

CAULFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

29

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Location: First floor, Caulfield City Hall at 8.00 pm.

PATRON : His Worship, The Mayor of Caulfield
Councillor John Campbell, M.B.E., J.P.

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|--------------------|---------------------------|----------|
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"HISTORY MAKES PEOPLE WISE,
FOR WITHOUT A KNOWLEDGE OF HISTORY, WE HAVE NO FUTURE".

Francis Bacon 1561 - 1626

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THE PAST IS STILL WITH US.

Memory and imagination go a long way towards spanning the centuries, and it is sometimes very startling to realise just how close the past is to us. Those of us who can remember our grand-parents, and great grand-parents know that their total lives, span a period of over two hundred years, longer than the white settlement of this Country.

We should all be grateful to the past for adding colour and interest to the present. We should be even more grateful to those early pioneers, who recorded their every day activities, and impressions of the hardships they encountered during the settlement of this land.

We should be more grateful that technology, which has developed over the years, enables us to go beyond the age of history by hear-say or word of mouth, which is not always reliable, we can now read it on the printed page, see paintings depicting life over five hundred years ago, see on television, the excavations of ruins over one thousand years old.

We can learn from the mistakes of the past, although it's lessons go unheeded. We applaud, and strive to emulate, the courage, endurance, and fortitude of our pioneering ancestors.

The present and the future are important, but so is the past, which sometimes seems so close that it echoes our footsteps as we go forward.

The many folk museums, ancient buildings, preserved by decree, and even in our City of Caulfield, "Ripponlea", "Labassa", and possibly to a lesser degree, the archives of the Caulfield Historical Society, which is striving to record and maintain the history and heritage of this City, are all evidence of our desire to share with those who come after us, some of the interest and beauty that we, and our ancestors knew.

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HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS

Miss Irene V. (Rene) Anderson, a Member of the Caulfield Historical Society since 1973, was recently honoured by being appointed an Honorary Life Member of this Society.

Until recently, Rene had played an active part in the business of the Society, and although advancing years has restricted her attendance at meetings, she has retained her membership and interest.

Rene has lived in Caulfield for most of her life, and she is a fund of knowledge regarding the early days of this City, which she is always willing to discuss with students of local history.

She has made many donations to this Society, and she recently completed a book detailing the history of the many homes of the Langdon Family, who were one of Caulfield's early pioneers. This book, which is now almost out of print, is suitably entitled :- "The Langdon Homes of Caulfield".

We all offer Rene our sincere congratulations on joining the ranks of Honorary Life Members of the Caulfield Historical Society, of whom the late Councillor, and Mayor of Caulfield, Fred Arden was, until now, the only other recipient.

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Members will be sorry to learn that Rene has recently decided to move from her home in Caulfield, and is now a resident at the Alexandra Private Nursing Home in Hawthorn Road.

She is fit and bright, and would welcome visits from her many friends of this Society.

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THE Jack R. PAICE COLLECTION

This Society is honoured and delighted to have recently received a gift of nearly two hundred hard-covered books relating to the histories of the majority of Cities, Towns, Shires, and Districts, in the State of Victoria, together with several Biographies.

These books, a number of which are first editions, and are all in mint condition, have been donated to the Caulfield Historical Society by Mr. Jack R. PAICE M.B.E. of East Doncaster. They will be an invaluable reference library for the use of our members, the general public, and students researching local and Victorian history.

In appreciation of this very valuable gift, all of our members have unanimously agreed that they be named :- "THE JACK R. PAICE COLLECTION" and each book will be suitably inscribed.

As a further expression of our appreciation we are pleased to advise that he has been appointed an HONORARY LIFE MEMBER of the Society, and now becomes the third recipient to receive this honour.

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THE DUNCAN MACKINNON RESERVE

The Duncan Mackinnon Reserve was originally known as Crosbie Swamp, so named after Thomas Mahoney Crosbie, a land owner during the early days of the development of Caulfield, and the swamp was a major source of fresh spring water.

Fresh water, suitable for drinking from the newly constructed Yan Yean Reservoir, did not reach Caulfield until 1874, and prior to that date local residents were forced to purchase water at one shilling a load, or alternatively collect their own from either Paddy's Swamp (Caulfield Park) or Crosbie Swamp.

Crosbie Swamp was later re-named Warrein Reserve, and then to Duncan Mackinnon Reserve in 1976, in honour of Duncan Cornelius Mackinnon, a former Caulfield Councillor since 1924, and Mayor in 1932. Councillor Mackinnon has since been described as perhaps one of Caulfield's most popular and respected Mayors.

Caulfield Council purchased what was then a large area of swamp land in 1962, and after draining, it was used by several football and cricket clubs. Serious development of the area was commenced in 1973, and it was converted to it's present international sporting complex standard in April 1976, at a cost of \$530,000.

Funding for this project was obtained from both Federal and State Governments, which approved grants of \$110,000 and \$420,000 from City finance.

Today the reserve features an athletic track of Olympic standard, playing ovals, jogging track, a bicycle racing track, playgrounds and electric barbecue facilities.

The then Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation, Mr. Brian Dixon, said Caulfield Council was a pace setter. It was the first Council, outside the City of Melbourne to do something constructive for recreation, and for the youth of the City.

In opening the Reserve, the then Mayor of Caulfield, Councillor Sam Taylor, said it had been one of Caulfield's major projects.

Duncan Mackinnon Reserve is situated on the corner of North Road, Crosbie and Murrumbeena Roads. It is used almost continually each day of the week. It is controlled by a Committee of Management, which is democratically appointed.

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CAULFIELD GUINEAS STAND IS NOW REDUNDANT

After more years than most people care to remember, the old Guineas Stand at Caulfield Race Course is to be demolished to make way for a recreation area, which is reported, will complement the existing improvements already being implemented.

This news will bring a flood of nostalgia, not only to those many followers of "The Sport of Kings", but also to the thousands of ex-servicemen, who, for a short period of time, (it sometimes seemed like for ever) were billeted at the Course during the 1939-1946 war.

Caulfield Race Course was their home while they awaited final posting to their various units. These embryo soldiers were all kept busy by parades, drilling under the eagle eye of a permanent Army Sergeant, polishing their very new army boots, (almost impossible to obtain a shine) and webbing, peeling potatoes, and pumpkins, what seemed like a ton a day, and cleaning the stands and grounds around the Course.

Their sleeping quarters were, in the majority of cases, the Guineas Stand. Palliasses were collected from the Quartermaster, which were then filled with straw, and carted up the stairways to the tiered seats high above the Race Course, which was to be their bed-room for how long they knew not.

Those seats of the Guineas Stand were narrow, and made for sitting, not sleeping, and many a rookie soldier, in those early days of Army Service, rolled off these narrow seats, during the night, and if the fall did not awaken him, the loud profanities which issued from his unfortunate mates, who were desperately trying to sleep in the tier below, in unfamiliar surroundings and conditions, surely did.

The Guineas Stand, and indeed the whole of the Race Course, was home for many thousands of Rookie Soldiers, during their initial training, until the Regular Army Transit Officer finally decided into which Unit they would be posted.

What has happened to those Guineas Stand Residents, who were lucky to survive the horrors of war, where many friends made during their short stay at Caulfield?

The old stand, and the Caulfield Race Course, brings back many memories of yester-year. The Guineas Stand has gone, but as the residents during 1939-1945 are growing older, it will soon be forgotten by the younger generation, but we pray that this famous Race Course, and it's facilities will never again be used as it was so many years ago.

VALE CAULFIELD GUINEAS STAND

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THE HISTORY OF "QUAT QUATTA"

Aboriginal for "GOOD CAMPING PLACE"

This Society has had several inquiries regarding the history of "Quat Quatta", that magnificent old mansion in Ripponlea.

Although just outside the boundary of the City of Caulfield, we have been able to obtain a short history of this old house.

"Quat Quatta" was built in 1890, on the grounds of "Erindale", which was the property of Thomas Monahan, who was reported to be a wealthy settler in the district.

It was built soon after his death by his daughter, Betsy Keogh, who engaged W.H. Cooper, a prominent architect of that time, to create the present building.

Professional craftsmen were imported from Italy to prepare the hand painted and stained glass windows, the intricate parquetry dance floor, and the marble tiled verandah. "Quat Quatta" was completed for a total cost of twelve thousand pounds.

In 1893, Betsy Keogh's brother-in-law, the Hon. J.A. Wallace, M.L.C. due to his commitments in Melbourne, required to purchase a town house, and he subsequently obtained "Quat Quatta" consisting of eleven acres of rose gardens, tennis court, and stables. At that time "Quat Quatta" and "Ripponlea" were the only two large houses in the area.

During the many subsequent ownerships, "Quat Quatta" was used as a stopping place for Cobb and Co., carriages going to and from the popular holiday resort of Brighton. It was later converted into a reception centre, private hospital, and finally to a cheap accomodation boarding house.

When the Carns Family acquired "Quat Quatta" in 1968, it was a dilapidated old house, which had been leased as flats, with over thirty tennants. After six months of extensive renovations, it was restored to it's original splendour, with all its former beauty.

Today, "Quat Quatta" a single storey Victorian mansion, is owned and operated by the second generation Carns family, as a popular venue for Wedding Receptions, and other private functions.

In 1974, this old mansion house was classified by the National Trust.

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THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONVENT

Dandenong Road, Chadstone.

The Good Shepherd Convent, while not within the environs of Caulfield, was an historic land mark just beyond the boundary of this City.

The Convent was built during 1881 - 1883, and provided a residence for the Sisters of the Order of the Good Shepherd, and for young homeless girls in need of care and protection.

The Sisters moved into the Convent during the latter part of 1883, with twenty-five girls who were aged from fourteen to eighteen, and within a short space of time, this number had increased to over one hundred.

The furnishings of the Convent were financed by generous donations from both Catholic and Protestant families residing in Oakleigh, Caulfield and surrounding districts, and included all the facilities needed for the maximum comfort of the girls who were living there. In addition to well appointed dormitories and recreation rooms, a swimming pool tennis court, and basket ball court, were constructed on the premises.

In those early days, when most of the land surrounding the Convent was used for farming and market gardens, the Sisters tendered herds of Jersey cattle, which provided milk and meat for both themselves and for the girls under their care.

During 1930, a Chapel was built beside the original building, which was a stone structure in Gothic style, with furnishings imported from Europe and Africa.

The Sisters of the Order of the Good Shepherd, moved out of their Convent in 1982, and the building was sold to developers.

All that remains of this once beautiful building, which dominated the skyline for over one hundred years, is a red wall with it's peep holes that once offered a view over most of the surrounding country side.

The grounds on which the Convent once stood is now a concrete car park, created to provide space for customers at Chadstone Shopping Centre.

All that survived from the wrecker's hammer were the Chapel light fittings, pews, confessional doors, fireplaces and the Altar. Nothing else was saved, to make way for, what is now regarded as progress.

How many of the people who park their cars at the new Chadstone car park, will stop to think that they are really parking on Holy Ground?

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HERITAGE WEEK 1987

Sunday 5th April to Sunday 12th April, 1987.

Heritage Week is a "Week for Discovery", which is organized each year by the National Trust of Australia (Vic), and created to promote an awareness and interest of our Heritage.

In a variety of ways, Community Groups, Local Councils, Historical Societies, and individuals from all parts of Australia join with the National Trust to highlight the preservation and conservation of our Heritage, for, as has been noted previously in this News Letter, "Without a History of the Past, We Have No Future."

The Caulfield Historical Society, has again this year, been invited by the National Trust to participate in Heritage Week, and as in previous years, we have accepted their invitation.

Our room on the first floor, Caulfield Central R.S.L., 169 Hawthorn Road, South Caulfield, will be open to members, their friends, and the general public, on Monday 6th April to Friday 10th April, 1987, from 2pm to 4pm.

Our theme for this year will be :-

"EARLY CAULFIELD RE-VISITED"

Admission for non-members of the Society is by a donation to Society Funds.

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TO ALL MEMBERS

Please publicise our involvement in this year's Heritage Week, it is a most important period in the activities of all participating Historical Societies in general, and of this Society in particular.

Our Committee work very hard to make sure that all of our exhibitions and displays are made as interesting as possible, but without the active support of all members, it becomes increasingly difficult.

There appears to be a number of our members, although they loyally attend our monthly meetings, have never visited our display room, and an appeal is now made to them, active or otherwise, to rectify this omission, at least during Heritage Week.

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NOTES FOR YOUR DIARY

Guest Speakers for 1987

A further reminder that the following Guest Speakers have been invited to speak at our meetings during this year.

Please show your support by attending as many meetings as possible for the remainder of this year.

- 18th March M/S Stella Barber
Archivist/Researcher for G.J. Coles and Co.Ltd.
- 15th April Mr. Brian Gales
Secretary/Manager Brighton General Cemetery
- 20th May Mr. John McKernan
Past President, Ship Lovers Society of Victoria.
- 15th July Oakleigh Historical Society
Slides of early Oakleigh.
- 16th September Annual Meeting
Mr. Peter Isaacson, D.F.C, A.F.C, D.F.M., F.I.A.M,
R.A.A.F. Pilot during World War II
Proprietor and Editor, "Caulfield Southern Cross"
- 21st October Member's Participation Night "Show and Tell". Bring along an article which is either of sentimental or historical interest, and speak for one minute on it's history.
- 18th November Mr. Graham Breydon,
Member: Tramways Museum Society of Victoria
- Final Meeting for 1987.

Meetings for 17th June, 19th August, are general discussion meetings, at which all members are invited to express their views regarding the conduct and programmes of the Society.

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WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

The following members have recently joined this Society, and we extend to them all a very sincere welcome. We trust that whenever possible, they will attend our meetings, and enter into our activities and deliberations.

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|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Hon Robert Lawson, M.L.C. | Moorabbin |
| Mr. Barry Fabian | Murrumbeena |
| Mrs Fay Johnson | Murrumbeena |
| Mr. Ian Barclamb | Glen Huntly |
| Mrs. Aafice Barclamb | Glen Huntly |
| Mrs. Edith Brand | Glen Huntly. |
| Councillor Veronika Martens | Murrumbeena. |

DONATIONS RECEIVED

The following donations to this Society have recently been received. They are all very valuable additions to our records and acquisitions, and are acknowledged and accepted with sincere thanks :-

Remington Typewriter, (c1900)

Donated by Miss N. Ward, Elsternwick.

German Portable, Hand Operated Vibrating Shuttle Sewing Machine

Vintage uncertain, but possible late 1800.

Donated by Mrs. M. Cooke, Caulfield.

Book. "Steam Locomotives of Australia", by David Burke.

Donated by Mr. J. McLoughlin, Elsternwick.

Hand Woven Supper Cloth (1831).

Donated by Mrs. Perrinan, Elsternwick.

A very early Railway Map of Victoria, showing all rail routes in the State.

Donated by Miss M. Allender. Caulfield.

Cheque for \$10.00 in appreciation of Miss G. Rowe showing our slides of early Mansions of Caulfield.

Donated by St.Mary's Anglican Church Guild, Caulfield

Diary of E.A. Garnett, formerly of 9 Rippon Grove, Elsternwick, of his sea voyages from 1872 to 1877.

Family Tree of the Garnett Family, who have a family connection with the Langdons of Caulfield, from 1858 to 1967.

Donated by Mr. Ian M. Garnett, Dandenong.

Book. "Civic Palaces" by Marc Fiddian, a tableau of Australian Town Halls.

Donated by Pakenham Gazette, Pakenham.

Book. "City of Caulfield Shopping From Home Guide"

"Tracing Your Family History", a List of Resources and Materials Available from the Caulfield Library.

Donated by Mrs. Gladys Vallati, Kew.

Magazine. 1958 Edition of The Australian Post Office Magazine.
Official Journal of The Postal Institute.
Donated by Mrs. M. Bromfield, Carnegie.

Book. "Been Everywhere and Seen Everything" an Autobiography by
John James Whitty.
Photo-copied, with the Author's permission, By Miss H. Ford.
Donated by the Author, Mr. J.J. Whitty.

Book. "Dalkeith" and the McConchie Family, a Family History.
Donated by R.H. & E. McConchie, Casterton.

Books. Two hundred Hard Covered books, covering the histories of
most of the Councils, Towns, Shires, and Districts in the
State of Victoria, together with a number of Biographies.
Donated by Mr. Jack R. Paice, M.B.E., East Doncaster

Book-Case. Subsequent to the typing of this News Letter,
Mr. Paice has also donated a large book-case, in
which the collection can be shown to the best advantage.

Photograph. A further donation has now been received, which is a
coloured photograph of the CAULFIELD CITY CHOIR, taken
on the occasion of the Choir's 40th. Anniversary, held
on 7th. September 1986.
Donated by the Committee and Members of the Choir.
