

Box Hill Historical Society Newsletter



Volume 22, Issue 1

December 2016

General Meetings of the BHHS are held on the 3rd Thursday of each month, beginning at 8 pm in the Strabane Chapel Hall 29 Strabane Avenue, Mont Albert North

Members and friends are always welcome.
Enquiries:

03 9285 4808

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For your diary

Welcome to another year of interesting and informative meetings and events of the Society. Our syllabus organiser has put together a programme of speakers on a wide variety of subjects of relevance to our area. Details of the first meeting of the Society for 2016 are as follows:

Thursday, 18 February 2016: Guest Speaker: **REV. DR RICHARD MALLABY.** The **Chapel on Station Gallery** was established in 2005 by the Box Hill Baptist Church. It is located in the Chapel of the Church, on the corner of Station Street and Ellingworth Parade. Dr Mallaby, a minister at the Church, will give a presentation about this successful art gallery.

(For details relating to the other events confirmed to date for next year, and other forthcoming events, see page 3.)

Founded in 1963, the Box Hill Historical Society is affiliated with the

- * Royal Historical Society of Victoria
- * Association of Eastern Historical Societies

and is a

Place of Secondary Deposit for the Public Record Office of Victoria

The Society can now be found on the Web at:

www.vicnet.net.au/~bhhs/
(or use a search engine)

and you can now email us at:

boxhillhistory@gmail.com

Follow us on Facebook at

www.facebook.com/boxhillhistoricalsociety

President's report — February 2016

Greetings for 2016 – may it be healthy, happy and harmonious for all members.

The conclusion of 2015 was attendance at the annual meeting of tenants in the TOWN HALL HUB. Some 10 tenant groups were represented; society President being in attendance. Pleasure was expressed at the painting of the town hall which will be completed when further maintenance is completed. All tenants expressed their appreciation of the town hall staff and their generous assistance to all tenants groups over the past year. The Town Hall Hub has now been in existence for 10 years, having had tenants from mid 2005. This society was a foundation tenant.

The meeting was followed by an end-of-year get-together for all tenants, their staff and volunteers. This was held in the Whitehorse Art Space and was a very pleasant occasion. (The Society was represented by Janet Galley OAM, John Barnao, Philip Widmer and Peter Galley).

A number of society members, including Jennifer Elder, attended the City of Whitehorse 2016 Australia Day Celebrations and were delighted that Graeme Elder was awarded a Community Award.

Janet Galley OAM
President

From the Committee

The Committee extends APPRECIATION to Graeme Lamb, who has resigned from the Committee – but not from the Society. Graeme has retired and is going to have a change of scene, and reside in Bendigo. Our good wishes go with Graeme for the future.

As a result of Graeme's leaving, there is now a CASUAL VACANCY on the committee. If you would like to consider the position please contact either the Secretary or President for further information.

The committee meets on the first Monday of each month (not January) at 6 pm. in the Heritage Centre.

With modernisation of communication and alternative means of conducting business, as well as a decline in visitors and researchers to the HERITAGE CENTRE on the first Saturday of each month, the Committee has agreed that as from 1 January 2016 the Heritage Centre will no longer open on this morning each month.

The usual Tuesday opening of 11am – 4 pm will continue. In addition, researcher can make use of the Heritage Centre facilities, BY APPOINTMENT.

Suggestions?

The Committee welcomes suggestions from members for events to be held by the Box Hill Historical Society.

If you have any ideas for topics for talks or speakers, tours, or exhibition topics, please contact a member of the Committee.

Contributions?

A newsletter like this one functions best and is of most use and interest to members when it contains a wide range of pertinent information for its readers. To assist this exercise, the Editor is always looking for contributions about the Society, from our own members. If you have something you would like to include in an issue of the Newsletter—a photograph, some information you'd like to share—don't be shy; contact the Editor.

Mission Statement

The Box Hill Historical Society seeks to collect, preserve, facilitate access, research and communicate items that reflect life in and the development of Box Hill and district.

Geographical area of interest

The Collection is relevant to the suburbs of Box Hill, Box Hill North, Box Hill South, Mont Albert, Mont Albert North, Bennettswood and the parts of Burwood and Surrey Hills, which fall within the City of Whitehorse.

Forthcoming Society events

General Meetings:

Thursday, 17 March 2016

Guest Speaker: **John Barnao**

'The Business of Fruit in the outlying districts of Box Hill'. John's talk will cover the farms, storage and distribution of produce in the area.

Thursday, 19 May

Guest Speaker: **Sandy Nicholson**

'Our Lady of Sion, Box Hill'

Thursday, 16 June:

Guest Speaker: Robyn Calder:

'Women's Cricket in Victoria'

Thursday 15 September:

Guest Speaker: Graham O'Rourke

'George Coppin – founder of Australian Theatre'

Vale

Lifelong Box Hill residents Miss Winifred Alison McCook and Miss Mary Marguerite Scarfe both died recently. Both were aged 92 years, and had lived in their respective parents' residences for their long lives.

Miss McCook was a daughter of the Reverend William and Mrs Hannah McCook, who from 1928 conducted Gladstone Girls' School at their home in Dorking Road, for some years.

Miss Scarfe lived at 12 Clota Avenue and was a student at St. Francis Xavier Primary School and Convent of Notre Dame now known as Our Lady of Sion. She was a parishioner of St Francis Xavier Church, where her life was recalled with much love. She and she had given pleasure to many local residents.

Also noted is the death of the Jessie Elizabeth McCallum. Jessie was a former Councillor and Mayor of the City of Whitehorse, (1997–2004), before moving to Yarrowonga to live.

Congratulations

Graeme Elder was recently honoured with a Community Award in the 2016 City of Whitehorse Australia Day Civic Awards. Graeme is a long-term volunteer and audited not only this Society's books but those of a number of other organisation. He also works with Elgar Contact, Meals on Wheels, and Neighbourhood Watch.



Electronic copy of the Newsletter

Members are reminded that this Newsletter can be received in digital form, as an attachment to an email. When received in this way rather than through surface mail, the Society benefits by reducing the cost of both producing and posting the Newsletter. In addition, less paper will be used, which of course is good for the environment.

If you are interested in having your Newsletter mailed electronically, please send an email to that effect, to the Editor at presland.gary@gmail.com.

Alternatively you can email the Society: boxhillhistory@gmail.com

City of Whitehorse

- 2016 Heritage Week:
8 – 15 September;
- 2016 Spring Festival:
16 October

‘From Nail Can to Knighthood’: Sir Macpherson Robertson

Exhibition at Royal Historical Society of Victoria, 239A Beckett St Melbourne until 4 March 2016.

In November 2015 I made a very quick trip into the city to see the exhibition. I was late, as I had misread the website. It was after 4 o'clock. The very nice lady let me in but explained she was closing up. She let me have a look for a few minutes. I will have to go again, in good time next time. This exhibition was due to close on 18 December but has been extended, by popular demand, until **4 March 2016** (Mon –Thur 10am – 4pm, Fri 10am – 3pm). It is a comprehensive exhibition and well worth seeing. The cost of entry is by gold coin. If you haven't been to the RHSV, it is in the former Australian Army Medical Corps building on the corner of A Beckett and William streets, opposite the Flagstaff Gardens. It is only about a five minute walk from Flagstaff station.

The confectionary business was called MacRobertson's. This is an amalgam of the founder's first name and family name. He was Macpherson Robertson, later to become Sir Macpherson Robertson KBE. He started the business as a young man of 21 years, in the bathroom of the family home in Fitzroy, using an improvised boiler. This nail can boiler is shown in the exhibition.

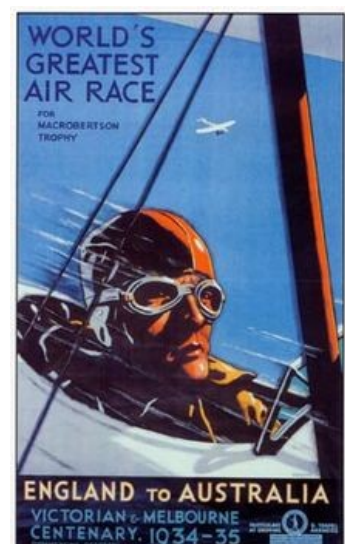
Even though it seems most of the family became involved in the business Macpherson was the driving force behind its great success. He had a great talent for marketing. At 34 he did a world tour and spent some time in America. He must have found America a profound inspiration for business and marketing ideas. He described it as 'Colossal America'. He later introduced fairy floss and chewing gum to Australia. MacRobertson's eventually operated from 17 factories in Fitzroy, all painted white and known as "White City". The several thousand employees wore white uniforms and

Macpherson himself appeared in public in white. He was a handsome man and dressed immaculately.

He was aware of the problems of transportation in the vast country of Australia and financed a round Australia expedition by two trucks, in 1928. He promoted the England-to-Australia air race in 1934, and he put up the money for the West Australian airline MacRobertson Millar Airlines, later taken over by Ansett. He contributed generously to Victoria's centenary celebrations in 1934 and gave money for MacRobertson Girls' High School, the MacRobertson Bridge over the Yarra River, still in heavy use, the herbarium in the Royal Botanic Gardens and a fountain in front of the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance. This was in addition to his earlier support for Douglas Mawson's Antarctic expeditions in 1929–1930, which led to his initial knighthood.

MacRobertson's was the largest confectionary manufacturer in the southern hemisphere until it was taken over by Cadbury's in 1967, which in turn, much later, was taken over by Kraft.

Philip Widmer
Roving Reporter



From Public Record Office Victoria

[The following item has been unearthed from the archives of the Victoria Police, (VPRS 807, Inwards correspondence to the Office of the Chief Commissioner of Police), by our roving researcher, Helen Harris OAM.]

Balmoral Crescent
Surrey Hills
July 13 1916

To: A.G. Sainsbury, Chief Commissioner of Police

Sir

My object in writing to you, as Chief Commissioner of the Police service is to bring under your notice the conduct of Sen Constable Stephenson of Box Hill towards me – I have to state that I have been a Magistrate for over 40 years and that I have sat on the Box Hill bench for the last 15 years – I sometimes visit the Box Hill market. Sen Constable Stephenson has written a report to the Solicitor General stating that during my visits there I borrow small sums of money from different people in order to obtain drink, that I induce people to “shout” for me and that I drink with anyone – to these statements I give a most emphatic denial, they are utterly false – I am not a teatotler [sic] and sometimes have a drink with a friend when at the market – I beg to refer you to the different Sen Constables who have been stationed at Box Hill for the last 15 years – and they all know more of my conduct than Stephenson, who has only been a short time there. Sen Constable Selwood was at Box Hill 15 years and some time afterwards and I used to meet him at the Market – the same refers to Sen Constable Brotherton and many others, Sen Constable Patterson now at Warrnambool and no one knows me better than Sub Inspector Heany – he was at Surrey Hills for 13 years when I was resident here and I have known him over 30 years – they will testify to my character and tell you that no such conduct as described by Stephenson was at all true, as they all knew me longer than he did, and met me often at the market – For some time past he (Stephenson) has been closely watching my movements when I have attended the market – may I ask with all seriousness – have I become a thief or criminal by a policeman like Stephenson? He is a great friend of a Mr Ellingworth, a Justice of the Peace living at Box Hill – he (Ellingworth) has been endeavouring for some time past to get me removed as a J.P. and has not endeavoured to do so – and by his sneaking underhand ways has induced him to help him in this matter, hence Stephenson’s action.

Yours faithfully
James Malcolm

[The response to this letter was that the request was made by the Law Department and a response should go there; it was not a matter for the police department.]

Box Hill Historical Society Inc.
No. A15258V BN 613 34916140

Heritage Centre – 03 9285 4808
Suite 7, 27 Bank Street, Box Hill.
(Town Hall Hub, rear Box Hill Town Hall)
Hours: 11 – 4 Tuesdays; otherwise, by
appointment

President: Janet Galley OAM
Vice-President: William Orange
Secretary: Dr Gary Presland; Treasurer: John
Barnao
Committee: Dr Colin Barraclough, Robyn Doble,
Philip Widmer ,



Phone: 03 9890 9288

**Box Hill Historical
Society
Newsletter**



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PO Box 268 Box Hill 3128

CITY OF



WHITEHORSE

Box Hill Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the City of Whitehorse for its support with grants, discounts on hall hire, concessional use of premises in the Box Hill Town Hall and its willing assistance with our exhibitions in the Box Hill Town Hall Art Space.