthusiastic foundation member and his knowledge of the Balwyn area began as a child growing up in Deepdene and later residing in Balwyn. He often recounted memories of his boyhood job in his father's shoe and boot repair business where he wrapped and neatly tied the repaired Deepdene Football players boots. It was an "awesome" job as Eric recognised his idols' footy boots! We will remember and miss Eric's hearty laugh and cheery persona and especially acknowledge his contribution to the society's resources as well as his loyal attendance at our meetings over the years. Our sincere condolences are offered to his wife Joan and their family.

Dawn Pritchard

Since the May meeting, we also learned of the passing of Dawn who had not been well for the last few years. Dawn also grew up in Deepdene and was another foundation member along with her late husband, Bill. Dawn gave wonderful support to Bill our dedicated President for the first 8 years. Dawn's warm greeting to members on their arrival always made everyone feel very welcome, especially newcomers. She had a great memory of the people of Deepdene and her school days as well as the changes in the area. We have fond memories of Dawn's happy conversations that brightened supper time that she organised for many years. We offer our deepest sympathy to her sister Lorraine who also attended meetings with Dawn and Bill.



This building is still standing near the corner of Meadow Grove and Whitehorse Road, Deepdene.



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1 cup sugar, 2 cups flour, 1 cup milk, 1 cup butter, 3 eegs, 1 teaspoonful vanilla. Mix as ordinary cake, divide into two. Bake in a quick oven.

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Boil 1 cup of sugar in enough water to dissolve for 4 or 5 minutes, pour on the beaten whites of 3 eegs, stir till cold and thick. Spread layer on top and between sandwich, sprinkle with Dns. Coccanut.

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SPONGE SANDWICH.
Beat 3 eegs, 1 cup of sugar for 15 minutes. Sift in 1 large cup of this flour (mix lightly) and bake in quick oven.

SCONES (Plain).
Mix lightly 1lb. of this flour, 2 eegs, butter, add 1 cup of milk, pinch of salt, roll out dough and cut into shapes.

SCONES (Sweet).
1lb. this flour, 2 eegs, butter, 5 eegs sugar, mix butter and sugar to cream, add 1 cup milk, mix lightly and bake.

STEAM PUDDING.
Beat 2 eegs, butter, 1 cup sugar to a cream, add 1 eeg, 1 cup milk, then add 1 cup of this flour. Beat well, steam in a buttered basin 1 1/2 hours.

FACTORY:
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Advice for all good cooks!

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