

# Box Hill Historical Society



**Volume 27, Issue 2**  
**April 2021**

(In the usual course of events)

**General meetings of the BHHS** are held on the 3rd Sunday of each month, in the *Bert Lewis* Room in Box Hill Library, 1040 Whitehorse Road, beginning at 2 pm.

Enquiries are welcome, on:  
**03 9285 4808**

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

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

## **A message from the President**

The society's activities continue to be circumscribed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of individuals allowed to safely gather at meetings is one restriction we face; the slow pace of inoculations with the vaccine is another. Nevertheless, some progress has been made on the projects in hand. Checking of ratebook indexes has been done and the database uploaded to the 'net. For details of this and other happenings within the Society, the attention of readers is directed to items with this Newsletter.

## **Next Society Meeting**

**Sunday 18 April, beginning at 2.00pm**

*From Box Hill to palæontology*

The guest speaker at this meeting will be **Dr Stephen Poropat**. For details about Stephen, see Page 2. This will be a Zoom presentation. If you plan on attending this meeting, please RSVP to the society, by email—**[boxhillhistory@gmail.com](mailto:boxhillhistory@gmail.com)**—and you will be sent the Zoom link, which you will need to use to log in.

## **Heritage Centre re-opening**

There has been no locally-acquired cases of COVID for more than a month, and the roll-out of the vaccine is slowly gaining pace. As a result, the Committee feels it is in a better position to put a tentative date on a re-opening of the Heritage Centre.

The Archivist is about to have her first shot in the arm, and anticipates that by **Tuesday 27 April**, if the overall situation continues to improve, she will feel safe enough to open up to the public. Of course, all stipulated regulations and conditions will be observed, in order to minimize any risk of an outbreak. Details of these will be on our website and Facebook page.

Until that date, BHHS members wishing to carry out research can meet with the archivist, **by prior arrangement**. If you wish to arrange a meeting for such purposes, please contact Helen by email ([boxhillhistory@gmail.com](mailto:boxhillhistory@gmail.com)), or telephone — 9890 9288.

The Society can be found on the 'net at:

**[www.boxhillhistoricalsociety.com.au](http://www.boxhillhistoricalsociety.com.au)** (or use a search engine)

You can email us at: [boxhillhistory@gmail.com](mailto:boxhillhistory@gmail.com)

and follow us on Facebook at:

[www.facebook.com/boxhillhistoricalsociety](https://www.facebook.com/boxhillhistoricalsociety)

## Forthcoming Society events

Details of the next general meetings of the Society are as follows:

**Sunday, 18 April 2021, 2.00 pm**

Guest Speaker: **Dr Stephen Poropat**  
— *'From Box Hill to palaeontology'*

Stephen (pictured right) is a Box Hill native who, from childhood, has pursued a career in palaeontology, and has recently been successfully researching dinosaur fossils in out-back Queensland. He has a PhD from Monash University and currently divides his time between a Masters in Teaching (Secondary) at Federation University, and research with the Australian Age of Dinosaurs Natural History Museum near Winton Queensland. He is the author of *Dinosaur Stampede* and co-author of *Pre-historic Australia: animals to colour and facts to discover*.



**Sunday, 16 May 2021, 2.15 pm start (to allow for COVID cleaning after previous meeting)**



Guest Speaker: **Robert Leach** —  
**The History of the Rotary Club of Box Hill/Burwood.**

As 2021 is the centenary of the formation of Rotary in Australia, it is fitting to hear about the history of the organisation, both nationally and in our local area. Our guest speaker is currently the treasurer of the Box Hill/Burwood Rotary Club, and has had a long involvement with it. He has formerly served as both President and Secretary.

## Recent donation

The Society is pleased to acknowledge receipt of two copies of the latest publication by the Box Hill Hawks — *The Charge of the Whitehorse Brigade: a statistical history 1951–2019*. These were donated by John Ure, on behalf of the football club.

Copies are available from the Club at  
<[history@boxhillhawks.com.au](mailto:history@boxhillhawks.com.au)>.

## New members

The Committee is pleased to welcome the following individuals who have joined the Society recently. We hope their association with the Society is a long and beneficial one.

**Alison O'Donoghue** has a Bachelor of Creative Arts, and is currently completing a Graduate Diploma of Museum Studies at Deakin University. (The Committee is particularly thankful to Alison for willingly taking an active part in the Zoom meeting, held in March.)

**Pam Millist's** family has lived in Box Hill for many years. She grew up in Box Hill South and worked at Doncaster Shoppingtown when it first opened.

### *The Charge of the White Horse Brigade*



### *A History of the Box Hill Football Club Statistical History - 1951 to 2019*

## Archivist's Report

I have now finished checking the rate valuation book entries for the whole of East Ward 1954–1984 and the index of just over 30 000 entries has been uploaded to our website. The entries are drawn from 28 books; there are 39 books left to complete the series, for South and West wards. Hopefully we can make a start once we reopen to our Tuesday volunteers—after the vaccine rollout is finally organised.

Also uploaded, thanks to the work of Lorraine Taylor in 2019, has been an index to the names of local school children whose signatures were placed in a time capsule at the opening of the town hall in 1935, and retrieved in 1985. While the original is housed in the Council's collection, we have photocopies of the pages, and this is what we have worked from.

We continue to receive donations from people having 'cleanouts'. We have received recently the following donations:

- Box Hill High School Magazines, 1956, 1957, 1959, 1960, 1961;
- St Leo's Annual Reports and Speech Night Programs for 1961, 1962, 1969 and 1970;
- Whitehorse Neighbourhood Character Study 2002/2003;
- Lidgerwood family tree and photographs;
- Photograph of employees of the Colonial Gas Company c.1960;

Also left at the Council's service centre for us were a small collection of old newspapers, in poor condition, and some editions of the 1910 *Town and Country Journal*, which is published in NSW. As none of these had anything of relevance to Box Hill, they were disposed of, but not before extracting some material of use to other historical societies. The *Journal* in particular had lots of photographs of NSW country people and places; I have distributed these to numerous historical societies in that State, as the *Journal* is not on *Trove* for that period. I've since received a number of emails of appreciation from the societies, and by a strange coincidence, found that a former Box Hill resident retired to one of those towns. I also extracted some wonderful advertisements from the *Journal*, which are included in this Newsletter.

Til next time,  
Helen

## Adverts from 1910

The following advertisements have been drawn from a 1910 issue of the *Town and Country Journal*.



**BRITANNIA**  
Guaranteed Unshrinkable  
Underwear and Hosiery.  
Night Wear and Day Wear for All.  
IF YOUR STOREKEEPER DOES NOT STOCK  
BRITANNIA, W. T. ROSS WILLIAMSON, 28  
MARKET-STREET, MELBOURNE, WILL  
GIVE YOU THE NAME OF THE NEAREST  
SUPPLIER.



**BRITANNIA**  
UNSHRINKABLE UNDERWEAR.  
NIGHT AND DAY WEAR  
FOR  
LADIES, CHILDREN, and MEN.  
AGENT FOR THE WHOLESALE—  
**W. T. Ross Williamson,**  
28 Market-st., Melbourne.  
Who Will Give You the Name of the  
Supplier in Your District.



**Keep Cool**  
if you can, and you can by drinking  
**'Montserrat'**  
**Lime Juice**  
It communicates its own delightful purity  
and coolness to the blood, and it  
quenches thirst better than stimulants.  
Its delicious flavour appeals to everyone.  
Made in two kinds—  
Unsweetened, i.e., Plain Lime Juice; Sweetened, i.e., Lime Juice Cordial.

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## ZOOM workshops in conservation

We have been asked to help publicise a couple of workshops being staged by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) during the forthcoming Australian Heritage Festival.

The two conservation talks are being given in collaboration with a local conservator, Debra Parry. They are aimed at explaining how to care for objects such as books, photos, letters, documents or treasures so that they survive into the future. The talks focus specifically how to store them to limit damage to the items.

Both of the workshops will be conducted via zoom meeting type style. There will be an opportunity to ask questions at the end of the session about your personal items and get some advice.

The links provided below can be used to find further detail and make a booking.

The first of these events is titled '*Preserving your photos for the future*'.

**Date/ time:** 21 April; 7.00pm-8.00pm

**Fees:** Adults \$10, Concession \$8, Members \$Free

[https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/ahf\\_event/preserving-your-photos-for-the-future/](https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/ahf_event/preserving-your-photos-for-the-future/)

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/x/australian-heritage-festival-preserving-your-photos-for-the-future-tickets-146523358309>

The second event is titled '*Preserving your personal heritage for the future*'.

**Date/ time:** 28 April; 7.00pm-8.00pm

**Fees:** Adults \$10, Concession \$8, Members \$Free

[https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/ahf\\_event/preserving-your-personal-heritage/](https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/ahf_event/preserving-your-personal-heritage/)

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/australian-heritage-festival-preserving-your-personal-heritage-tickets-146516080541>

## Report of AEHS Meeting

The first meeting of the Association of Eastern Historical Societies for 2021 was held on **Saturday 27 February**. The meeting was hosted by Doncaster-Templestowe HS, and held in the garden at Schramm's Cottage. Representatives from eight societies were in attendance, including from our society which was represented by the President and Secretary (pictured right). A further eight societies extended apologies.

A number of matters were discussed regarding a proposed excursion later in the year. These included:

- Helen Harris reported that it was not practicable for us to visit fire-affected areas such as Gippsland, due to their distance from Melbourne;
- Dianne Phillips and others reported that a trip to PROV was possibly premature;
- It was decided that a number of members would look further at the group visiting both Mont De Lancey and the Upper Yarra Historical Society and Museum, in order to get an idea of places and costs to members for lunch. The Secretary asked that there be an educational content in addition to the excursion being a social visit;
- Transport should be done through car pooling rather than by bus;
- Proposed date: Saturday 19 June;
- It was noted that all members of our societies may attend meetings, but please RSVP in due course.

The next meeting of the Association is to be held on **Saturday 17 April**. It will be hosted by Mooroolbark History Group at Hookey Park Rotunda in Station Street, Mooroolbark.



The President and Secretary in the garden at Schramm's Cottage. This venue holds a special significance for the couple, as they were married there in April 1994.



## They once lived in Box Hill

*Continuing our series of notable former residents of Box Hill, the following six individuals were the subject of short presentations at the February ZOOM meeting of the Society. The following notes are précis of text researched, written and presented by Gary Presland (Archibald Campbell and Reg Jackson); Helen Harris OAM (the O'Donoghue family and Trevor Arthur); and Alison O'Donoghue (Neil Warren-Smith and Norman Yemm). The Society's thanks are extended to each of them for their efforts.*

### Archibald Campbell (1856–1929)

A J Campbell was a remarkable Australian-born ornithologist, who made notable contributions to knowledge about the breeding of birds in five colonies of Australia. Through many years of fieldwork and study he became the foremost oologist (ie. specialist in birds' eggs) in Australia.

Campbell was born in February 1853 in Collingwood but lived for his first ten years in Werribee. At the age of 16, he obtained employment in Melbourne as a public servant in the Customs Department. His interest in studying birds began in his youth and continued for the rest of his life.

Campbell's contribution to the study of birds' eggs and nests included c. 180 journal articles and a two-volume, 1020-page book on the subject.

He was also a keen photographer, and in fact was the first person in Australia to use photography in the study of birds. He did this in 1889 on a visit to Western Australia, where he took the first photos of a nests and eggs of a land bird, and nesting seabird species. Among his legacy are several thousand historical photographs, held in Australian museums and libraries.

He was an active member of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria, formed in 1880, and took part in three of the major Club expeditions—to King Island in 1887; and to both the Kent Group (1890) and Furneaux Group (1893) of Bass Strait islands. In addition, he was the founder in 1901 of the Royal Australasian Ornithological Union (now Birdlife Australia).

In retirement, Campbell moved to live at **16 Wellington Street, Box Hill**. He was an active member of the Methodist church until his death in 1929.



### Reg Jackson (1913–1989)

Reginald Jackson was born at Daylesford, the eldest of nine children, three of whom died as infants. His father Ernest William was an engine driver. The family moved around a great deal, living at Yarra Junction for at least the next 10 years, before moving to Footscray and later to Camberwell.

Reg joined Victoria Police in January 1934, and had a career that spanned more than 40 years. His experience included uniform duty at Mildura and, as a detective, with metropolitan stations and specialist units. He rose steadily through the ranks and in October 1971 was appointed Chief Commissioner. During his tenure of six years in that role, Reg oversaw a number of major changes to the force, including the acquisition in 1972 of a former chapel in Glen Waverley, to be converted to training facilities for recruits.

In January 1943 he bought the house at **25 Watt Street, Box Hill**, for £1,195. He lived here with his wife and three daughters, until 1964, when the house was sold for £5,150, and the family moved to Greythorn Street, North Balwyn. Reg died at St George's Hospital, Kew on 5 August 1989; his wife Ona died in 1998. They are buried together, next to his parents in the Box Hill cemetery.



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## They once lived in Box Hill (continued)

**Trevor Arthur** (1925–2009)



Trevor was born at Brighton, one of twin sons of George and Marguerite Arthur nee Reynolds. In July 1943 he enlisted in the RAAF, rising to become a flight sergeant. After the war, Trevor took advantage of a scheme that allowed ex-servicemen to attend University, studying forestry at Melbourne University and the school of forestry at Creswick.

Posted firstly to the State nursery at Wail near Horsham and Dimboola, he later took employment with the Federal government, and moved to the nursery at Woomera in South Australia. In 1952, back in Victoria, he married Patricia Margaret Hunt, and in September 1959 the couple bought **14 Ashley Street, Box Hill**, paying £4,590.

In 1962 Trevor joined the newly formed National Parks Authority as technical officer. He subsequently enacted a range of schemes to improve ranger training and the management of national parks.

In 1971 he was featured in a series of articles in *The Age* called ‘the earth and Trevor Arthur’ which focused on waste minimisation and pollution. He railed against unnecessary amounts of packaging, particularly the use of plastics.

In 1974 Trevor was appointed by the MMBW as the first manager of Melbourne’s parks, which at the time were controlled by the Board. Two years later Premier Rupert Hamer opened the first new metropolitan park at Jells Park, followed by Brimbank Park at Keilor.

He retired in 1986, and moved to Roseland Grove Doncaster. He remained active, however, giving a paper at a 1990 seminar, and maintaining his interest in environmental matters. In 2009, not long before his death, the National Trust awarded him life membership, in recognition of over 40 years voluntary service.

### **The O’Donoghue family — Terence, Sibyl, and Rory**

Terence O’Donoghue arrived in Melbourne from England with his wife Sybil Ghilchik, in June 1956. Terence was one of four singers engaged by JC Williamson’s for their Australian 1956–58 season of Gilbert & Sullivan operas. The family moved into a small single-storey weatherboard house, with four rooms at **4 Patrick Street, Box Hill**. Based on newspaper reports, the family were in Melbourne until February 1958 when they moved to Sydney.

While Terence continued his musical career, on stage and radio, his son Rory (b. 1949) began to reveal his amazing musical talent. He taught himself to play guitar when seven; at 12 he performed in a lead role in the musical *Oliver*, and as one of the children in the *Sound of Music* at 13. When 17 he was invited to become musical director of a theatre revue being organised by Sydney University architecture student Grahame Bond. Other members of that revue, later to become well known, were writer Geoffrey Atherden and future film director Peter Weir.

Grahame and Rory formed a close partnership and subsequently collaborated on numerous theatre, radio and TV projects. In 1972 they were commissioned by the ABC to do a series of six programs, and Rory wrote his first hit song—the theme for the *Aunty Jack Show*.

As well as working with Grahame Bond on several shows, Rory appeared on stage in *Jesus Christ Superstar*. He and Bond also formed an award-winning advertising partnership for which they jointly composed many successful jingles. Rory wrote the music for the movie *Fatty Finn*, for which he won an AFI Award, and the theme and incidental music for the ABC series *Bush Tucker man*.

Unbeknown to anyone outside his family, Rory had suffered from depression and mental health problems for some years, and this culminated in a breakdown in 1991. The story of his recovery and life thereafter is told in an episode of *Australian Story*, shown on the ABC last year, which documented the breakdown of his marriage, his recovery through taking up extreme exercise, his subsequent new relationship and his tragic suicide in 2017.



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## They once lived in Box Hill (continued)

### Neil Warren-Smith (1929–1981)

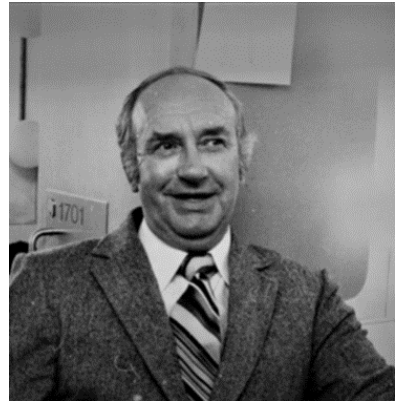
Neil was born in Melbourne to Francis James Smith and Elsie, née Conway. Encouraged by his mother to take vocal lessons, his studies paid off when he started winning prizes, including several in the Melbourne Eisteddfod, and began singing in the choir of St Paul's Cathedral all while still working in his father's butcher's shop.

Having participated in *Music for the People* concerts and worked his natural bass tone with several mentors, Warren-Smith found himself performing as Leporello in *Don Giovanni* with the National Theatre Movement in 1955. It was here that he realised his lifelong passion for opera. That same year he won the ABC vocal competition, which led to a number of opportunities to work with their symphony orchestras. Warren-Smith began singing as a junior principal, singing four small roles in the 1956 season. Later, as the company became the Australian Opera Company, he sang as principal bass every year until his death.

He had married Roma O'Connor in 1949, and in October 1961 the couple moved in to **4 Naralla Grove, Box Hill**. The rate notice listed his occupation as 'Professional Vocalist'. In the following March he bought the property for £4,400. Unfortunately, their relationship ended in divorce shortly thereafter. He married ballet dancer Beverley Anne Dean in 1966.

Warren-Smith's love of history brought life and credibility to his portrayal of historical figures like King Philip II in *Don Carlos* and Kutuzov in *War and Peace*. His performance in the latter role was met with high acclaim in the Australian Opera's first performance at the new Sydney Opera House. While achieving such success domestically afforded Warren-Smith a number of opportunities to perform internationally, he preferred to advance his career at home.

In 1976, Warren-Smith was made an Officer of the British Empire (OBE). He was held in great esteem by his peers and served as a mentor and source of encouragement to many newcomers. He died in July 1981 of heart disease, survived by his wife Beverley and their son, and the daughter and son of his marriage to Roma.



### Norman Yemm (1933–2015)



Born in Elsternwick in 1933 to Leonard and Olive, Norman Leslie Yemm was a man of many talents. As a young adult Yemm became a professional track athlete. It was a sport he continued to practice and compete in for most of his life, and in which he won a total of 96 finals. These included three races at the Stawell Gift annual meet. Yemm also played for Port Melbourne in the Victorian Football Association competition beginning in 1956.

Having grown up in a musical family—his father enjoyed playing the harmonica and ukulele, and his mother was a talented pianist—Yemm secured a musical scholarship to university. He spent two years studying before going on to become an opera singer, performing in numerous musical theatre productions including *Oklahoma!*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *South Pacific*, and *The Sound of Music*.

One of his most notable achievements was in becoming the principal baritone for the Australian Opera Company at the age of 29. He held this position for almost five years and it was at this time that Yemm moved to **24 Olympiad Crescent, Box Hill North**. He rented the 5-bedroom house for just short of seven months in 1965, listing his occupation as 'professional singer'.

Perhaps best remembered for his acting career, Yemm appeared in several popular Australian dramas, including *The Sullivans*, *Neighbours*, *Blue Heelers*, and *Number 96*. However, it was for his role as Senior Detective Jim Patterson in *Homicide*—appearing in 130 episodes over 7 years—that he became a household name.

Having retired from acting in 2010, Yemm passed away in February 2015, aged 82.

**Box Hill Historical Society Inc.**

**No. A15258V**

**ABN 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: Dr Gary Presland**

**Vice-President: William Orange**

**Secretary: Helen Harris OAM**

**Treasurer: John Barnao**

**Committee: Ian Broadhead, Judith Eadon, Rev.**

**Shane Hübner, Ric Pawsey, Grace Swiney**



**Phone: 03 9890 9288**

Box Hill Historical  
Society  
Newsletter



PO Box 268 Box Hill 3128

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.