

LOCAL HISTORY NEWS

Malvern Historical Society Inc.

Keeping Stonnington's History Alive!

June - July 2006 Newsletter No. 1

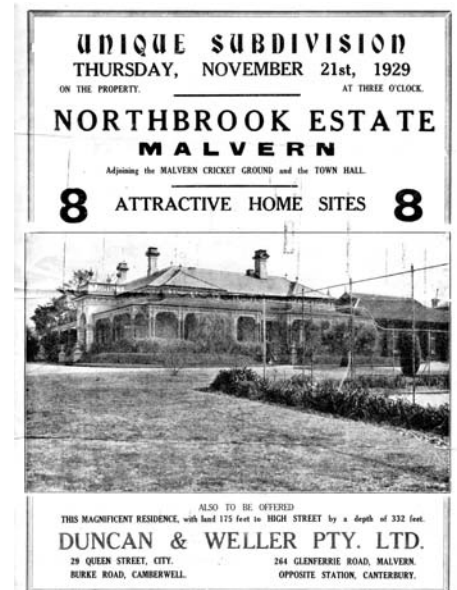
Welcome to the first issue of "Local History News Keeping Stonnington's History Alive!" a newsletter produced by the Malvern Historical Society Inc. At the April meeting of the Stonnington History Committee, the Stonnington History News produced by the Stonnington Local History Service was reviewed and it was decided after lengthy discussions that the newsletter in its present format would be put on hold. The future of the newsletter was discussed at a recent committee meeting of the MHS and the Committee strongly supported the idea of producing a regular newsletter. The Society's 'Local History News' will provide you with a newsletter with history articles and local history news. If you would like to offer your desk-top publishing skills, contribute material or you would like to make any comment just let us know. Telephone: 0438 515 631 or email malvernhistorical@yahoo.com

Malvern Historical Society Inc
Annual General Meeting
Thursday 22nd June 8pm. Northbrook
(behind Malvern Library, High Street)

followed by

"Treasures from the Archives"

Local Historian Di Foster will talk about original items from the Local History Collection including an advertisement on silk for a Malvern Cricket Club event at the Malvern Shire Hall in 1887, Weller subdivision plans, material from Stonnington Connecticut, USA, a 1980's model of a proposed sculpture for the Malvern City Square and the 1948 Cricket Bat from Malvern England.



Working Bee Tuesday 25th July Join Di and the volunteers in the Archives 10am – 12 noon.
All welcome RSVP Di 8290 1360

Museums Australia Media and Publication Design Awards 2006



The winners of the Museums Australia Media and Publication Design Awards 2006 were announced at the MA National Conference held recently in Brisbane.

The award for the Website Category (any information resource accessed via the www, by a group employing up to 5 staff or all volunteers) was presented to the Malvern Historical Society Inc and Working Edge in Prahran.

The judges commented on the 'usability', pleasing aesthetic and design of the site - its interactive qualities (sliding date line) and its ability to be used by computers with different capabilities (i.e. users of older versions of web browsers are not disadvantaged). The judges were particularly impressed by its great initiative in working with the 'work for the dole' participants.

This web page displays how a community group (Malvern Historical Society), a company training Work for the Dole participants (Working Edge), and the Stonnington Local History Service can work together in partnership and develop an exciting new project. The MHS website, which was provided at no cost to the Society, has been included on Pandora, Australia's web archive.



View looking south east from Church Street Richmond, showing the curve of the Yarra (later altered by the construction of Herring Island) c1914

Herring Island History

The original path of the Yarra River was formed by volcanoes to the north and west of Melbourne. From the early days of settlement floods presented a threat to property development along the lower reaches of the Yarra River. This was partly due to the number of bends in the river that restricted the rate at which water could flow towards the Bay. Between 1870 and 1880 a quarry, now known as the Burnley Boat Harbour, was formed and the stone used for local Richmond roads. This was just across the river from Como in South Yarra.

In 1929, to help minimize the impact of heavy rain a channel was excavated through the abandoned quarry hole in Richmond. Como (later renamed Herring) Island was created on a 2.8 ha triangular piece of land within one of the bends. Trees were planted and levee banks were built on the island in 1932/33. However in 1934 the worst floods on record resulted in the banks and trees being swept out to the Bay. The island was leased to the Scout Association from between 1951 and 1970. In 1952 it was renamed Herring Island in recognition of Sir Edmund Herring's contribution to the Scouts Association.

Sir Edmund Herring (1892-1982), was Dux of Melbourne Grammar, a Rhodes Scholar and barrister, and he was made a Knight of the British Empire in 1943. A well respected member of the legal profession, he held the position of Chief Justice for 20 years and also served as Lieutenant-Governor for a record 27 years retiring on his 80th birthday. Sir Edmund was President of the Boy Scouts' Association of Victoria for 23 years and was later President of the Australian Boy Scouts' Association.

From 1970 the Friends of Herring Island attempted to revegetate the island until its management was taken over by Melbourne Parks and Waterways (subsequently Parks Victoria) in 1994 and Herring Island was declared a Public Park. At this time vegetation

on the island consisted of a few remnants of indigenous riparian forest and grassland communities as well as native and exotic species that had been planted over the previous 60 years. Birds were abundant and varied and occupied a broad range of vegetation types. They included honeyeaters, Willie Wagtails, cormorants, kookaburras, magpies, wattlebirds and White-faced Herons. Water birds that sheltered and foraged within the reeds included Pacific Black Ducks, Dusky Moorhens and Maned Ducks.

Since the 1990's this informal parkland has provided the inspiration for the development of a concept in which artists are commissioned to create site-specific sculptures. Created from natural materials such as stone, earth and wood, the sculptures appear as part of the landscape to reflect the island's unique and tranquil setting.

The Friends' informative web site will provide you with additional information including when you can visit Herring Island.

Sources-<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~herring/welcome.htm> and City of Stonnington Heritage Marker- Como and Environs

News from the Stonnington History Committee

Ellen Porter is cataloguing the material in the recently donated Malvern Rotaract collection. David Tuck reported on Lesley Rosenthal's history of fashion in Chapel Street documentary film. Material has been gathered from Stonnington, Connecticut, USA by Di Foster. Discussions were held on the future direction of the history newsletter. David Tuck reported on recent discussions relating to the long term storage of oral history tapes.

Treasure from the Archives

The Gift of a Cricket Bat - Malvern Urban District Council UK 1948

Dear Mr Mayor,

It gives me the greatest possible pleasure to extend greetings to you and the citizens of Malvern, Australia, on behalf of the townspeople of Malvern, England. We in the Motherland are not forgetful of the great service rendered by Australia, particularly by her fighting sons, during the war years, nor are we unmindful of the part she is playing to assist in our post-war recovery; nor too, do we in Malvern, forget the kindness and beneficence of the people of Malvern, Australia in sending of food parcels which have served to enhance the bonds of friendship which exist between the two towns which, I can assure you have been very greatly appreciated. As a small memento of the friendship existing between the two towns and in the hope that it may serve to perpetuate and preserve that friendship, I am to ask you to accept a Cricket bat on which is inscribed the signatures of the members of the Worcestershire County Cricket Club, which include, with one exception the signatures of the Worcestershire team which met the Australian XI in the opening match of their 1948 tour. The missing signature is that of R. Howarth, who at the time the signatures were obtained was on tour with the England team in South Africa. Also on the bat are the signatures of the members of the Malvern Cricket Club and the Barnards Green Cricket Club, which are the two main clubs of the town. A cricket bat has been selected as symbolic of the spirit of friendly rivalry between our two countries but at the same time it serves to remind us of the team spirit which has brought us through the dark war years and without which we cannot hope to succeed in building up a new world founded on friendship, fellowship, peace and prosperity. The bat has been dispatched to you under separate cover and I am to ask that you will accept it on behalf of the citizens of Malvern, Australia, and to express the hope that it will find a place among the treasured possessions of your City and in the hearts of your citizens as a token of lasting friendship from the people of Malvern, England.

Yours sincerely,

F.A.Edwards

Chairman of the Malvern Urban District Council.

Come and see the cricket bat and letter at the Annual General Meeting!

Taking Local History into the Community

Local Historian Di Foster has recently proved to be an entertaining speaker for both Malvern Rotary and Grade 3 and Grade 4, Caulfield Grammar School, Malvern Campus.

Oral History

Oral Historian Sue Hodges has completed nine oral histories, part of our continuing oral history project. Stories shared have included growing up in a home in the High Street shopping strip, establishing and operating a fruit shop at Central Park, working as a barber in Burke Road Gardiner and living in Stuart Street Armadale for 50 years.

Plans are underway to complete the next set of interviews. Funding for the project has been provided by the Stonnington council and the East Malvern Bendigo Community Bank. A number of earlier oral histories can be read and listened to on the MHS webpage

http://home.vicnet.net.au/~malvern/oral_history.htm

Donations to the Local History Collection

Donations from Mary Carter and the Grieve family include photos of the family home in Wilks Ave, many taken during the war years and a copy of a feature article 'Dr and Mrs J. W. Grieve at home in Wilks Avenue Malvern' taken from *The Australian Home Beautiful* February 1934.

Rob Bower, *Malvern 1856-2003 Business Trades Professions*
Donated by the author, Rob Bower

Malvern Rotaract collection
Donated by Bob Stevens

'Alan Ball, the man and his music' – a family history containing many valuable photographs. Alan was involved with the Malvern Municipal Band for many years.

Donor: Carol Brookes (daughter of Alan Ball)

Thank you for your contributions to the Archives.

Welcome!

Welcome to new member Bettina van Der Pligt.

The Archibald Prize - a local connection!

Paul Juraszek, the sculptor of the Sun & Moon statues in the Malvern City Square, features in this year's Archibald Prize. Marcus Wills has won the 2006 Archibald Prize for his painting The Paul Juraszek monolith (after Marcus Gheeraerts). Juraszek appears in the painting 29 times and in most cases the sculptures featured are his own. Juraszek is a Melbourne-based sculptor, who makes mostly animals based on myths and legends. www.thearchibaldprize.com.au/winners/archibald

Volunteer milestone!

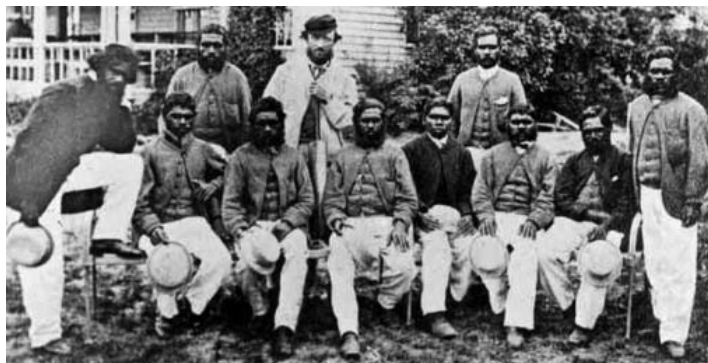
Julia has added almost 7000 records to the Malvern database. Thanks Julia, an amazing achievement! Thanks also to the team who worked so hard at the May Working Bee in the Archives.

May Bus Trip: "If Only These Streets Could Speak"

On Saturday, 6 May, Malvern Historical Society hosted a bus tour around Stonnington. Thirty-one people listened as Bruce McBrien and Jane Nigro entertained them with tales of scandal, woe and wonder from Stonnington's past – distant and more recent history. Our affable bus driver manoeuvred the large vehicle along narrow streets and down leafy avenues. He stopped at intervals to get a closer view of a house or garden. Row after row of grand houses stood silent, some literally: though lavishly built, they had known years of emptiness. Only one, in a state of unfinished renovation, produced an assortment of inhabitants from its basement, who cast wary eyes over our bus, only to disappear back into the depths! The plane which clipped the church's spire, the production site of Australia's first motor car, a kidnapping, a murder, a mysterious disappearance – these and other anecdotes were related during our comfortable drive, with a few contributions by passengers; including the observation that the Russian tourists are quite taken with the spa at the Harold Holt pool! It was interesting also to note the extent of Stonnington's boundaries, which surprised some people – something one doesn't really think about until you start traveling around the area.

Aboriginal History

The City of Stonnington has engaged Dr Ian Clark of Ballarat University to write an Indigenous History of Stonnington. Dr Clark has an extensive knowledge of historical sources concerning Victoria and the Boonwurrung and Woiwurrung Aboriginal peoples. Laura Kostanski, who is currently undertaking a Doctorate in Aboriginal Place Names, will be working with Dr Clark on this project.



Aboriginal Cricket Team c1865-1870



Thomson's Motor Works in High Street, Armadale 1906

Stonnington Heritage Markers

Work is progressing on repairing existing Heritage Markers and replacing the ones that have gone missing! The Council has set aside funds in the budget to undertake this important catch-up work so that new markers can be commissioned in the coming year. The first to be installed within the next twelve months include the Stonnington City Centre (Malvern Town Hall), Mandeville Hall, Prahran Council, Church Street Bridge, Malvern City Square, Malvern Council, the Malvern Hill Hotel, Prahran Mechanics Institute, and Holy Trinity Church.



Dismantling the first Church Street Bridge 1921

Jim McNamara 1931-2006: Members of the MHS were saddened to learn of the death of Jim McNamara. Jim was a long time member of the Society and had a keen interest in both local and architectural history. He was a valued member of the Committee over a number of years. Jim had many interests including St Roch's Parish and gardening at his home in Vincent Street Glen Iris. Our sympathy is extended to Margaret and all the family.

Malvern Historical Society Inc (A7682)

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The Malvern Historical Society Inc is a member of the Stonnington History Committee, an affiliated member of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, a member of the South Metro History Group and has been appointed by the Public Record Office of Victoria as a Place of Deposit for non-permanent public records.

OTHER STONNINGTON HISTORY CONTACTS:

Stonnington Local History Service www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/history • Malvern Archives Tel: 8290 1360 • Prahran Archives Tel: 8290 7160
Prahran Historical and Arts Society P.O.Box 8649, Armadale Vic 3143 pahranhistoricalsociety@yahoo.com Tel: 9509 9978 www.vicnet.net.au/~phas