

CAULFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 202, Caulfield South, 3162

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NEWSLETTER

February 1974
20 cents

MEETINGS

DECEMBER 1973

The Christmas meeting held on 19th December, 1973, was almost cancelled when we were advised by the Council that our meeting room in the Town Hall was being converted to offices. We were offered the alternative of using Centenary Hall but the suggestion was entertained with some misgiving when it was discovered that the City Choir was staging a Christmas recital in the main hall next door. Fortunately, the Vicar of nearby St. Margaret's Church allowed us to use the church hall at short notice, thus saving the day.

Some members were uncertain of their liking for Renaissance music and were pleasantly surprised to find, after the supper of hot drinks and Christmas Cake, that it could be, and was, most enjoyable. All agreed that the MELBOURNE RENAISSANCE PLAYERS had provided a most entertaining and colourful programme.

MARCH 1974

A tour of Parliament House has been arranged for the night of 20th March. Sir Edgar Tanner, M.L.A. for Caulfield, and the Society's first life member, will be our host for the tour and the supper which will follow.

Members should meet in Queen's Hall, Parliament House at 8.00 p.m. Our party will be limited in number, so members who wish to attend should advise the Hon. Secretary by 18th March,

APRIL

The Grimwade family will be the subject of an address by Professor J. R. Poynter on Wednesday, 17th April.

The Gromwades had their home at "Harleston" in Balaclava Road until the house, built in 1875 and named after the Norfolk village where F.S. Grimwade was born, was offered by his sons to the Melbourne Grammar School. The school opened in 1918 and the name changed to its present one of "Grimwade House".

Professor Poynter, who is Ernest Scott Professor of History in the University of Melbourne, is the author of a biography of Russell Grimwade published in 1967. In his lecture to the Society he will discuss the political outlook of the family.

PATRON

The Society's Patron for the year 1973-74 is the present Mayor of Caulfield, His Worship, Cr. G.N. Doolan, LL.B. Cr. Doolan has served as a Councillor for eleven years and is serving his second term as Mayor. His Worship has shown a keen interest in the work of the Society since its establishment

COMMITTEE

Miss Cecily E. Close, M.A. (Hist), has joined the Committee of the Society. Miss Close, who is a Caulfield resident, is Senior Assistant Archivist in the University of Melbourne and a member of the Committee of the Business Archives Council.

HISTORIC CAULFIELD

HOMES OF CAULFIELD GRAMMAR SCHOOL

by J. O'Donnell, B.A., B.Ed.

Caulfield in the early 1880's was still chiefly an area of large mansion homes on large, semi-rural estates, many of them owned by people of distinction in the boom town of Melbourne (Frederick Sargood, Sir George Stephen, Mr. Justice Wilberforce Stephen, Henry Ricketson). Market Gardens were the other main feature(6).

There was a need for a grammar school which would provide a sound education for the sons of the families in the Caulfield area, which was seen by Mr. Joseph Henry Davies (who came from Whangerei, New Zealand, in 1860).(4) In April 1881 Caulfield Grammar School was started as a small privately owned school, in the eight room rented premises of Mr. McConnell, in the building which still stands on the west corner of Selwyn Street and Glen Huntly Road - opposite the Elsternwick railway station.(7)

By the end of the first year the number of pupils had risen to 32, and nearly doubled that by the end of the second. In 1882, the growing needs of the school made it necessary to acquire larger and more suitable accommodation. Five acres of land on the Stanmere Park estate, (12) adjoining Sir Frederick Sargood's property "Rippon Lea", and with access from Glen Eira Road, and what is now Regent Street were purchased. Regent Street, also called Cotton and Ebdon Street at various times, ceased at the southern boundary of the school's land.(7)

The first building constructed was the single storey brick class rooms, which still remain. The brick chapel/hall, on its bluestone foundations followed in 1883. Its solid constructions now withstanding the indignities of service as a P.M.G. storage depot. The boarders remained at the Selwyn Street building until near the end of 1884,(7) when they moved into the plain but substantial two storey residence which had been erected in front of the class rooms. The residence is still easily identified today, being the only two storey building in Regent Street.

In 1888 the paddocks used by Caulfield Grammar School as playing fields, owned by Mrs. Elizabeth Short (for whom Short Street, now Allison and Elizabeth Streets were named) were sold and subdivided for housing. The school was thus left without adequate playing facilities. The land affected is the present area of housing between Regent Street and St. George's Road (then George Street). On 19th May 1888 Mr. Davies sold the entire property to a land company which carried out the subsequent sub-division for working men's homes.(7)(10)

Mr. Davies, having been persuaded by Rev. H.B. Macartney of St. Mary's that he should enter the mission field, sold the school to Rev. E.J. Barnett. Mr. Davies became the first Australian missionary to Korea, where he died on 30th April 1890. In 1875, his sister Sarah had already become the first Australian missionary to India, and later his brother Tabor also went as a missionary to India.(3)

Rev. Barnett faced the task of finding suitable facilities and accommodation for the 91 pupils, including 32 boarders. (4) Charles Crosby, one of the referees for the school in the 1883 Prospectus, and a member of Crosby & Co. merchants, commercial and shipping agents, of Queen Street,(6)(11) offered an option on his property in Glen Eira Road.(7)

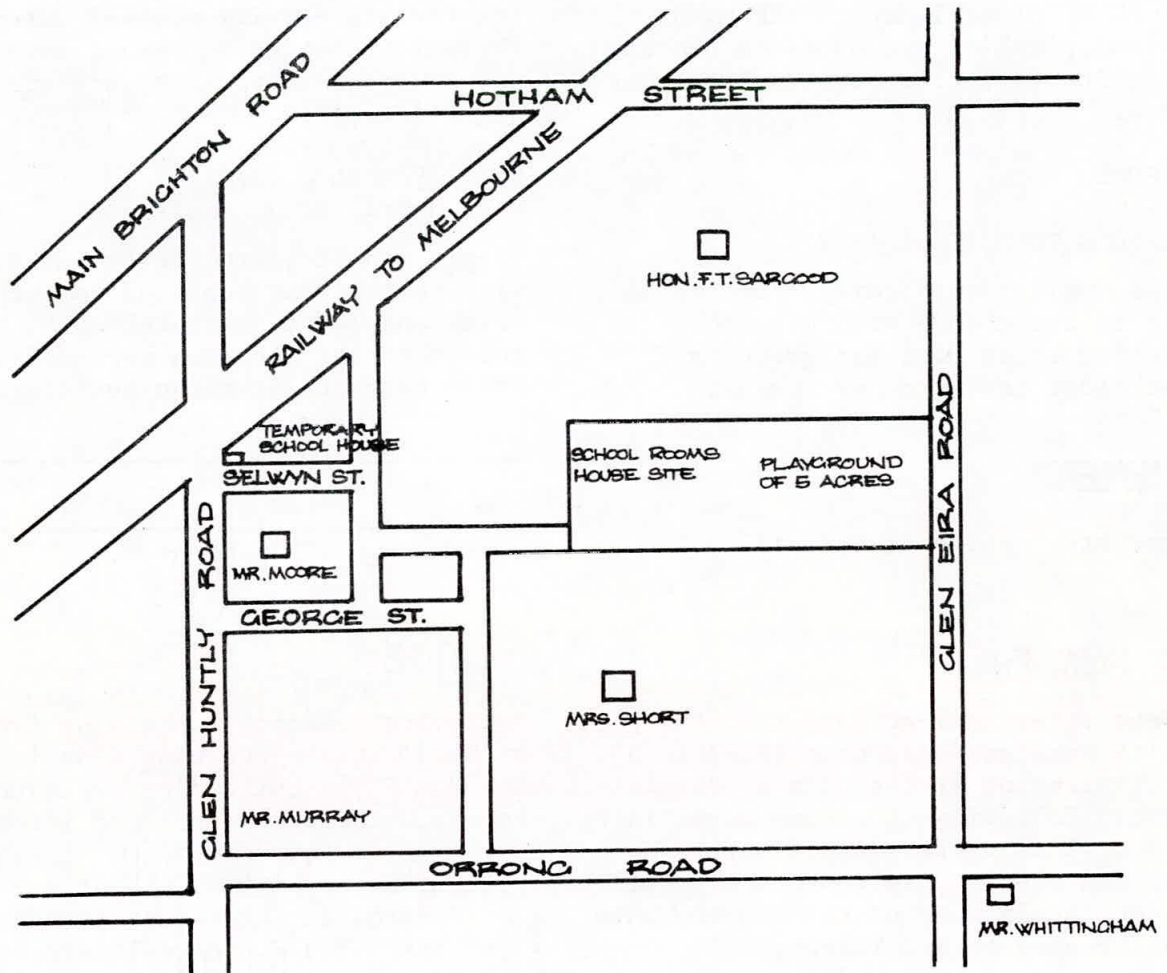
Mr. Crosby's property was of five acres, with a tennis court in front of an eleven room two storey house, built originally as eight rooms in the late 1870's. Crosby had only moved into the house himself in 1883.(6) Classes started in the new premises on 1 February 1889; tenders for the "erection of dining room, classrooms and dormitories" (9) designed by Lloyd Tayler, having been filled in mid-December 1888. The building contractor tendered £1,387-10/-, so the new building was of some size, especially as it was being erected for that sum partly in timber.(5)

The new buildings were intended to cope with an anticipated increase in numbers. However, on Sunday, 27 April 1890, a spectacular fire(9) destroyed everything except the original residence. The old premises in Regent Street were temporarily re-occupied and some boarders were housed at "Rippon Lea" for a short while.

CAULFIELD GRAMMAR SCHOOL CONTINUED

In June the same year, the tender for the construction of the new, larger, and solid brick building was let. This building was designed by F.J. Bearley and consisted of a large two storey structure with an impressive four storey square tower.(6) The tower was long a landmark for travellers on the Brighton railway line. The new school buildings were completed by December 1890 and the Speech Day took place in the new hall.(7)

which most of the present school now stands) adjoining the old Crosby property was bought. In 1909 the shifting of the school to its present site began with the erection, on the eastern side of what had been playing fields, of a substantial single storey block of red-brick class rooms. The last visible features of this building have disappeared under the recent re-building and re-construction operation at the school. The next move was made when a new boarding house was erected in 1912.(7)(8)(10)



In 1896 Mr. Walter Murray Buntine, who had previously run his own school, Hawksburn Grammar School, became the new Head Master, bringing with him fifty-five new pupils. The total enrolment was now 120, a welcome increase, especially because of the depression in the early 1890's. (7)

With a firm eye on the future growth of the school, the 10 acre block (on

The old site of Charles Crosby's mansion fell slowly to the wrecker. The subdivision of the land, and the creation of McWhae Avenue, occurred in 1913 and the last traces of the property were replaced by the villa units on the west side of McWhae Avenue.(6)

References:

1. M.M.B.W. map 1905
2. Inscription in St.Mary's Church
3. St.Mary's Church records

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NATIONAL TRUST CLASSIFICATIONS

The National Trust has advised the following new classifications for buildings in the City of Caulfield:

CLASSIFIED

"MYOORA"

405 Alma Road, Caulfield

The official citation describes it as "a very substantial residence built in 1886 for Thomas Christian' still mostly intact, with an interesting tower and bold internal and external detailing. Defaced by miscellaneous outhouses, external plumbing and asbestos cement partitioning etc. to cast-iron balconies at rear."

RECORDED

84 ORRONG ROAD, Caulfield

"-----a typical two-storey house solidly built in about 1889 with hexagonal patterned slate roof and ground and first floor cast-iron verandahs."

NEW MEMBERS

Mr. and Mrs. Mathews, Parkville.

CITY MANAGER

Newsletter No.7 advised that the post of City Manager would be created in a re-organisation of the City's administration. Following extensive advertising, Mr. K.D. Wilson, previously Deputy Town Clerk has been appointed to the position. The congratulations of the Society have been conveyed to Mr. Wilson.

CAULFIELD GRAMMAR SCHOOL CONTINUED

4. Sutherland, A. Victoria and Its Metropolis Vol.2
5. Australian Builders and Contractors News 1888, 1890
6. Directories 1880-90, 1910
7. Caulfield Grammar School Jubilee, 1881-1931
8. Caulfield Grammar School Archives Photographs
9. "Argus" 1890
10. Caulfield Grammarian 1969
11. Pike, D. Australian Dictionary of Biography Vol.3
12. Vale Maps Vol V.p105 La Trobe Lib.

"BELLECOURT"

85 Seymour Road, Caulfield

"-----a typical two-storey substantial residence built about 1891, with ground floor and first floor verandahs and a new but unobtrusive external staircase."

FORMER METROPOLITAN FIRE BRIGADE STATION
2 Selwyn Street, Elsternwick

"A small fire station of 1895 interesting for its heavily moulded dutch gable, unusual bluestone horseshoe arch, and the ornamental tympanum panel in the adjoining gable,"

STATE SCHOOL NO.773

Glen Huntly Road, Caulfield

"A pleasant coloured brick building with contrasting bands of coloured brick and painted plaster work. Noted that the roof has been replaced in tile which detracts from the building."

DONATIONS

Following comment in the last issue of Newsletter concerning donations to the Society's collection, we have received the undermentioned items.

Collection of bottles c1880(?) - 1920 recovered during recent excavations by the M.M.B.W. in Caulfield Park. Included are chemist, household and liquor bottles.

Ledger - John H. Kroger 1909-1931.

Mr. Kroger conducted a butcher's shop and subsequently an estate agency in Caulfield. This ledger records the accounts of both businesses.

Oil painting - "Early Spring in Elsternwick" by Naomi Norris. (in need of extensive restoration)

Pair woven cane dress baskets and some pieces of lacework.

Hurricane lamp, swagman's billy, pair of bellows

Commemorative plaque and gold-printed newspaper commemorating Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee - 1887.