



# GLEN EIRA HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

## Kynaston – a story of the house and some of its residents

An interstate inquiry led us to discover more about an imposing home in Glen Eira and those who lived within the walls of 'Kynaston' mansion and estate in Bambra Road, Caulfield North.

In 1888, Kynaston Lathrop Murray, purchased a four roomed wooden house for £115 from Horatio Beauchamp in Bambra Road, Caulfield. By 1889, a brick house, 'Kynaston' was built on the site in grand Italianate style, listed as a 12 roomed home on four acres. The owner, Mr Kynaston Murray was Chief Telegraph Engineer and a Commissioner of the Victorian Railways. His six children were born in Victoria and by the time he left Ararat to come to Melbourne, he had become relatively prosperous.

In 1893, ten people lived at the house, but progressively from 1894-1903, the Murray children married and left home. Later in 1902, the house and contents of 'Kynaston' were listed for sale in *The Argus* newspaper as the owner was 'relocating.' In April 1909, painting and repair tenders for 'Kynaston' were advertised in *The Argus*. By 1910 the property was leased to Frederick Holst, a sharebroker.

The next mention of 'Kynaston' was in December 1913, when Kynaston Convalescent & Rest Home, Bambra Road, Caulfield was advertised in *Punch* magazine. Two sisters (both nurses), Mrs Grace Mary Anderson and Catherine Pauline (Nurse) Dunphy leased the property from Mr Murray to operate a superior convalescent and rest home. At the time, nurses could not work after marriage, but private hospitals and convalescent homes created a respectable means for women (single or widowed) to work. Mrs Anderson was a widow with a young son.

As a home and rest retreat, 'Kynaston' catered for wealthy people who had suffered nervous breakdowns or were recovering post-operation. It showed no outward sign of being a hospital and was situated on acres of ground with gardens, orchards and dairy cows. The house had 20 handsome and well - proportioned rooms which had been newly furnished. A major attraction was the Alcock billiard table for the enjoyment of residents. The halls and stairways were wide and the outlook from balconies and the tower commanded a view of the sea and glimpses of the Dandenongs.



'Kynaston', corner of Bambra Road and Hudson Street, Caulfield North, July 2023 (GEHS collection)

continued on page 3

## Contents

Kynaston – a story of the house and some of its residents	1
From the President	2
Richard Whitecross - Scottish immigrant, brick mason, golfer and member of the AIF	4
Jessie Mary Vasey (1897 - 1966) – War Widows Guild Victoria	5
Out of the Shadows - The Forgotten History of the War Widows' Guild of Australia	6
Donation Of Local Newspapers	7
First women bus conductors	9
Heritage Matters	10
Vale Keith Stodden 1931-2023	11
Events	11
Speaker Series – If these walls could talk	12

## Can you identify this object? It's part of our collection

see answer on page 8



## From the President

A most successful AGM was held on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at the Murrumbena Bowls Club with Paul Long from Monash University speaking on *Music in history, heritage and archives*. Members and friends brought their music memorabilia including a tiny guitar with a George Harrison photo, some portraits of The Monkees and a pianola roll.

The following positions for 2023-24 were declared – President Barbara Hoad, Secretary Anne Kilpatrick and Committee Member Carol Mayell. We thanked retiring Committee member Carol Stals and also Adriana Konidaris, retiring from her position as Newsletter publisher.

We were interested to find there is another GEHS. Member Adriana spotted the Greater Elland Historical Society in the UK, founded in 1974, so around the same age as we are. Elland is now part of the Metropolitan Borough of Calderdale but for many years was in the West Riding of Yorkshire. The town is situated on the hills of the Pennines between Halifax and Huddersfield with bridges crossing the River Calder, overlooked by the ancient Parish Church of St Mary. GEHS UK wondered if any of our members have links to this area – they would love to hear if you do.

We are busy framing photographs and collecting musical items for our upcoming exhibition, *Musical Notes from Glen Eira*, to be held in Glen Eira City Council Gallery from **Thursday 7 September to Sunday 1 October 2023**. We hope you come along to see the photographs and music ephemera we have uncovered of the players, musicians, bands and community singers in Glen Eira.

**Barbara Hoad, GEHS President**





## Kynaston (continued)

Mr. Murray died in 1916. Probate records show he still owned 'Kynaston' but had leased it to Mrs G. M. Anderson (Nurse Grace Anderson) for £150 p.a. Its value was put at £2,745 (as listed in an inventory in K.L. Murray's will dated November 1916). About this time, the house appears to have changed names to 'Kahlyn' but Mrs G. Anderson and Nurse Dunphy continued to run the house as a rest home for many years, although land was sold off around the house. In November 1921, *The Age* advertised Kynaston Estate up for sale - 15 ideal home sites with frontages to Hudson Street and Bambra Road. In 1923 Mrs G. M. Anderson and Miss Dunphy were still listed in Sands & McDougall as residents of 68-70 Bambra Road, but by 1945 'Kahlyn' Private Hospital was listed in the name Marian McDonald.

Sadly, the two sisters were mentioned in bankruptcy notices in 1932 and 1944, still living and operating a private hospital in Bambra Road. An attempt was made to sell the house in 1932 by Coghill & Son but the property was unsold at £2,800. Mrs G. M. Anderson died in April 1948 and Catherine Dunphy, Executor of her Estate was living at 202 Wattletree Road, Malvern (opposite Cabrini Hospital).

In 1989, 'Kynaston' was once again on the market, described as 'an imposing Victorian style dwelling with its white tower standing high above the sprawling grounds of about 3824 sq. metres'. It consisted of two lots – the original mansion house facing Bambra Road (Lot 1) and a later extension along Hudson Road (Lot 2) with an expected price of \$1.5 million plus. The house still stands proudly on Bambra Road and has been cared for and restored over years. According to <https://www.realestate.com.au/property/70-bambra-rd-caulfield-north-vic-3161/> the house was last sold for \$618,000 in 1995.

And a small postscript -

The residents of the house were more interesting than the house. Although KL Murray built the original house, he and the family lived there for less than 10 years. Members of the Dunphy family lived at 'Kynaston' from 1913 till the early 1940s. It was both a home to various members of their family, and a means to care for many others. Originally from Wagga Wagga, the Dunphy family (of Irish

heritage) consisted of seven children - at least three of whom became nurses. The eldest, Grace Mary Dunphy, married William Anderson and had one son. Catherine Pauline Dunphy remained unmarried. Sarah Theresa (known as Sadie) was a nurse in World War I and in 1921 took her final vows to become a Catholic nun, becoming Sister Mary Oliver.

Although KL Murray died in Tasmania, his body was sent to Melbourne for his funeral at St Paul's Cathedral, where he was a lay canon. He is buried at St Kilda cemetery.

### Heather Mallinson, Volunteer/Member



Brass memorial plate Kynaston Lathrop Murray, St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, (photo GEHS collection, 2023)

Sources:

Trove

Australian National Library – Obituaries Australia

St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne alumni and St John of God websites

PROV – probate records

City of Glen Eira Heritage Management Plan 1996 conducted by Andrew Ward, page 53.

## Richard Whitecross - Scottish immigrant, brick mason, golfer and member of the AIF

Richard Henry Whitecross took his own life at Caulfield Hospital on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1918. He was 35. Such potential unrealised. This is his story.

He was born on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1883 at Saltcoats Farm, Gullane, Scotland, son of John W. Whitecross, agricultural labourer and his wife Marion Stewart Crooks. He became a brick mason by trade and lived with his parents in Sunnyside Cottage Gullane.

Whitecross was a member of Dirleton Castle Golf Club and won the Wotherspoon medal in 1902. He played in the 1906 Open Championship at Muirfield, finishing equal 15<sup>th</sup>, won the prestigious Hope Challenge Medal at Kilspindie in 1908, entered the Amateur Championship in 1909 and then, after joining the professional ranks in 1911, he was appointed 'professional' at the Bridge of Allan Golf Club.

In 1912 he emigrated to Australia and arrived in Melbourne hoping for a position at an Australian club. He played in the 1913 Australian Open Championship at Royal Melbourne Golf Club and in professional tournaments at Fishermans Bend (Victoria G. C.), and at Elsternwick G. C. where he finished in 6<sup>th</sup> place. In the Argus newspaper, Whitecross was described as a professional with a good record in the UK and his performance at Fishermans Bend gained him a large number of supporters. His 6<sup>th</sup> place was notable, as three of the five who beat him were the greats: Carnegie Clark, Dan Soutar and Arthur LeFevre.

Richard was not attached to a golf club but entered tournaments as a member from Dirleton Castle Golf Club. Unfortunately, he never achieved his goal of becoming a club professional in Australia and by 1914 he was living in Dimboola, north-west of Melbourne where he worked as a bricklayer.

In 1915 Whitecross enlisted in the Australian Infantry and was attached to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Brigade. The Australian troops sailed to England joining the British Expeditionary Force on Perham Downs near Andover from where they were posted to France. Before enlisting, Whitecross suffered from varicose veins in both legs which were painful when he marched. He was asthmatic and, whilst on

active service overseas, was admitted to hospital several times with severe asthma attacks and bronchitis. He drank heavily and this accelerated his waywardness.

After several bouts of drunkenness and insubordination, he was arraigned before a Court Marshal in 1917 but in October of that year a Medical Board decided that he was permanently unfit for general and home service. He was discharged from active service due to ill-health and returned to Australia.

He was sent to No. 11 Australian General Hospital in Caulfield, the largest of three repatriation hospitals in Australia, where the medical staff assisted in the rehabilitation of disabled soldiers.

By 1918, Whitecross was still at Caulfield Hospital suffering badly from asthma, bronchitis, pains in his legs and alcoholism. He was invalided out of the army. There was little likelihood of a position as a golf professional or much chance of returning to his trade as a bricklayer.

With only three shillings in his pocket, after nearly three years in the army, alone in hospital, his family back in Scotland, most probably depressed, dark thoughts entered his mind and at 9.53 am on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January 1918 at Caulfield Hospital, he committed suicide. Whitecross was 35 years old. He was accorded a military funeral and, on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January 1918, buried in Brighton General Cemetery, Melbourne. A cable from his regiment was sent to his father at Gullane, notifying him of his son's death. His name was later inscribed on the family headstone in Auld Kirk graveyard, Gullane and on the local WWI memorial.

### Leon Rowbell (GEHS member, Golf Historian) and Douglas Seaton



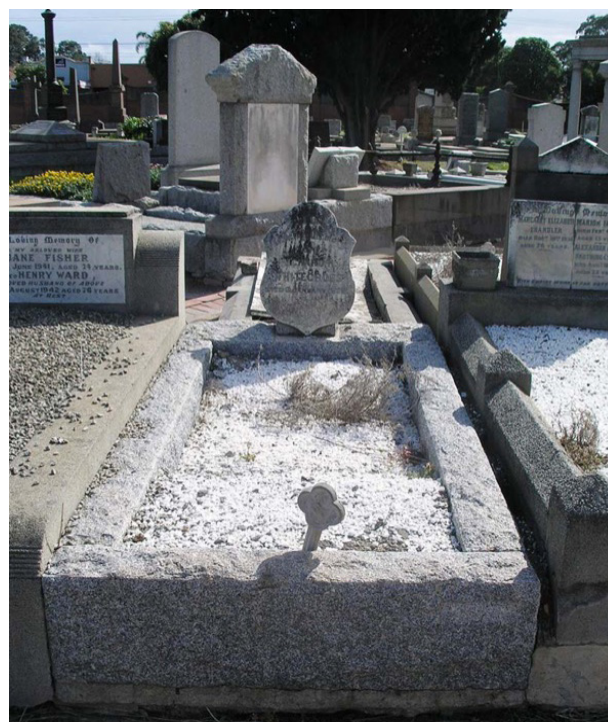
Richard Whitecross grave at Brighton Cemetery, courtesy Brighton Cemeterians.



Brighton Cemeterians contacted the Gullane and Dirleton History Society (GDHS) seeking information about any surviving family. The Cemeterians are planning to place an Australian flag at his grave during the week of Remembrance Day, later this year.

### GDHS responded:

I don't think I can provide any living relatives. Richard had a brother John and sister Elizabeth both of whom are also recorded on the family headstone. Elizabeth died unmarried in 1951. John emigrated to New Zealand in 1906 but returned in 1931, landing in Hull from a ship from Melbourne. He died in 1954. At some point he had married Elizabeth Stewart but apparently not in Scotland nor England. She predeceased him and we have no information about children. There is local recollection of Miss Whitecross living at Sunnyside and that is also given as John's address at the time of his death. We know the father, John W Whitecross, had a brother, also Richard, but have no knowledge of any wider family. It might be interesting to highlight locally the story of your memorialising of Richard with the Australian flag.



Richard Whitecross grave at Brighton Cemetery, courtesy Brighton Cemeterians.

## Jessie Mary Vasey (1897 - 1966) – War Widows Guild Victoria

In helping a member with a planning issue a while back, we came across the name Jessie Vasey. The connection was to the former War Widows Guild Vasey Housing flats and an old Victorian home at 87 Seymour Road, Elsternwick. The flats and Victorian villa have been signed over to the developers but Jessie's name stood out as a story now largely in the shadows.

Jessie Vasey was the founder of the War Widows Guild, firstly in Victoria and then expanding across Australia to become the War Widows Guild of Australia. As founder, she literally hand wrote letters to all the War Widows in Victoria inviting them to come to a meeting about their issues in late 1945.

A War Widow herself from 1945, she and her husband Major General George Alan Vasey had earlier decided that once the War ended, they would dedicate themselves to improving the lives of War Widows. Often treated as outsiders to regular

economic and social life because of the loss of the breadwinning man in their lives, War Widows struggled to survive on the miserly pensions and with the capricious decisions enacted by the bureaucrats of the time.

Jessie led the War Widows Guild for the rest of her life. The Guild provided a voice for these women as well as skilling them to become productive weavers. Amongst other Guild achievements, Jessie later led the Guild's success in providing housing for particularly the War Widows from World War I. The Guild initially bought old homes to convert into flats before launching the building of new blocks of flats for their specific purpose - such as those at 87 Seymour Road.

Today in Victoria, there is no longer a branch of the Guild even though this is both Jessie's home state and the founding state. Vasey Housing lives on, appended to the RSL name, but fewer and fewer people know about the extraordinary achievements of both the Guild and Jessie Vasey.

We are keen to hear from anyone connected to the history of the War Widows Guild Victoria and/or Jessie Vasey. The connection may be as a member

of the Guild, resident or having a family member resident in one of the Vasey Housing flats. We'd like to hear your story so please contact us.

In the meantime, we plan to run an occasional series of articles related to this remarkable woman. We also welcome War Widows Day, celebrated on the 19th of October in New South Wales, South Australia, Queensland and Western Australia - commemorating Jessie's birthday.

### Anne Kilpatrick , Secretary GEHS

Sources: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jessie\\_Vasey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jessie_Vasey);  
<https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/vasey-jessie-mary-11915>  
; <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/media-statements/McGowan-Labor-Government/October-19-to-be-recognised-as-War-Widows-Day-in-WA-20230424>

### Ed. A continuing acknowledgement of Jessie's work

The Guild continues to promote and provide companionship, counselling and support for its 27,000 members. In 1988, the Board of the War Widows Guild of Australia decided to ensure the work of its founder, the late Jessie Mary Vasey, would be recognised for years to come. In a memorial well-suited to the War Widows practical founder, herself an Honours student in History at The University of Melbourne, the War Widow's Guild of Victoria established the Jessie Mary Vasey Prizes in Women's History, to be awarded on the recommendation of the Head of the History Department, to the best essay on a Women's History subject submitted as part of any third or fourth year History subject by Bachelor of Arts students.



Jessie Vasey picture in The Mercury, 3 Oct 1947, p8  
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/26426878>

## Out of the Shadows - The Forgotten History of the War Widows Guild of Australia

GEHS member Zina Sofer is undertaking a project on Jessie Vasey and the War Widows Guild, for her Honours studies in Photography at RMIT.

Zina writes:

*Located in Elsternwick [87 Seymour Road] there is a large established housing estate built in the 1950s by the War Widows Guild of Australia. The estate, specifically providing housing for war widows and their children, is now facing demolition to make way for luxury housing.*

*At the height of its heyday, the Guild was involved in advocacy, education, support, counselling, and housing for widows. The capital needed to purchase real-estate and build communal housing came from the Guild's growing membership base and some government funding. Income was also generated by selling woven goods made by the women. Weaving was probably a lifeline for some, supplementing the war widows' unliveable small pension.*

*My curiosity led me to discover one of the most powerful women's blocs in Australian post-WWI history, the War Widows Guild of Australia and its founder and president, Mrs. Jessie Mary Vasey, OBE and CBE.*





Vasey flats at 87 Seymour Road,  
Elsternwick 2023. Photo Zina Sofer



Photo of Jessie Vasey n.d with weaving effect  
added by Zina for her photography project.

## Donation Of Local Newspapers

Recently, the Glen Eira Historical Society received from the Footscray Historical Society a donation of local newspapers that covered the current Glen Eira area and mainly the period 1952-53. These were a small part of a large donation of local papers received from all over Victoria by the Footscray Historical Society. The donation consisted of incomplete copies and a number of cuttings.

The mastheads featured, included the *Bentleigh Standard* with papers from 1952 and 1953, *The Moorabbin News* included items from 1948 and 1949 as well as a couple from the later period and two items from the *Brighton News*. Back then, of course, Bentleigh was a part of the City of Moorabbin until the council amalgamations of the early 1990s.

Although, all are incomplete items, the material is of significant interest and value to a local historical society. From these local papers we gain glimpses of local life as it was in the early 1950s (and the late 1940s). How different everyday life is some 70 years later. Then the community was predominantly Anglo-Saxon with very strong allegiance to the Crown but with a significant minority of those with Celtic Irish origins. This link had become even firmer with the young Queen

Elizabeth having only recently ascended to the throne following the death of her father. Some even spoke of a second Elizabethan age.

The *Bentleigh Standard* dated 24<sup>th</sup> September 1952, proudly noted the donation of a commissioned painting of the Queen made for the Bentleigh RSL by artist Charles Crompton and then presented to the Moorabbin Council to be placed behind and over the Mayoral Chair. The painting would replace a framed photo of George VI presented to the Council some years before by the local scouts after visiting the Council and noting there was no royal portrait in there. (*Bentleigh Standard*, No 692 Wednesday September 24<sup>th</sup> 1952, *Moorabbin News* No 5730 Friday September 26<sup>th</sup> 1952)

Not only was the community committed to the Crown but it was very much seen as Christian, with members allied to one of the main denominations even if a minority was perceived as paying lip service to their faith. The ministers of the various denominations would frequently judge prospective council decisions through their moral prisms and were not loath to present their views both with the pen and in person at a council meeting.

One example of this behaviour was reported in the September 1952 issue of the *Bentleigh Standard*. The Council had narrowly approved a proposal

by a Mr J K Lynch and the McKinnon Social Club to organise a football match on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> September with proceeds in aid of the Moorabbin Hospital Appeal. A letter of complaint from the Moorabbin Ministers' Association appeared in the next edition of the *Bentleigh Standard*. A deputation of members from the Ministers Fraternal appeared at the next Council meeting. The original decision was then narrowly rescinded. The Councillors adjudged that a majority of residents still 'remembered the Sabbath and wanted it kept holy'. A year later a similar application suffered the same fate. (*Bentleigh Standard*, No 692, Wednesday September 24<sup>th</sup> 1952, *Moorabbin News* No 5730 Friday September 26<sup>th</sup> 1952, *Bentleigh Standard* No 769 1953)

Yet, the Moorabbin Council was not completely rigid on matters pertaining to the Sabbath. It approved a request from the McKinnon Bowling Club to open the greens in Joyce Park on Sunday afternoons for playing non-competitive bowls. (*Bentleigh Standard*, No 690 Wednesday September 10<sup>th</sup> 1952)

Yet, 70 years ago, the churches were also vibrant communities of social and sporting activity. In the *Bentleigh Standard's* Table Talk column, a mannequin parade was referred to, organised by the Presbyterian Ladies Guild that was to be held in the Bentleigh Presbyterian Church Hall. It must have been quite an event as Table Talk also reported that there had been queues to obtain reserved seats.

Local papers, including the *Bentleigh Standard*, made a significant part of their income from advertisements in addition to the purchase cost paid at the newsagents. These advertisements also provide snapshots of community life back in the early 1950s. Then, English makes of cars competed strongly with Holden, Ford and other American cars. (Not a Japanese make to be seen). Prominent was a puff piece for Booran Motors, Glen Huntly Road, Glen Huntly who had a dealership for Vauxhall cars. It was promoting the latest Wyvern (15.63 HP) and Velox (23.44HP) models. A linked advertisement proudly noted the Vauxhall features of a square cylinder block and the automatic locking of the luggage compartment; one which could only be released from inside the car. (*Bentleigh Standard* No 690 Wednesday October

22<sup>nd</sup> 1952) I wonder how many of our readers had a parent who drove a Vauxhall sedan?

Finally, among the advertisements in this pre-IT and pre-transistor age for both home and business, appeared Grays Radio Electrical at 161A McKinnon Rd, which had in supply 'radios, radiograms and portables'. Standard newspapers could even assist local businesses and associations with made to order rubber stamps that could be applied to stationery. How less complex was life back then!



Newspapers held in GEHS Collection

**Neville Daynes GEHS Volunteer/Member**

## Answer to 'Can you identify this object?'

During the Victorian Era, women's fashion could be highly impractical. Full-length skirts weighing up to fourteen pounds were comprised of six layers of petticoats.

The weight of multiple petticoats was eventually reduced thanks to the crinoline, a beehive-shaped frame that supported the skirt from underneath. Not only did these devices reduce weight, but they also gave women's legs room to move.

However, women still usually had to occupy one or two hands to hold their skirt up so it wouldn't get dirty.

The skirt lifter attempted to solve this problem in 1846. It was a small clamp that would be attached mid-way up the skirt and then tied to the waist. The skirt lifter held the hem up without the need for hands.



## First women bus conductors

GEHS recently received an enquiry relating to the history of women and non-traditional work. In particular, the question was about the first employment of women bus conductors (conductresses) in Victoria:

*Women were first employed by the Trak and Kintrak bus companies, established by Frederick Knight and partners, which had their headquarters in Elsternwick. Many of the women employed lived locally; preference was given to women within walking distance of the head office in Elsternwick. We are hoping the Historical Society might help us in locating records related to the companies and/or the women employed.*

Unfortunately, we have no information about either company or any early employment of

women as conductors and were unable to assist the researcher. Given that it's an intriguing avenue of research, we are now seeking your help with any information and photos relating to women bus conductors in our modern day area of the City of Glen Eira. Just email us with details.

Here's a great photo to start with from the State Library's catalogue –

*Four young women, wearing bus conductors' uniforms, standing in front of a Kintrak bus. Inscription reads first conductors - No. 1 shift, Misses G. Wilson, I. McKillop, E. Holmes, M. Heaton.*

**Anne Kilpatrick, Secretary**



Photo: Kintrak Motors Pty Ltd, commencement of services between Caulfield & Melbourne [picture], W. Mason & Co. (1924). Courtesy State Library of Victoria [https://find.slv.vic.gov.au/permalink/61SLV\\_INST/1sev8ar/alma9921155233607636](https://find.slv.vic.gov.au/permalink/61SLV_INST/1sev8ar/alma9921155233607636)

## Heritage Matters

### Melbourne Racing Club (MRC) Plans 19/06/23: new grandstand at Caulfield Racecourse

<https://www.woodsbagot.com/global-studio/news/progress/grand-plans-for-caulfield-racecourse-take-events-to-another-level/>

The link above gives some insight into the concept plans by architects Woods Bagot for the new grandstand flagged to replace the Rupert Clarke Stand. Since Caulfield Racecourse was added to the Victorian Heritage Register, the MRC is required to have a Heritage Permit or Heritage Permit Exemption before such works can proceed.

Plans for the new Glasshouse at the Racecourse (to replace the carpark in the north-eastern corner) have been lodged with Glen Eira Council. The Advertised Plans are still available on Council's website so it's not too late to look at these and provide your comments to Council at

<https://edocs.gleneira.vic.gov.au/WebGrid/default.aspx?s=ePathway&PathwayReferenceNumber=GE/DP-35745/2022>

Our colleagues at the Glen Eira Climate Emergency Action Group (GECAN) have done exactly that and are continuing to ask questions at Council meetings.

### Glen Huntly and Caulfield East Heritage Review now C252glen

<https://www.gleneira.vic.gov.au/media/files/Agenda02052023.PDF> p341 Item 5 Attachment 1.

We mentioned this in our last Newsletter and it has

since been adopted unchanged by the City of Glen Eira. As it progresses through the various stages, it is now known as Planning Amendment C252glen.

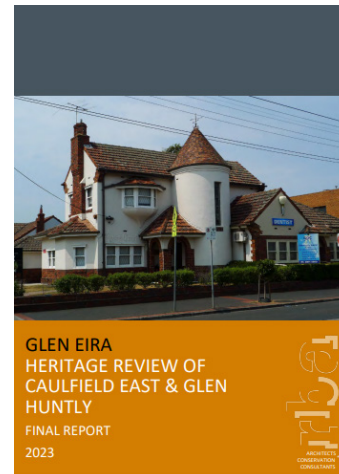


Photo Courtesy City of Glen Eira and RBA Architects + Conservation Consultants

### Draft Elsternwick Structure Plan and Heritage Review of Caulfield North

At time of writing, these are both on Council's meeting Agenda for 15/08/2023. You will have also received a recent email from GEHS about the Draft Elsternwick Structure Plan reiterating our and others concerns including our colleagues at the Stop the Elsternwick Towers (STET) group.

**Previously,** we asked about the long demolished stables at the back of Station Street and likely Bond Street in Caulfield (opposite Caulfield Racecourse), with entry from the Members Carpark in the early 2000s. No progress on this one to date so it is still a live question.

**Anne Kilpatrick, Secretary**

## Items in our June newsletter provoked some memories

In an article detailing the talk by Professor Ian Clark on the Indigenous history of Glen Eira, there was mention of Pastor Sir Doug Nicholls visiting Gardenvale in the 1940s.

I attended Sunday School at the Gardenvale Church of Christ in the 1940s and remember Pastor Doug Nicholls (as he was then) speaking at our Anniversary Service. I particularly remember

that he had his little daughter, Pam, with him. She would have been about three years old. This sticks in my mind as it was the first time that I had seen Aboriginal people. I believe that little girl could be the lady we know today as Auntie Pam Pedersen OAM, so very well known for her work in Aboriginal affairs.

I also remember that we used to knit singlets for the Aboriginal babies to be sent to the mission at Cummeragunja, near Barmah in Southern NSW, that Doug Nicholls was associated with. We were

told the children liked the knitting to be in very bright colours.



Pastor Sir Douglas and Lady Gladys Nicholls Memorial (Louis Laumen, 2007), Parliament Gardens, Melbourne (2019). Photo courtesy Dietmar Rabich / Wikimedia Commons / "Melbourne (AU), Parliament Gardens, Pastor Sir Douglas and Lady Gladys Nicholls Memorial – 2019 – 1555" / CC BY-SA 4.0

The photo of the O'Neill Convent on page 2 (June newsletter) provoked another memory.

I lived in the next street to the convent and my best friend went to school there. We could see the bell tower from our street and I remember that a bell was always rung three times a day, at dawn, noon and dusk, for the Angelus devotional prayer. When the six o'clock bell started to ring, we kids knew it was time to stop playing in the street and go home for our dinner.

**Ailsa Hunt, Volunteer/GEHS Member**

## Vale Keith Stodden 1931-2023

Keith was a member of GEHS from 1986, and regularly attended the meetings of the Society in the 1990s.

He was a man who embraced many causes, interests and people.

Keith was an eclectic collector, a linguist, and member of St John's Uniting Church. Above all, he was noted for his photographic memory plus an unwavering commitment to supporting migrant's justice, multiculturalism and peace movements.

A life well lived.

## Events Exhibition

Musical Notes from Glen Eira  
7 September - 1 October 2023

Gallery Two, Glen Eira City Council Gallery

Did you know there was an Operatic Society in Murrumbeena in the 1930s and rock bands such as Sherbet and Lobby Loyde played in the Caulfield Town Hall in the 1970s? This exhibition presented by the Glen Eira Historical Society features photographs, programs and other fascinating memorabilia revealing the players, musicians, bands and community singers in our city from the early days to more recent times.

Gallery hours: Mon – Fri 10am-5pm, Sat and Sun 1pm-5pm. Closed public holidays - Free admission

## Speaker Series

The Parliamentary Library

We invite you to our September Speaker Series featuring a talk by Carolyn Macvean, Manager of the Victorian Parliamentary Library and Information Service.

Come and learn some of the history of the library, completed in 1861, and how it is used today by members of Parliament and staff.

10.30am

Wednesday 27 September 2023

Caulfield Cup Room, 1st Floor, Glen Eira  
Town Hall  
Corner Glen Eira and Hawthorn Roads  
Caulfield Vic 3162

Bookings: <https://www.trybooking.com/CKSOF>



## Speaker Series – If these walls could talk

On the afternoon of 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023 our Speaker Series was held at the Bentleigh Library before a group of members and other interested community residents. It was run as a library event but with two speakers; local historian, Jenny O'Donnell, organised by GEHS, and professional historian, Alice Cerreto, by the Bentleigh Library.

The first speaker, Jenny O'Donnell (also a foundation committee member of the Caulfield Historical Society), spoke about 'Heatherbrae', a heritage listed mansion on the corner of Neerim and Booran Roads in Caulfield, which she has been researching for the new owners.

Heatherbrae was initially a six room villa, built for John Holland circa 1850s. Jenny, using plans and diagrams, explained that the house was re-orientated so that the grand facade of the new two storey wing faced Neerim Rd. The new front door featured Brooks Robinson (a local firm) painted

glass surrounds of English birds and plums, pre the nascent federation era depiction of Australian motifs. She explained the dark marble fireplaces indicated the male domain such as the study/library and public drawing room. The Art Deco glass doors and parquetry were 1920s renovations.

The new Heatherbrae owners, Julie and Vince, also attended the meeting. Julie brought along some artefacts that they had found, including bell pulls, door furniture and a military medal. They also explained how they had engaged an arborist to examine the trees on the property. Some of these were in a decaying state and had to be removed, however, they intended to restore the garden to its former heritage appearance. In addition, the four star-rated (in its day), Brooks Robinson cast iron stove, will be a feature of the modernised kitchen.

After a break, the Library's guest speaker, Alicia Cerreto spoke and showed those present how to start their own house history research and provided a printed handout with useful websites.

**Claire Barton Volunteer/Member**

**September 2023 Newsletter Editorial team**  
Neville Daynes, Joy Mawbey, Barbara Hoad

**GLEN EIRA HISTORICAL SOCIETY COMMITTEE**  
President / Treasurer - Barbara Hoad  
Secretary / Vice-President - Anne Kilpatrick Committee - Carol Mayell  
Committee meets monthly

**We thank David Southwick MP for kindly donating the printing of this Newsletter.**

We acknowledge that the Boon Wurrung/Bunurong peoples of the Kulin Nation are the traditional owners and custodians of the area covered by the City of Glen Eira

Community Bank · Murrumbeena

**Bendigo Bank**



PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY  
Glen Eira City Council Community Grants  
and Bendigo Bank Murrumbeena

Address: 965 Glen Huntly Rd Caulfield 3162  
Call: (03) 9077 5395 | Email: [gehs@optusnet.com.au](mailto:gehs@optusnet.com.au)

Opening Hours: Open on Tuesdays 9am - 1pm (appointments preferred).  
Appointments at other times may be arranged.

ABN: 11 335 469 474, A0041700U

Visit our Website: <https://www.gehs.org.au>