

LOCAL HISTORY NEWS

Malvern Historical Society Inc.

Keeping Stonnington's History Alive

April 2023 - Newsletter No. 99

Wednesday 17 May: AGM and Professor Richard Broome 'The Making of Melbourne'

Wednesday 17 May 7:30 PM

Join Members of the Malvern Historical Society at the Annual General Meeting. Venue: Malvern Town Hall, 1251 High Street Malvern - Upper Foyer.

After the AGM, Guest Speaker, Professor Richard Broome, will speak on 'The Making of Melbourne' including the impact on both Malvern and Prahran. Professor Broome will also discuss the creation of the book 'Remembering Melbourne'.

Bookings are essential so that sufficient seating is provided. All welcome!
RSVP: Heather: 0407 865 098, Lorraine ljsage123@gmail.com

About the Guest speaker:

Professor Richard Broome AM, FAHA, FRHSV, Emeritus Professor in History La Trobe University, President Royal Historical Society of Victoria.

Richard's latest books include:

Mallee Country. Land, People, History (2020 <https://publishing.monash.edu/books/mc-9781925523126.html>)

Conflict, Adaptation and Transformation. Richard Broome and the Practice of Aboriginal History (2018) edited by Ben Silverstein <https://www.newsouthbooks.com.au/books/conflict-adaptation-transformation/>

Analyzing Australian History co-edited with Ashley Pratt (2021) www.cambridge.edu.au/education



Looking north along Chapel Street c1911
Stonnington History Collection PH7077

From the President

The Malvern Historical Committee is back in full action busy organising activities and events for the members of the Society and others. We have recently organised several events which have been very well attended.

Our next activity is the Annual General Meeting of the Society when Professor Richard Broome will be our speaker. Richard is an excellent speaker. He lives and breathes history. More details about this event are included elsewhere in the Newsletter.

Our Facebook page continues to grow and we now have over 5,000 followers. Our thanks to Nicki Cooper for all her wonderful work on Facebook. Very well done. The new Website is well underway and we will keep you informed of our developments.

Thank you to all the members who have renewed their subscriptions. It is always very encouraging to receive your renewals and support.

Looking forward to seeing many of you at the Annual General Meeting. Lorraine Sage: ljsage123@gmail.com

National Trust - Australia Heritage Festival

Stonnington Mansions Bus Tour

www.nationaltrust.org.au/ahf_event/stonnington-mansions-bus-tour

Sunday 30 April

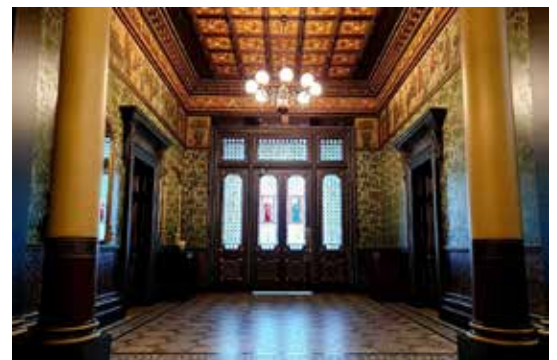
Come on an elevated bus ride through the City of Stonnington and discover the architectural wonders in Armadale, Malvern and Toorak, with architectural historian and former Mayor of the City of Stonnington, Steve Stefanopoulos OAM

Toorak mansion tour – Mandeville Hall

www.nationaltrust.org.au/ahf_event/toorak-mansion-tour/

Sunday 7 May

Come and explore the newly restored areas of this architectural wonder and discover the magnificent features, exquisite interiors and opulent rooms of this internationally significant Toorak mansion, ending with a cup of tea or coffee and a glass of sparkling wine.



Mandeville Hall

5400 followers!

Nearly 7 years ago, the Malvern Historical Society started a Facebook page and we never, in our wildest dreams, thought we'd reach over 5000 page likes and 5400 followers! Thank you to everyone who has supported our Facebook page over the years. Thanks especially to Nikki Cooper who has been responsible for every Stonnington local history post since the start!



Local History in the Community

Society members enjoyed hearing about Stonnington legends and 'firsts' at the March Cuppa and Catch-up at the Malvern Vale Hotel.

Grant Aldous recently donated a copy of J B Cooper's History of Prahran. It will be used to provide text and images for upcoming Facebook posts. Thanks Grant!

Exciting donations!

The Stonnington History Centre has recently received the following exciting donations.

Ainslee Meredith, Stonnington History Centre

Wagner collection - Catalogue record: SHC71285

A large collection of items relating to John Wagner and his family. The American-born Wagner, a businessman and partner in the Victorian branch of Cobb and Co. Coaches, built *Stonington* on Glenferrie Road in 1890. It was named Stonington after the town of Stonington, Connecticut, USA, where his wife Mary had been born. The City of Stonnington was named after the house. The collection includes china crockery and glassware used in *Stonington* Mansion, family papers and photographs.

One very intriguing item is a painted gum leaf by an unknown artist. The first documented use of gum leaf as a painting support can be traced to colonial artist Alfred William Eustace, who was active in northeastern Victoria in the late nineteenth century. They became a popular medium for depicting colonial Australian scenes, flora and fauna.



**Painted Gumleaf
Stonnington History
Collection SHC71285.1**

Toorak College and Glamorgan. Catalogue records: SHC71276 and SHC71277

Honour lists for Toorak College for the years 1885, 1891 and 1894.

Two half-term school reports for Glamorgan, Toorak Preparatory Grammar School, Toorak (1897 and 1898). The reports are for pupil Robert Montieth Rolland (1887-1976). Robert was the youngest son of the Reverend William Stothert Rolland, minister of the Prahran Presbyterian Church in Cromwell Street, South Yarra. Glamorgan was founded in 1887 by Annie Wilhelmina Wesley McComas, next door to the family home on Wallace Street (now Wallace Avenue) in Toorak. The school was taken over by Geelong Church of England Grammar School in 1947.

University College. Catalogue records: SHC71266 and SHC71267

University College was an early private school located at 33 Sutherland Road, Armadale. It was run by M.J. and T.A. Linehan in a house named *Clydesdale*. We have very little material relating to this school so we were thankful to receive a class photograph from the 1920s and a copy of a book prize awarded to pupil John Downey.



**Stonington c1940
Stonnington History Collection SHC71285.7**



**Stonington central stairway
c1940 Stonnington History
Collection SHC71285.6**



**University College, Armadale
Stonnington History Collection SHC71266**

Two decades in the Community

Peter Norman, the founding Chairman of the East Malvern Community Bank and a member of the Malvern Historical Society, recently donated a copy of his report on the East Malvern Community Bank Two Decades in the Community and \$5,500,000 in Community Contributions. The bank opened in 2000 when sentiment was against the major banks after over 2000 bank branches closed in Australia in the 6 years to June 1999. The EMCB's charter was 'that up to 80% of the profits were to be returned to the community and up to 20% returned to the local shareholders.'

STONNINGTON MEMORIES – No 2

The Royal Visit 1954

In early 1954, Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh made an extensive tour of Australia, hardly a few months after the coronation. On 27 February 1954, the Queen was in Melbourne and drove to the tennis at the Kooyong Stadium from Flemington Racecourse. The route took her down Toorak Road to Glenferrie Road and then left down the hill.

The route was lined with thousands of people, many younger children, who were held back by dismountable wooden barriers. The young ones were equipped with rectangular cardboard periscopes fitted with two diagonal mirrors so that it was possible to see over taller people in front. While we jostled in excitement and flapped our small cotton Australian flags, the Queen, wearing a white dress, finally drove past in an open-top black car, and HM waved towards us. There were howls of pleasure, but it was all over in seconds. The Herald reported on Saturday 27 February 1954 that Toorak matrons were standing on their best antique chairs to get a better view and people lined up on the balconies of very posh houses to see the royal progress.

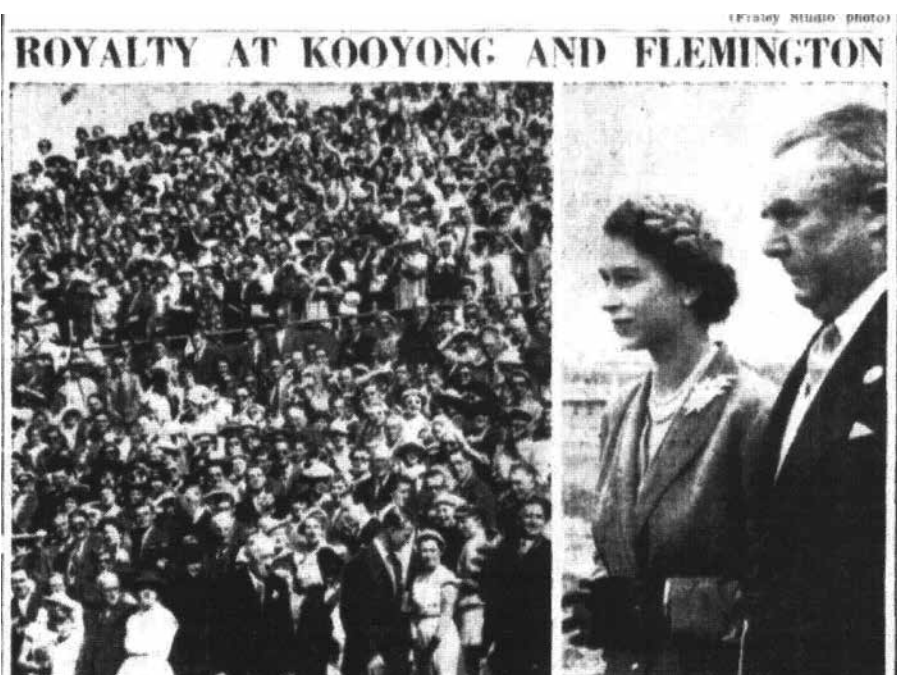
Afterwards, my parents, brother and I walked up the hill in Linlithgow Road to the corner of Albany Road where my mother's aunt Thelma and her husband Harry Lane lived. Harry was Managing Director of Neal's Motors in Exhibition Street in the city and must have had plenty of 'dosh'. It was a splendid house named *Avondale* on a huge $\frac{3}{4}$ acre allotment that I later found was designed by Irwin & Stephenson and dated from 1935 – it is still there and heritage listed. We wandered around inside – I had never been in such a fine and spacious home. Glazed French doors opened onto a rear terrace with crazy paving. The garden was stunning, with trees and lots of shady areas, one covering an elaborate fish pond. The paths were also crazy paved and there were very green lawns, no doubt fed by sprinklers. I thought the garden may have been designed by Edna Walling, but no evidence of this – maybe the architects were responsible.



28 Albany Road, Toorak (undated) Image: John Maidment

So, two delightful memories from that February day close to 70 years ago!

John Maidment OAM 2023



Undated newspaper cuttings.

Champion race car driver Joan Richmond

Joan Richmond, an Australian motorsport pioneer, was inducted into the Australian Motorsport Hall of Fame at a ceremony on the opening day of the 2023 Australian F1 Grand Prix at Albert Park.

Joan Margaret Richmond was an accomplished equestrian and car driver. In 1921 she twice drove from Melbourne to Camooweal, Western Australia, in a Citroen. Joan was fifth in the 1931 Australian Grand Prix at Phillip Island. To further her experience she approached the Riley Motor Co. in the UK and was engaged as a rally driver, competing in various events in Europe. Joan won the inaugural Brooklands 1000 in the UK in 1932, the first Australian woman to win a major motor-racing title. She also achieved the first overland car journey from Australia to England and competed in the Monte Carlo Rally.

In her later years, she turned her focus to animal welfare issues and worked in this field for the rest of her life. She was involved with the Cat Protection Society and ran a boarding facility at the rear of her property in Plant Street, Malvern.

www.nma.gov.au/explore/collection/highlights/joan-richmond



Joan Richmond
(National Museum of Australia)

Wood Ha' (Wood Hall) 555 Dandenong Road, Armadale

Wood Ha' (Wood Hall) stood in Dandenong Road, halfway between Kooyong and Glenferrie Roads, on the Armadale side. Its name, and that of the next-door house, *Carlowrie*, have been traced to an area of land in East Lothian Scotland, adjacent to what is now Edinburgh Airport. The house was built on land purchased by Edmund Henriques, of Cooktown, Qld, in 1887. An Edmund Henriques Jnr was gazetted as Police magistrate of Port Douglas, Qld, in 1887. The land was subsequently re-sold to Thomas Underwood Groube, and George Groube in late 1887. The Groubes subdivided the land into building lots. For his troubles, George Groube was later featured in the book *The Land Boomers* as having made a secret composition in 1893. A Melbourne stockbroker, A.A. Henriques, a possible relation of the original owner, was declared bankrupt twice in the 1890s.

However, in 1890 construction of the house commenced, and it was completed in 1892. It was built in the late Italianate style and featured, uniquely, two double-fronted bay windows. Some unusual ceiling roses were another feature. A later addition was a bluestone wall around the front and Gladstone Avenue side, the bluestones are thought to have come from the tram tracks on Dandenong Road when they were re-laid in the 1940s. Originally, *Wood Ha* was numbered 35 Dandenong Road, Malvern, but, by 1912 the *Wood Ha'* had been dropped and the house was re-numbered 27 Dandenong Road, Malvern. In 1930, it became 27 Dandenong Road, Armadale, changing to 555 Dandenong Road, Armadale in 1940, whence it remained for the rest of its life. The first occupant was Gordon Wright. It is not known if the first homeowner was Scottish or if he was responsible for the naming of the house. Gordon and his wife, after he had passed away, occupied the house for 41 years. Several owners followed, one of whom was the celebrated author, Cyril Pearl, author of *The Wild Men of Sydney*. Cyril worked for *The Age* for a while and lived in this house at that time. At one stage, the house was divided into two apartments, with two front entrances, but this was rectified by the final owners, Jerry and Judy Bell, who lived in the house for 34 years. Jerry is currently a member of the Malvern Historical Society.

Wood Ha' was a fine example of a spacious and comfortable late Victorian Melbourne private home, all too many of which are disappearing from our streets. Sadly, both *Wood Ha'* and *Carlowrie* were demolished in 2019.

Jerry Bell 2023



555 Dandenong Road Armadale c1995 Image: Jerry Bell



St Laurence Chapel of Ease, South Yarra

The former St Laurence Chapel of Ease in Argo Street, South Yarra, was set up by Christ Church South Yarra as a mission church.[undated]

Stonnington History Collection PH8568

Growing up at 186-188 Wattletree Road Malvern

'I grew up in Wattletree Road, Malvern. My father was a doctor, who had bought the practice from Dr Guy Springthorpe in 1939. War was declared and my father could not wear army boots, due to a foot injury from an accident involving a tram, so he took on a lot of the locums for doctors in the area who were serving in the war. I remember going to St Benedict's Hospital to see newborn babies when I was 3 and 4 years old. That hospital became Cabrini Hospital. In the same street lived a Mr Roy Connolly, who later became the Lord Mayor of Melbourne and won the 1956 Olympic Games for Melbourne. He later became Sir Roy Connolly. At the end of the street lived Doctor Shannon who had a grass bowling green along the side of his house, opposite an existing bowling club. Cabrini has taken over all of that land now.

Down Wattletree Road, on the corner of Glenferrie Road, there was a bank and upstairs was a dentist called Dr Adam. Close by there was a French Polishing shop run by Mr Crimind, who was a very good French Polisher and furniture restorer. Further up was a dairy where you could get ice cream in a cone and when we were having dinner guests, we used to take a silver jug down and carry it home full of cream, which meant that your wrist was very tired by the time you got home. Next to the dairy was a petrol station (possibly Ampol), with the bowsers on the street curb, where my father used to fill up his car. Because he was a doctor, he was entitled to a larger petrol ration. A lot of cars at that time had coke burners to produce their own fuel. The coke was very flammable. Opposite the dairy was the Victory Picture Theatre, where the Lincraft store is now. It had a neon sign outside that spelt VICTORY. On VE (Victory in Europe) day, I remember standing at our gate post and spelling the word as it lit up. It was a 90 degree sign with V at the top.

During the war, you needed to black out your windows and we had red velvet curtains with black lining to stop the hall light from shining out, while inside we played carpet bowls. One night there was a ring at the doorbell and a patrol officer, in a face mask and helmet, said that we were showing too much light. The curtains had not been closed properly. It was frightening because he had all of his equipment on and I was only a young child. There was a routine of washing the surgery linen on Tuesdays in the old copper and ironing it all on Thursdays. The old mangle was still in the laundry shed for years. The copper was gas. We used the mangle but later on we had a water powered spin dryer, which was very good. The hot water supply to the house was a coke boiler on the porch outside the back door near the kitchen. The boiler was on one side and the coke storage was next to it. The coke had to be shoved into the boiler to keep the water hot for the surgery.

The boiler was called "Jock" by the Scottish maid, who used to say "I got to go and stoke Jock".

I was in a cot at age 2, and there was a party to welcome back my grandmother and aunt and uncle who had just got back from Europe by boat. I had been put to bed and there was a lot of noise and then dead silence. It wasn't until some years later that I was told it was because the announcement of the start of the war by the Prime Minister was made. It was a great relief that the family were all safely back in Australia. At age 4 or 5, my school was "Little PLC" (Presbyterian Ladies College), which was in the Sunday School rooms of the Malvern Presbyterian Church. Later it closed and PLC moved to the present site in Burwood.

My memory is that a pine tree in a street behind Cabrini was planted from a seed or seedling from Gallipoli. For this reason, that tree could never be removed. Opposite where we lived was a house with a tennis court and, during the war, the tennis court was dug up for trenches for the school children to take shelter in. After the war, the property was bought by an Italian doctor who looked after the big Italian migrant community. It has now been developed into units. On a nearby corner was the original Wattle Tree Hotel "Glendearg" which was a day's walk from the city towards the goldfields. It had a tethering rail along the veranda where horses could be left overnight. A family called Hasker lived there. It's now a heritage listed property (http://vhd.heritage.vic.gov.au/search/nattrust_result_detail/66860). The veranda was wide and it had full length windows, so people could walk in and out through them. It was a weatherboard house. As I grew older, curfew was when the streetlights came on. The main communication tool was to switch off the hall lamp when my sister and I came home, so that when my mother or father woke up, they could see that the light was off and we were safely home.'

Barbara Stuart-Smith 2023



186-188 Wattletree Road Malvern



Access 8,000 maps with the click of a button

The State Library of Victoria Historical Maps and Plans Collection contains 8,000 maps on microfiche and covers the first 60 years of European settlement in Victoria.

Touching on everything from what the landscape was like when Europeans arrived to locations of early buildings and houses, the collection is a boon for researchers.

You'll find some of the highlights from the collection in the blog post.

https://blogs.slv.vic.gov.au/our-stories/mapping-the-past-with-victorias-historical-plans/?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=12-04-23_SLV-News_Autumn-23&utm_content=12-04-23_SLV-News_Autumn-23+CID_e0233be76f48863b2e53a102860a56&utm_source=Campaign+Monitor&utm_term=Read+more

Toorak tip

Land for a brickworks and associated quarry in Elizabeth Street, Malvern, was purchased by the City Brick Works Company Pty Ltd around 1902. It was used as a clay pit for some years. In 1907 the clay hole extended to a point halfway across to where Henderson Avenue is today. Quarrying was discontinued in the early 1950s. In 1956 Malvern Council rented the area as a tip site and the quarry was slowly filled over the next decade. In 1968, the land was purchased by the MMBW and in 1973 it was transferred to Malvern Council in compensation for land lost in the building of the South-Eastern Freeway. In 1974 Sir Robert Menzies Reserve was opened on the site of the quarry, but the brickworks were still operating in 1980. Around 1984, the brickworks site was re-zoned residential, the brickworks were demolished and by 1986 the land facing Elizabeth Street had been subdivided into housing allotments and sold.



Toorak Tip, corner Elizabeth Street and Toorak Road
Malvern (Image: Philip Leahy 1970)
Stonnington History Collection MP13714

Harry Kemp, bootmaker, 157 Chapel Street South Yarra

Harry Kemp's bootmaking
shop, an iron shop of 3 rooms
c1880 Stonnington History
Collection PH12315



Cobb and Co

Hazel Johnson, the author of *Along the tracks of Cobb and Co. - Cobb's Coach Drivers*, continues to look for stories to share. Did any of your ancestors have a connection with Co and Co?

dvhtjohnson@gmail.com

www.cobbandcotracks.au

Malvern resident, John Wagner, was a founding partner with A.W. Robertson in the Victorian branch of Cobb and Co. Wagner had gained his wealth in carrying, gold mining, manufacturing and real estate. In 1890 Wagner commissioned leading architect, Charles D'Ebro and an imposing mansion of 40 rooms was built by the local builder, Stephen Armstrong. The residence was named Stonington, after *Stonington* Connecticut, in the U.S.A., the birthplace of Wagner's wife Mary. John Wagner lived with his family at Stonington, until he died in 1901.



John Wagner 1895
Stonnington History
Collection MP5227

Malvern Historical Society Executive Committee 2022

President:	Lorraine Sage
Vice President:	Jane Nigro
Treasurer:	Ann Ahin
Minute Secretary:	Heather Kasa
Committee:	Marisa Costa Francesca Di Mattina Dianne Gardiner Bernadette Wood

Newsletter:

Editor:	Jane Nigro
Design/Printing:	MBE Malvern

Gladstone Gardens and Windsor Siding

Gladstone Gardens was developed by Prahran Council around 1912 on part of a railway easement originally set aside for a railway line that ran from St Kilda to Brighton via Windsor Station. Those were the days of private construction of railways. In the 1850s, two rail routes from Melbourne to Brighton were proposed by rival railway companies: one to travel via St Kilda, with a 'loop line' to Windsor, where it would join the opposition's line.

The alternative line ran south from South Yarra to Brighton, via Prahran. The loop line, however, was soon judged to be not economically viable and it only ran from 1859 to 1862. All Brighton rail traffic thereafter travelled from the City via South Yarra. The loop line provided plenty of engineering challenges. The South Melbourne swamp was traversed on a viaduct 365 metres long, made of blue gum timber. At St Kilda Road, a bridge 30 metres long provided 4.4 metres of road clearance. At Punt Road, another bridge was constructed, and the road was excavated two metres to save the expense of a bridge embankment.

The level crossing, at Union Street, Windsor, was complicated by the need for a long cutting almost 10 metres deep at its peak. When the line reached Peel Street, Windsor, the water pipe owned by the South Yarra Water Works Company, had to be modified to run under the railway line. Nothing was simple, and the track maintenance costs proved to be prohibitive. After the loop line was abandoned, part of the easement was used for many years as a railway siding. The poorly drained strip of land did not catch the eye of developers, much to the delight of the local residents.

In 2022 the Windsor Siding BMX track, 104 Union Street, Windsor, was redesigned to make it safer and more accessible to users of all abilities. Since its opening in late 2016, the BMX track has been popular with families and BMX enthusiasts. Over the years the track surface has deteriorated. The new surface will be smooth bitumen, creating a multi-sport facility for BMX, skateboarding and scooters. In 1985 there was a BMX in the former City of Stonnington, on the site of the future South Eastern Arterial Road link, close to Gardiners Creek.



Gladstone Park, Windsor c1913
Stonnington History Collection PH9171



City of Malvern BMX track 1985
Stonnington History Collection MP14648

Dalmah, 23 Bruce Street Toorak



Dalmah, c1887, 23 Bruce Street, Toorak, was built for stockbroker Henry Wolfe (Image:1966)
Stonnington History Collection PH13620

C E Connop, Architect



Hand-coloured drawing of the offices of C.E. Connop, architect, corner of Commercial Road and Balmoral Street, Prahran c1890
Stonnington History Collection PH9027



Albert Edward Kemp, butcher, Glendearg Grove Malvern c1912

Albert Kemp worked at T Ethel's butcher shop in Claremont Avenue, Malvern. Albert died in France during WWI.

Stonnington History Collection MP1606

MHS MEMBERSHIP 2023

Malvern Historical Society Inc P O Box 184, Malvern Victoria 3144

I would like to

- Join the Malvern Historical Society
 Renew Malvern Historical Society

Annual Membership Options

- Individual \$13
 Full time student \$9
 Family \$20

Date:

Donation \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

Member information

Name/s _____
Address _____
Suburb _____ Postcode _____
Phone _____ Mobile _____
Email (please print) _____ Signature _____

- Yes I'd prefer to receive the newsletter by email only.

Payment options

- Paying by Direct Transfer

Commonwealth Bank BSB No: 063187 Account No: 10104883 Account Name - Malvern Historical Society

*** Please make sure the message/reference box states your name and what the payment is for.

***We would appreciate the return of your completed form by mail or by email.

- Paying by Cheque

Please make the cheque payable to the Malvern Historical Society Inc. Kindly forward your cheque and completed form to the Malvern Historical Society.

I would like to assist with:

- Committee and administration Newsletter Walks Talks Afternoon teas & suppers

*Financial year: 1 Jan - 31 Dec

MHS website: www.vicnet.net.au/~malvern Tel: 0438 515 631 malvernhistorical@yahoo.com

Malvern Historical Society Inc. (A7682)

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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 and a member of the South Metro History Group.

OTHER STONNINGTON HISTORY CONTACTS

Stonnington History Centre, Email: history@stonnington.vic.gov.au

Tel: 8290 1360 www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/Discover/History

Prahran Mechanics Institute Tel: 9510 3393 www.pmi.net.au

Have you enjoyed viewing the photos in this issue?

Material for the articles has been researched from the Stonnington History Centre Collection. The database contains over 65,000 records. To view enlargements of photographs and to read more, just go to the website. www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/Discover/History

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