



Balwyn Historical Society

Newsletter February 2021

Welcome back to all of our members and friends!

**Notice of Annual General Meeting
Thursday 11 February 2021– 8 pm
at
Balwyn Evergreen Centre,
45 Talbot Avenue, Balwyn**

Following the AGM we will hear from two of our members as our
Guest Speakers:

**Barrie Dempster & Philip Mallis
Topic: “Reflections on local and family history”**

**Thursday 11 March, 2021 – 8pm
Speaker: Matthew ETTY-Leal
Topic: “Billy Hughes and Daniel Mannix”**

Billy Hughes – “A pestiferous varmint” US President Woodrow Wilson; arguably, the most formidable, most amusing, most Australian of our Prime Ministers” Jill Kitson

Daniel Mannix – “an almost legendary figure, possessing great intellectual power and courage, with a power of persuasive speech I have never known surpassed”. Sir Robert Menzies

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Balwyn Historical Society (BHS) President's report 2020

As with many other community groups, Balwyn Historical Society (BHS) had a challenging year during the COVID-19 restrictions of 2020. After our regular meeting in March further meetings were cancelled and no more face-to-face meetings were held for the rest of the year. This was in line with the cancellation of activities at the Balwyn Evergreen Centre where our meetings are held. Hopefully, BHS will be able to resume normal activities under a COVID safe plan in 2021.

Prior to the setbacks due to the corona virus we had a very good year in 2019 with many interesting speakers, regular monthly newsletters and a well-attended final meeting in December, 2019 when we were entertained by Pete Smith of Channel 9 fame followed by a delightful supper when we could all get together and chat.

Despite the various restrictions in 2020, the BHS committee worked hard to keep BHS members feeling connected. About twice per month members were emailed an informal newsletter containing a short article and general news items. Many of the articles contained local content such as growing up in Balwyn during the 1940s and 50s and household activities in Deepdene during the same period. Patricia O' Dwyer has taken us on a tour of the shops in Deepdene also in the 1950s. It has been a pleasure to receive additional material from our members on a variety of topics. In addition to the newsletters, updates on historical topics available on Zoom or via webinar, music clips, comedy routines, travel photographs and items of interest were sent to our members on at least a weekly basis. For those few members who do not have access to email we have mailed out printed copies of the newsletters and also phone them to have a chat at intervals.

As we held so few face-to-face meetings during 2020 your committee decided to waive membership fees normally due on July 1 of the new financial year. It was felt it would be unfair to charge for membership given members cannot attend meetings. In common with other community groups, we decided to defer our AGM normally held in October until our first meeting in February, 2021 when annual fees will be due.

The BHS committee membership has seen a few changes. Sharon Bondy, our web manager, resigned after five years managing and updating the BHS website. We owe special thanks to Sharon for her great work and efforts on our behalf. We are delighted that Philip Mallis offered to join the committee and act as web manager in her place. Heather Alford also joined the committee which means we will be under less pressure when meetings finally resume.

The work of committee members is varied. We respond to a steady stream of queries posted on our website often relating to family history or research on houses in the locality. In the past year we worked with Boroondara Council on the mural in Yerrin Street, Balwyn. However, for about two years, our major interaction with Council representatives has been in regard to the new Canterbury Community Precinct. It is planned that three Boroondara Historical Societies (the Canterbury History Group, Surrey Hills Historical Society and BHS) will use specially designed premises including office space, exhibition space, archival storage and meeting rooms in the precinct. One of the advantages has been that BHS committee representatives have had many meetings with the other historical societies and the opportunity to comment on and work with Council and architects on the scheme. Planning for the whole project is well developed however due to the impact of the coronavirus and lock-downs In Melbourne during 2020 the build did not begin as planned.

I would like to thank you all for your patience, understanding and above all your feedback and appreciation in difficult times. Thank you also to committee members Patricia O'Dwyer, Matthew ETTY-Leal, Barbara Russell, Heather Alford and Philip Mallis. Your efforts, advice and help are greatly appreciated. I particularly wish to thank Patricia O'Dwyer for her work as a committee member since the founding of BHS in 2008. Her help, support, hard work and good advice have proven invaluable over the years.

Due to other commitments, I will not stand as President in 2021 nor will I be a committee member. I have enjoyed being President of BHS and found it an interesting challenge (as someone who is not a professional historian) to write so many history research articles for the newsletter. It has been wonderful meeting all of you and learning so much more about the history of Balwyn and that of our local area

Take care and stay safe.

Associate Professor Marilyn J Poole.
President, BHS
January 2021

Membership Renewal Information:

It has been decided that the annual membership fees will be due at the first meeting of each year.

You may renew your membership fees for this year by the March 2021 meeting.

It would be helpful if you could place your payment in an envelope marked with your name(s).

Fees will remain the same as prior years.

Single: \$25

Joint: \$35 (2 members at the same address)

Payment can be made by Cash, Cheque (payable to Balwyn Historical Society)

or by EFT transfer:

Account Name: Balwyn Historical Society

BSB: 633-000

Account Number: 133477380

(please reference your surname)

Alternatively, please send a completed renewal form together with a cheque to **The BHS**

Treasurer, Balwyn Evergreen Centre, 45 Talbot Ave, Balwyn 3103

Renewal forms will be emailed and available at the meeting/s.

For Membership enquiries contact: Barbara Russell 0409 199 209

Balwyn Historical Society Committee of Management 2021

Matthew ETTY-Leal

Philip Mallis

Pat O'Dwyer

Heather Alford

Barbara Russell