

# LOCAL HISTORY NEWS

Malvern Historical Society Inc. Keeping Stonnington's History Alive! April - May 2012 Newsletter No. 36

## 16 May Malvern Historical Society Inc Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 16 May Time – 7.30 p.m

Guest Speaker, Peter King Old Photos – hidden treasures!

Wesley Hall - St. Andrew's Uniting Church, Gardiner (the Hall is on the south side of the Church). Corner of Burke Road and Malvern Road, Glen Iris

RSVP: President Lorraine Sage 9885 9082

Following the AGM, Peter King, who has operated a photo copy and restoration business from his Glen Iris studio for the last 25 years, will talk about preserving, researching and restoring old photos.

Mayor Frank Alway and Mayoress May Alway.  
Photograph by Muntz Studio, Malvern.  
c1935 Reg No 170



## 19 May A Toorak Ramble - an updated tour around the delights of Toorak

Saturday 19 May 2pm – 4pm

Join Bruce McBrien on our annual bus trip

A Toorak Ramble - an updated tour around the delights of Toorak

Numbers strictly limited. Bookings essential

Members \$8 Non members \$10

Bookings: Lorraine 9885 9082

Dunranven, the residence of Mr. George Fairbairn, M.L.A.  
Clendon Road, Toorak. 1904 Reg No 7814



## Malvern Historical Society – Message from the President

I would like to thank all members for again supporting the work of the Malvern Historical Society through their subscriptions and additional donations. We also appreciate the comments we receive relating to our Local History News newsletter, it is always full of interesting material. Thank you to members who have already returned the 'Can You Help?' brochure. We look forward to hearing from more of our members in the coming weeks.

Lorraine Sage, President 9885 9082

## Stonnington Research Enquiries

During the past few months the Society and the Stonnington History Centre have received enquiries relating to the Darling Football Club, the Budworth and McKew families of Murrumbeena, James and Maria Marsh who owned land close to Wattletree Road in the 1850s, a request for information on where No.145 Dandenong Road was around 1939, and Ethel Walters and William Henry McLean. William was an equine dentist to the racing industry during the 1930s. One enquirer's great grand-father, James Phillips, was believed to have been a municipal gardener in Prahran in 1900. His son Reginald Phillips also worked in the area in the 1920s.

One researcher, undertaking research on her property in Hume Street, Armadale, required some help along the way. Unable to attend the house dating seminar she came to the History Centre with her notes and together the staff worked through the procedures until she was back on track. It was discovered that Charles Roberts, a builder, owned two blocks of land on the north side of Hume Street in 1889 and had built seven brick houses along the street by 1890, which he then rented out. Roberts lived in the house in question for a time, but all the properties ended up in the possession of the Melbourne Permanent Building Society by 1896.

## Malvern Ladies' Benevolent Society

Julie Thompson recently discovered the following hand written history of the Malvern Ladies Benevolent Society among the papers of her late mother, Mrs Esme Sparrow, of East St. Kilda, who was President of the re-formed Society for 7 years from 1958-1965 and again later for a second term.

'This is just a very brief account of the actual beginning of the Malvern Ladies' Benevolent Society. The first minute book of the Society records.... "At a meeting held in the St George's School House on the 18th June 1876, resolutions were passed that a Society be formed to be called the Malvern Ladies' Benevolent Society and that the objectives be...to help all deserving cases of poverty and sickness within the boundaries of the operation." The meeting was chaired by the first vicar of St George's the Rev. T.C. Cole and the Ladies elected to that committee were—Mrs. T.C. Cole (wife of the vicar) Mrs. Manifold (elected chairman) Mrs. Kerford, Mrs. Singleton, Mrs. Moss (wife of the Rev. J. Moss), Mrs. Middleton, Mrs. Martin, Mrs. Sellar, Mrs. Jones and Miss Glinn.

It would appear that in general the ladies who worked on the committee in those days were from the more prominent and perhaps more affluent families of the district. The Singletons lived in what was described as a fine house in Haverback Avenue. I think the streets were named after the Kerfords and the Woodmasons – be that as it may they carried on gallantly dispensing charity. I noticed that Mrs. Manifold still held her office of chairman until 1889 (13 years) when Mrs. Godby, wife of the second vicar of St. George's took over the office, her husband – the Rev. Canon Godby, later became the Dean of Melbourne. So the Society started on good Christian principles.

The committee seem to have given a good deal of their own personal charity, they also collected monies in their respective districts and quite a few donations were received. There were odd instances in the old minute books where a Dr. perhaps who had been attending a case for which the Society had sent a cheque for his fee, would return same with a request that it be put into the funds. Concerts were sometimes held to raise funds and I noticed that "proceeds from the Mayoral Ball" appeared on the balance sheet from time to time. To those who qualified as deserving poor or sick, the society must have been a godsend. It must have represented some form of security to such a person in days when there was so little in the way of social services. One instance comes to my mind, she was apparently an invalid or cripple or some such, and had applied to the Society for help in June 1876. It was approved "that her room rent of 2/- per week also 2/6d. out of 3/- per week for groceries should be allowed for one month.... but records in the minute books easily 20 or more years later still recorded rent, groceries etc. for this little lady despite the fact that rent had climbed to a dizzy 6/- per week and maybe the groceries had soared upwards of 10/-.

As older members faded out of the picture, others seemed to come forward to take their places, and the history rolled on for about 70 years until it wound up in 1946. Possibly due to the following reasons: 1. Difficulty getting new members, 2. Less destitute people in the immediate post war years, 3. Many women were exhausted from their voluntary efforts during the war years. The society lapsed until the 19th May, 1958 when it was reformed. The Mayor called a public meeting and I was elected the first President of the newly formed society – a position I held until 1965 when I resigned and Mrs. Fred Dear became the new President. Mrs. Dear has recently moved from Malvern and resigned a couple of months ago and I find myself with the reins again.

The reformed Society works with a new constitution and its objects are now.... For the purpose of providing charitable relief to destitute persons including deserted wives and children, giving assistance until Social Service payments are received and rendering help to Aged Pensioners in cases of illness or other emergencies. Membership and Fees: Membership shall be open to all interested citizens on payment of an annual subscription of not less than 2/-. Finance By members' subscriptions, endowments, grants and public subscriptions.'

Esme Sparrow c 1966

## Malvern News Sheet July 1987

Dear Editor,

As President of the Malvern Benevolent Society I would like to record my sincere thanks and gratitude to all the women, past and present, who over the 20th century have served the Malvern community through the Malvern Benevolent Society. Thousands of people have been helped and their lives enriched by the dedicated service of these voluntary helpers. Unfortunately, the time has come, when because of age, it is no longer possible for the present committee to continue after the end of 1987. If there is anyone in the community who is able to help continue this good work by forming a committee would they please contact the Honorary Secretary, Joan Russell or Babette Smart through the Malvern Citizens Advice Bureau (20 8341). I think special mention should be made of Mrs. Anne Clarke, who for over 30 years has been Honorary Treasurer of the Group, and Mrs. Joan Russell, who has not only served as President and Secretary but also been responsible for the committee continuing over the past 10 years. Other members of the committee - Helen Martin, Joyce Mitchell, Gloria Niemann and Carol Good have also given many hours of dedicated service. I do hope it will be possible for this service to continue.



Mrs. Gorton, wife of the Prime Minister, spoke at the annual meeting of the Malvern Ladies' Benevolent Society. Second from the right, she is with the Mayoress of Malvern, Mrs. S. Winston Hall (left), Mrs. Herkes (Secretary) and Mrs. G. E. Sparrow (Acting President) Progress Press, Wed., Aug. 6, 1969

Babette Smart

## Clive Elliott

For nearly forty years Clive Elliott has been an active and enthusiastic member of the Malvern Historical Society. The Committee was saddened to learn of his death recently. Our thoughts are with David and his family at this time. Clive donated many photographs and films to our collection and in the early years copied and enlarged our photographs.

Just last month Clive donated a copy of Ray Norgate's film of the Malvern Traders' Exhibition in 1955 (with a young Graham Kennedy as the judge!).

### Notes from an oral history interview with Clive Elliott 2005

**Clive:** Well my Mum was most unusual. She did wool and needle work. My mum was self taught and she became quite famous. She used to design her own needlework. In those days, girls got their boxes before they got married which was a big camphor box and they put everything they wanted into it. She used to design her own needlework which was in competition to anybody else and she used to get orders from around the world, well not around the world but around Australia. If you came in with a cup, saucer and plate, she would design supper cloths, serviettes and place mats exclusively for you.

When I left school I painted stain glass windows which was most unusual. I did this for about five years from 1936 to about 1941 when I went into the Army. I've got what they call an Opus Sectile – that's a mosaic in St John's Toorak. It's on the wall. I was nineteen at the time. It was something I painted on my own. It's got a heraldic symbol down the bottom. After the war I didn't know what to do with myself, when I came home. My Dad was now on his own because Mum died during the war. For something to do because I didn't want to go back to where I'd been and I was always interested in drawing, I started her business up again. I couldn't keep up with it as a needle worker so I was a manufacturer, a designer, a wholesaler, a retailer - I was everything all in one but I didn't know if I was making any money or not because I wasn't trained in business.

**Clive:** There was another thing when I was a kid. You've probably heard of Hubert Opperman, the great bike rider. He was as famous as Bradman in his day. He was a figure that people could relate to. Well, he rode Malvern Star bikes from the shop which my Mum was next to. Malvern Star shop was still around pre-war. I can see it plainly. He used to ride in the Malvern Cricket Ground with a chap called Fatty Lamb. The two of them used to race, round the Malvern Cricket Ground. They put Hessian right round the ground so you couldn't see in. It was a big, big deal. It was like Bathurst car racing at the time. People came from everywhere. There would be very few people who would know that because that was when I was a kid. Everyone knew Oppy. I met him a couple of times. He actually started in the Malvern Post Office which we could see from our shop which was just down Llaneast Street. He was a messenger boy. My Dad used to often say, "I picked him up off the ground after he'd fallen over off the bike." I met Oppy at a Sportsman's Night that we were running through Rotary and he came in a bit late and I happened to be standing there and we talked for about a quarter of an hour. I said to him, "My Dad used to tell me the story of how he picked you up as a messenger boy." He said "I was falling off all the time. I kept falling off a bike." Any rate, I sent him lots of photographs and he wrote back that they were photographs he didn't have of Malvern.



**Clive and Vivian Elliott 1921. This 1921 photo shows Clive in the high chair and his sister Vivian in the tub, beside the family's Harley Davidson motor bike with side car. Mrs Elliott ran a draper's store in Glenferrie Road. Clive established Elliott's Photographic shop, also in Glenferrie Road Malvern. Reg No 6527**



**Malvern Thirds (?) at Cricket Ground, Glen Iris (undated). Clive Elliott can be seen on the right, with William Ward Osborne, second from left. Reg No 7439**

## Mayoresses' names



**Mayoress, Mrs. Sylvia Cole, Mayoral Ball Prahran 1946 Reg No 2319**

Once upon a time it was common practice to refer to a married woman only by her husband's name, with no mention of her own initials and/or first names. Thus, the wife of Prahran's Mayor Alfred William Cole became known as either Mayoress Mrs A.W. Cole or Mrs Alfred William Cole. How times have changed. If she was mayoress today, we would know her as Mayoress Sylvia V. Cole.

One of the projects the Stonnington History Centre has recently undertaken is to correct this antiquated practice. We have begun with the Prahran Mayoresses, and will shortly turn our attention to Malvern's Mayoresses. If anyone has reliable information on the given names, and even the maiden names, of Malvern's mayoresses, where such information is lacking on our catalogue, please contact the Stonnington History Centre at [history@stonnington.vic.gov.au](mailto:history@stonnington.vic.gov.au) and we will endeavour to address this.

**Ellen Porter, Stonnington Local History Librarian**

## How to Start a Municipal Council

Well, historically, the precedent was usually for government to establish a Road District governed by a Road Board – Prahran had one in 1854, and Malvern two years later. ‘Road Board’ and ‘District Board’ seem to have been used synonymously. With the rapid population growth in the inner suburbs during the goldrush years, Prahran soon had enough residents to apply for municipal status. This was granted in 1855, though as I wrote in the last newsletter, for various dubious reasons it took almost a year before a council was actually convened.

Population growth in Malvern – or Gardiner Road District, as it was first known – was much slower, and it was not until 1871 that the Shire of Gardiner was declared. The minutes of the Gardiner Road Board, 1856-1871, have long been available on microfiche in the Malvern Library. Jane Nigro indexed them years ago, creating more than 300 entries that have been added to our online catalogue. Thank you Jane!



Former Wattle Tree Hotel, 196 Wattletree Road Malvern  
1970 Reg No 6519

As we all know, microfiche is not an easy read – Jane in fact worked from the original minute books held by the Public Record Office. With new technology comes new opportunities for a fresh look at the minutes. These minute books have now been scanned to pdf format, meaning that you can read them on your home computer, enlarge the text to suit your eyes, and print whatever takes your fancy.

The Stonnington History Centre plans to develop lending copies of the minutes to be made available through the Library. However, because these minutes only occupy about 100 MB of file space (less than 2% of what a dvd can hold), it seems short-sighted not to add more Council minutes to this project, perhaps up to 1912 if they fit. Bear in mind that City status was achieved in 1911. These later minutes have already been microfilmed – we just need to now scan the film. Council minutes from 1912-1994 have already been scanned and are said to be keyword searchable, though this is virgin ground. But for people like us, older is better! If you are now impatient to get your hands on the early minutes, having read this beat-up, we could paste a set of the files to your data stick, if you ask us nicely! Did you know you can read pdf files on your kindle? Imagine falling asleep in bed as you read the minutes, instead of falling asleep in the library!

“Why would you want to”, you ask? Choosing my words carefully (as a council employee), let me suggest that although modern minutes are not really captivating (unless you have a personal agenda being pursued), minutes from the olden days might cut right to the chase without artifice or spin. Maybe, or maybe not! Did you know that when first constituted, Gardiner Road Board met every Saturday at 3 pm in the Wattle Tree Hotel? Or that in May 1871, the Board was approached by its Boroondara (ie: Camberwell) counterpart to amalgamate and form a municipality, and that similar offers had been made to all its neighbours?

My point is that the early minutes have not been widely explored, and may provide fresh insights. It is up to each generation to discover and reinterpret the past – don’t just leave it to Cooper to tell us how it all happened, have a look for yourself. And when you’ve done that, write an article for the newsletter about something that caught your eye. If you’re a history student in search of a thesis topic, talk to us!

David Tuck, Stonnington History Centre

## Tales from the Courts

Edited reports of proceedings in the Prahran and Malvern courts as published in contemporary issues of the **Prahran Telegraph**.

### Little Horrors

William Oswald Kerr and John Thomas Kerr, aged respectively ten and thirteen years, were charged with assaulting their mother. On Tuesday last, the boys tied their mother down on a bed, she having a sprained ankle, and kicked and beat her. Mr George Hole, hearing the woman’s cries, went to her assistance when the eldest boy got a bottle and threatened to cut his head open. Upon senior-Constable Cahill going to the house, he found the smallest of the prisoners struggling with his mother, the other having a knife in his hand. **Prahran Telegraph, 16 October 1880**

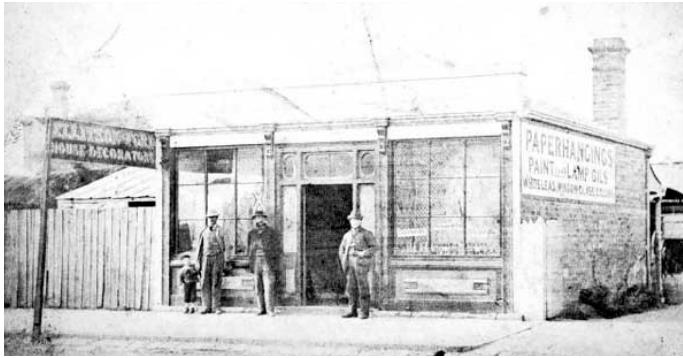
The prisoners were remanded for a week and subsequently discharged into the care of Mrs Kerr but trouble didn’t end there ...

W O Kerr, John T Kerr and their mother, Annie M Kerr, charged with assaulting John Franklin. The boys had previously appeared before the court charged with tying down and stabbing their mother. John Franklin, carter, living in Malvern road, deposed that he caught the elder boy damaging his property and that the boy swore at him when apprehended. The father had come up, and very civil, took the lad away. The mother then arrived and assaulted Franklin with a billet of wood and the younger boy stabbed him in the thigh while he was attempting to ward off the woman’s blows. Mrs Kerr had been several times before the court and is a notoriously violent woman. She was sentenced to three months imprisonment and her sons to one hour, then sent to the Reformatory, the oldest for four years and the youngest for six. **Prahran Telegraph, 4 December 1880**

Geoff Currey

## Ferretting the gremlins: researching two early shops in High Street Prahran

A very early photograph of Prahran was recently discovered by Simone while browsing the Museum of Victoria website. The signage in front of the shop was difficult to decipher, and it had been catalogued as E. T. Litson ....., Prahran, Victoria, 1870. But where, exactly?



Most businesses of this size should turn up on our online catalogue, because Diane Nicholas has indexed virtually all local businesses advertising in the Prahran Telegraph, 1866-1930. The absence of any Litson entry motivated me to linger over the signage with magnifying glass in hand.

The name Ellitson emerged as one possibility, confirmed by the full corporate name shown on the catalogue: Ellitson & Ford (just visible when you knew what you were looking for), and by the other sign on the shop advertising 'paper hangings, paint, lamp oils ....' Thanks Diane!

The Sands & McDougall directories confirm the date estimate of c.1870 – the entry appears only in the 1870 and 1871 directories. The location of the shop was on High Street, adjacent to the NE corner of Chapel Street and High Street. The corner block was vacant until c.1872 when Edward Rule built a grocery there. You can see this vacant block on the left hand edge of the photo.

Following the trail, a fresh gremlin emerged: the Centre does hold a copy of a photo owned by the RHSV of Edward Rule's grocery shop c.1870 (PH 10554), but there's no sign of Ellitson & Ford as neighbours! Instead we see three shops run by Rule, Thomas and Marum respectively.

As it turns out, after much consternation, we conclude that the photo owned by the RHSV is of Rule's first shop on the other side of the intersection (ie: the NW corner). From our catalogue (and again thanks to Diane): Prahran Telegraph 20 July 1872

(PH 7340): "The prosperity of Prahran is demonstrated by current buildings. Shops have been built at Perry's in Chapel Street, in High Street a shop built for Edward Rule and other shops further east". Then on 7 Dec 1872 (PH 7529): "Edward Rule's new building at the corner of High and Chapel Streets is both commodious and substantial".

Sands & McDougall directories confirm this: the juxtaposition of the shops (Rule, Thomas, Marum) appears in the only in the years 1866-1872, with all shops being in Chapel Street. Rule was initially based on the NW corner of Chapel and High, and moved his business across the road to his new shop c. 1873.



At least the cartage expenses for relocation would have been minimized – Chapel Street is narrow!

David Tuck, Stonnington History Centre

## Daphne Chandler (nee Draper)

Two framed hand coloured photographs of Daphne Chandler (nee Draper) were recently donated by her daughter Catherine Reid. This photo shows Daphne Draper when she was crowned Queen of Laughter at the charity event the Queen Carnival, held by St. Alban's Church of England, Armadale. The event entailed a grand concert.

The event also entailed a grand concert. A concert programme is included in the Stonnington History Collection, along with a single framed photo of Daphne Draper in her gown and queen robes and the transcript from a newspaper cutting found in the backing of the frame. In the photo, back row from left Leonard Slade; Jessie Clarke; Daphne Draper; unknown; Iris ?Waturton? and Harry Romanis. Front row from left: Peggy Porter; Peggy Marson; ? Raymond (kneeling); Jean Prentice (seated); Peggy Hocking (seated) and Evelyn Heyson.

Daphne purchased a house at 9 Euston Street, Malvern, when she was 21, prior to her marriage to Elwood Chandler. She lived at this address for 76 years. The Chandlers were members of St. George's Church, Malvern.



Queen Carnival, St. Alban's Church, Armadale. 1932

Reg No 60366

## Taking Local History to the Community

Our display and stall at Pets in the Park in Central Park created interest throughout the day. Thanks to Roxanne Dennis, David Hunter, Heather Kasa, Pat Brincat, Lorraine Sage, Francesca Di Mattina, Jane Nigro, Jane Brewster and Faye Pattinson who helped in so many ways. The Society was represented at the launch of the Glenferrie Road Malvern Business Association's new website. [www.glenferrieroadmalvern.com.au](http://www.glenferrieroadmalvern.com.au)

Lorraine Sage and Francesca Di Mattina enjoyed the Prahran Historical and Arts Society talk by Steve Stefanopoulos on the history of the Prahran Town Hall. Members were fascinated by the range of archives displayed during their recent tour of Heritage Victoria's Archaeology Store and Conservation Laboratory in Abbotsford. The visit to the Malvern Bowling Club, as part of its Centenary celebrations, went well with interest shown in both the historical display and taking part in the bowling activities! Thanks to Francesca Di Mattina, Faye Pattinson, Jane Brewster, Lorraine Sage, Jane Nigro, Bruce McBrien and Heather Kasa who helped during the afternoon.

Lorraine Sage represented the Society at the recent meeting of the South Metro history group, hosted by the Brighton Historical Society. The RHSV History News recently featured a review of Anne Jackson's book *William Philpott: Pioneer Victorian First Class Cricketer*. The Committee would like to extend a special thank you to Stonnington History Centre staff David, Ellen and Simone for their help with our recent displays and research enquiries.

## Additions to the Stonnington Local History Collection

A photo of 98 Finch Street, East Malvern was recently donated by Mrs Patricia Downey, along with reminiscence of her time there after she and her husband, Esmond, purchased the property from the Church of England in 1966. They lived there until 1982. The house was built in 1891 for Alfred William Howitt, who owned the property until his death in 1908. The General Board of Religious Education purchased the property, then numbered 56 Finch Street, in the 1940s and established St. Christopher College. Adjacent properties, were also purchased. The College trained women for work in the promotion of Christian education. Within twenty years more than 100 students from various parts of Australia and overseas graduated from the College. No. 98 was used to accommodate the students and had been extensively altered to include dormitories, sitting rooms etc.



Christopher's College, 98 Finch Street  
East Malvern 1950 Reg No 2729

## Donations of Goods Needed

Cleaning up in your home or garden? The Noel Miller mecwa Nursing Home in Glen Iris needs the following items for some of their activities with the residents... garden tools and large pots, plain colored cushions, felt, brooches, buttons, broken jewellery, swap cards, post cards, corks, stamps, lavender, old fashioned radio, record player and a piano. Just ring Jenny 98352333.

## New Members

We would like to welcome our latest new member **Marjorie Cameron**. (Marjorie is a granddaughter of the first elected mayor, Louis William Ralph Holmes and was one of three sisters who made their debut in the Town Hall and were members of the "Y.M.L." (the Young Malvern League of Social Helpers).

### Have you enjoyed viewing the photos in this issue?

Material for the articles has been researched from the **Stonnington Local History Centre Collection**. The database contains over 60,000 records. To view enlargements of photographs and to read more, just go to the website. [www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/history](http://www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/history)

East Malvern  
**Community Bank** Branch **Bendigo Bank**

300 Waverley Road, East Malvern. Phone 9563 6044



## Malvern Historical Society Inc. (A7682)

**P.O.Box 184, Malvern Vic 3144 Telephone: 0438 515 631 [malvernhistorical@yahoo.com](mailto:malvernhistorical@yahoo.com)  
[www.vicnet.net.au/~malvern](http://www.vicnet.net.au/~malvern)**

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 History Centre, Email: [history@stonnington.vic.gov.au](mailto:history@stonnington.vic.gov.au) Tel: 8290 1360 [www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/history](http://www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/history)  
Prahran Historical and Arts Society, P.O. Box 8649, Armadale VIC 3143 Tel: 9529 7442 [www.vicnet.net.au/~phas](http://www.vicnet.net.au/~phas)