

# CAMBERWELL HISTORY

RECORDING THE HISTORY OF CAMBERWELL  
AND DISTRICT

Camberwell Historical Society



No. 22

September 2015

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**Principal Patron:** Professor Emeritus Geoffrey Blainey, AC

**Patron:** Her Worship the Mayor of Boroondara, Cr Coral Ross

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Thank you to all the members who attended the Annual General Meeting, held on 25 August. Again, I would like to thank the committee for their efforts throughout the year: Adele Fernando-Swart, the Secretary; Dermot Murray, the Treasurer and Bryony Cosgrove. I would like to welcome to the committee Alister Bennie and Jennifer McArthur. In addition I would like to acknowledge the continual assistance of Wendy Baden-Powell, Anna Carina and Frances and Stephen Watson with the Society's meetings and all others who helped us. Thank you to the membership for your ongoing support. I look forward to another good year!

George Fernando

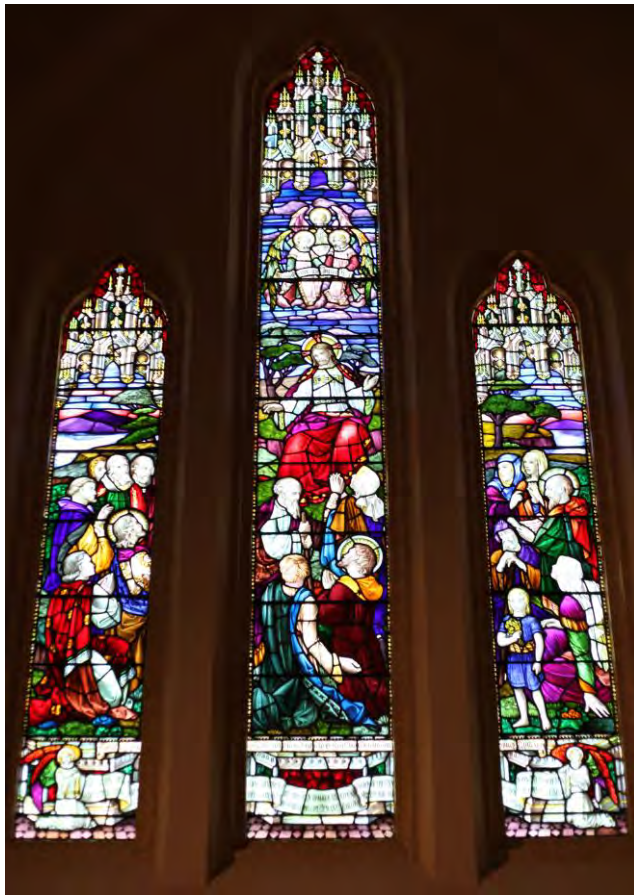
## TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, CAMBERWELL

Neil Powers



The first Presbyterian service in Camberwell was held in the old Shire Hall on 6 September 1885. At the close of the service a provisional committee was formed and one of its first acts was to form an alliance with the Presbyterian people at Burwood. The first service at Burwood was held on 11 October and this alliance continued until 1897 when the work at Camberwell had so increased as to require the undivided attention of the minister.

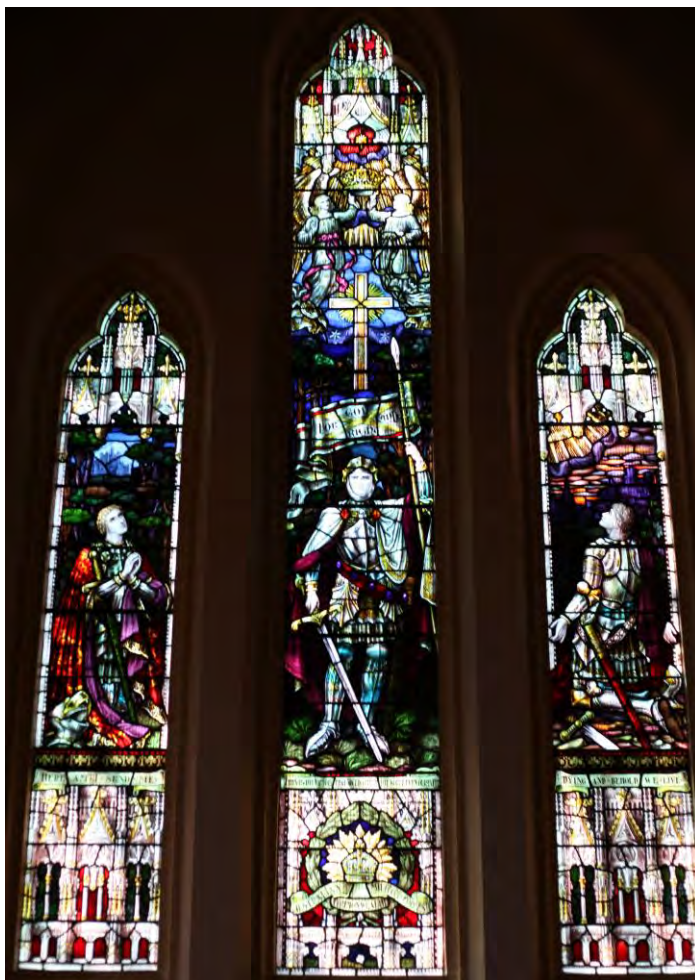
The committee erected a plain weatherboard structure on the present site on the corner of Riversdale Road and Waterloo Street and the opening services were held on 6 June 1886. The first minister, the Reverend James Climie, was inducted on 14 June. Unfortunately, Mr Climie, who had recently arrived from Scotland for health reasons, died on 14 April 1887. He was succeeded by the Reverend Patrick Murdoch. Mr Murdoch, who was the father of the newspaper proprietor Sir Keith Murdoch and the grandfather of Rupert Murdoch, remained at Trinity for forty years.



The original manse at 579 Riversdale Road was purchased in 1888. Planning for the building of the existing church began in 1903; the memorial stone was laid on 30 September 1905 and the church was dedicated on 27 April 1906. The spire was added later and dedicated on 13 June 1926.

During the First World War, 137 young men from Trinity enlisted and 22 lost their lives. They are commemorated by the Soldiers' Memorial Window, erected in 1920 and unveiled by Major-General Harold Edward 'Pompey' Elliott, and an honour board. Other stained glass windows dedicated in 1936, include a memorial to the Reverend Patrick Murdoch in the south transept, presented by the Murdoch family, and another window in the north transept transferred from the West Melbourne Church where Mr Murdoch had ministered before coming to Camberwell.

Murdoch window



1920 Soldiers' Memorial Window

*Subject*

Crown of Life  
For God and Right [banner]

*Inscription*

L.H. Here am I Send Me Centre This is  
the Victory that overcometh the world,  
even our faith

R.H. Dying and Behold We Live

*Description*

Stained glass artist, William Montgomery, acknowledged the verbal instructions from the church secretary, Mr. Forman, to proceed with the Soldiers' Memorial window 'according to design, approved by the Board of Management for the sum of two hundred and sixty pounds ten shillings £262.10.0 fixed in church'. The final cost of the window was £359, raised by the congregation. As was often the practice, the memorial was unveiled by a senior member of the military, in this instance by Major-General Elliott. Below the three armoured figures and placed centrally is the badge of the Australian Commonwealth Military Forces, with emblems of the crown, rising sun and laurel wreath prominently displayed. The Crown of Victory, held aloft by two angels, was placed above the head of the central warrior.

The original church hall, adjacent to the church in Waterloo Street, was built in 1925. In 1965 this hall was demolished and the existing hall built on the same site. The existing manse at 20 Waterloo Street was purchased in 1934, after which the old manse has been used for a range of purposes including meeting rooms and a caretaker's residence. An adjacent property at 18 Waterloo Street was purchased in 1963, intended for future development but the weatherboard house was subsequently demolished and the land is now used for off-street parking.

At least two Australian Prime Ministers are known to have worshipped at Trinity. Andrew Fisher (Labor Prime Minister, 1908-1909, 1910-1913, 1914-1915) was a close friend of Keith Murdoch. One of Fisher's biographers, David Day, records that he sometimes attended Trinity Presbyterian Church. Another Fisher biographer, Peter Bastian writes that Fisher took up golf and sometimes played against Patrick and Keith Murdoch and speculates that it may have been Patrick who taught him the game.

Honour board at  
Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell



Sir Robert Menzies (United Australia Party and subsequently Liberal Prime Minister 1939-1941, 1949-1966) is understood to have been an active member of the congregation as a young man and is on record as addressing a service for peace at Trinity on 6 August 1939 during his initial term as Prime Minister. It also seems that Trinity played a role in introducing him to his wife, Dame Pattie Menzies (nee Leckie). Pattie's mother died when she was young and she boarded at the Presbyterian Ladies' College and then at Fintona. She attended Sunday morning services at Cairns Memorial Church in East Melbourne and then at Trinity. The Menzies family happened to be parishioners of both churches and they all (Robert's parents and their four sons and one daughter) sat across from the massed schoolgirls. At those times the girls were no doubt well chaperoned and the couple did not meet formally until after she had left school and he

was practising at the Bar. Menzies family legend has it that he walked into a party in Camberwell and strode across the room, and said to her, "You're Pat Leckie; you used to make eyes at me in church!"

Three of Trinity's ministers have served as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. The Reverend Patrick Murdoch served as Moderator of this Assembly in 1898 and then in 1905 as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia. The Reverend Dr Wilson Macaulay (Colleague Minister with Mr Murdoch from 1921 and Minister from 1928 to 1951) served as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria in 1933 and as Moderator-General of the General Assembly of Australia in 1942. The Reverend William Loftus (Minister from 1951 to 1981) served as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria on three occasions during that period. Another contribution to the wider world was made by Dr Macaulay who

attended the 1949 Assembly of the United Nations as a spiritual adviser to the Australian delegation.

In 1973 all congregations of the Presbyterian Church of Australia were required to vote on the question of whether to join the Uniting Church of Australia (together with the Methodist and Congregational denominations) or remain in the “continuing” Presbyterian Church of Australia. A majority at Trinity voted to remain in the Presbyterian Church after the inauguration of the Uniting Church which eventually took place in 1977.

Trinity Presbyterian Church is now a congregation of around 200 communicant members with an average weekly attendance of over 300. The congregation has many children and young people and a range of youth groups, as well as a team of Christian Religious Education teachers who teach classes in several primary schools in the area. A notable feature of the worship program is an annual *Carols by Candlelight* service which has been held for at least forty years and has become an event greatly loved by the congregation and in the wider community. More recently the Christmas activities have expanded to include a *Free Family Fun Day* for the general public.

The church is also involved in a number of mission activities both in Australia and overseas, including an educational program in Cambodia and more recently the Prison Fellowship.

NEW SPIRE OF CAMBERWELL CHURCH.



Trinity Presbyterian Church, Riversdale road, Camberwell, now has a new spire, which has been erected in memory of the 30 years of service of the Rev. P. J. Murdoch at Camberwell. A dedicatory service will be held in the church on June 13.

#### Sources:

Peter Bastian: *Andrew Fisher: An Underestimated Man* (University of New South Wales Press, Sydney, 2009), p. 163.

Sir John Bunting: *R. G. Menzies: A Portrait* (Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1988), pp. 128-30.

David Day: *Andrew Fisher: Prime Minister of Australia* (4th Estate, London, 2008), p. 270.

A. W. Martin: *Robert Menzies: A Life*, vol. 1, 1894-1943 (Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1993), pp. 42-3.

Trinity Presbyterian Church records.

Photographs by George Fernando

Newspaper Articles from the collection of the National Library of Australia

*The Argus* (Melbourne, Vic.: 1848 - 1957), Wednesday 26 May 1926, page 19

## CAMBERWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY DONATIONS TO THE COLLECTION

Camberwell Historical Society welcomes donations of the following items relating to the former City of Camberwell:

Photographs and prints, documents, letters and diaries, maps and plans, books and pamphlets  
Reminiscences of former residents and people who worked in the area.

**NEW CHURCH SPIRE.**

**Ceremony at Camberwell.**

Crowds which could scarcely be accommodated in the building attended special services at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, yesterday to celebrate the completion of the church spire. The morning service was conducted by Rev. P. J. Murdoch, who has been attached to the church for the past forty years. In the afternoon the dedication service was conducted by the Moderator of the State General Assembly (Rev. T. Brown), who unveiled the commemorative tablet and delivered a brief address. Rev. W. Goyen assisted in the ceremonies. A collection in aid of the spire fund realised £80. The fund was started by a number of young men of the parish before the war began, and about £800 was collected in a brief period. The war interrupted the plans for the building of the spire, and the movement for the completion of the church was resumed only recently. With the building of the spire, the church is now complete.

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**MAJOR-GENERAL ELLIOTT.**

**Camberwell Memorial Service.**

High tribute was paid to the late Major-General H. E. Elliott at a memorial service in Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, yesterday. The congregation was widely representative. Chaplain the Rev. R. Wilson Macaulay, assisted by the Rev. A. B. Macneil, conducted the service, at which the Governor (Lord Somers) was represented by Major D. L. K. Richardson. Among others present were Mr. Crouch, M.H.R., representing the Prime Minister (Mr. Scullin); Major-General W. A. Coxen, representing the Minister for Defence (Mr. Chifley); Colonel Martin, representing the State Commandant and Military Board, the Attorney-General (Mr. Slater), and the Minister for Education (Mr. Lemmon), representing the Premier (Mr. Hogan).

In a short appreciation of the life and influence of Major-General Elliott, Mr. Macneil said that as the penalty of greatness the man whose memory they honoured had been obliged even after the war to live a life apart. The real man could not be judged from outward actions. Major-General Elliott had confessed that no task was greater than that of sending men into danger and possible death, but his feelings were hidden under sternness.

Preaching on the subject of "The Price of War," Mr. Macaulay took as his text the phrase "A Good Soldier of Jesus Christ." He said that it would not be found possible to abolish war until the equivalent of the qualities of earnestness, patriotism, courage, and unselfishness which it demanded were expressed in national and international life through a higher conception of duty transforming humanity.

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## REV. P. J. MURDOCH'S MINISTRY

### Memorial Window Dedicated

The ministry of the Rev. P. J. Murdoch received fitting tributes at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, yesterday, when a three-light window was dedicated by the Moderator-General, the Right Rev. Dr. John Mackenzie. The window was presented by Mr. Murdoch's children to commemorate his services to the Church, with which he was associated for 41 years as minister and for eight years as minister-emeritus. It was unveiled by Mr. H. R. Taverner, who has been member manager, elder, and sessions clerk in the last 51 years. The window portrays Christ's Sermon on the Mount.

Those present in the large congregation at the service included the Rev. P. J. and Mrs. Murdoch, Sir Keith and Lady Murdoch, Mr. and Mrs. Ivan Murdoch, Miss Helen Murdoch, Mr. Oldham, M.L.A., Councillor Gray, M.L.A., and the Mayor and councillors of Camberwell. The solo at the service was sung by Miss Wilma Berkeley, of London.

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### A NEW PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

The foundation stone of the new Trinity Presbyterian Church, Camberwell, at the corner of Riversdale-road and Waterloo-street, was laid on Saturday afternoon in the presence of a large gathering. The building will cost over £4000, and will seat 600 persons. The ceremony was performed by Senator Simon Fraser, who was presented with a silver trowel, suitably inscribed.

The Right Rev. P. J. Murdoch, moderator of the Presbyterian General Assembly of Australia, and minister of the church, presided, assisted by the Right Rev. W. S. Rolland, moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and the Rev. Dr. Marshall.

Owing to the threatening aspect of the weather the proceedings were brief.

In responding to a vote of thanks, Senator Fraser said it was the duty of every Presbyterian and of every religious person to build up the community by good moral teaching. He considered that the best moral teaching was the Presbyterian. It was necessary to teach the Bible in the schools. In a temporal sense there were enormous advantages in moral training, and no country could progress without it. He paid a high eulogy to the minister of the church.

The Right Rev. J. P. Murdoch, in response, said the stone laid was not properly a foundation stone, but a memorial stone.

The visitors were entertained at afternoon tea by the board of management.

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## GLEN IRIS PRIMARY SCHOOL 150 ANNIVERSARY

In September 2015 GIPS celebrated 150 years of education. Glen Iris Primary achieved the milestone of 150 years just as Melbourne celebrated its 180th year.

## MEETING REPORTS 2015

**June 23**

### **Jenny Davies, "James Fawcett"**

J. Fawcett and H.P.C. Ashworth were the winners of a competition held for the detailed design of Melbourne's Flinders Street Station. James built a house in Trafalgar Road in Camberwell. It was Arts and Crafts in style. James lived in Camberwell from 1902 to his death in 1934. His wife Mary continued to live in Opawa, 19 Trafalgar Road until her death in 1945. Ida, their daughter, continued to live there until nearly 1970.

**July 9**

### **Visit to the Johnston Collection**

The Collection is the legacy of William Robert Johnston (1911-1986) an antique dealer and collector of beautiful things. He loved objects that were unusual and visually arresting. This arrangement of the collection was organised by Richard Nylon.

**August 25**

### **Annual General Meeting**

The Society's Annual Meeting was held and the usual reports were presented. The Committee was elected for 2015 - 2016 and comprises: President; George Fernando; Secretary; Adèle Fernando-Swart; Treasurer Dermot Murray; Committee; Bryony Cosgrove, Jennifer McArthur and Alister Bennie.

### **Kent Wilson**

Kent Wilson talked about the Hawthorn Town Hall Gallery, the exhibitions and also about the historical memorabilia housed in its stores. The Gallery collects works by local artists or of artist with a connection to the area. It aims to house 8 exhibitions a year.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### IN RESPONSE TO THE JUNE NEWSLETTER ARTICLE

The organ at Our Lady of Victories was built by T.W. Magahy & Son of Cork, Ireland (correction of name). Thomas Walter Magahy founded the firm around 1875 and it continued until around 1950.

It is not the only Irish organ in Australia. There were two earlier instruments in NSW by the Dublin firms of Telford & Telford and John White, while more recently Kenneth Jones & Associates of Bray, Co Wicklow, built new organs for Trinity College Chapel, University of Melbourne, Christ Church, South Yarra and rebuilt an organ for Holy Trinity Cathedral, Wangaratta.

### **John Maidment**

The Our Lady of Victories story was excellent. In a later portion of the Newsletter, you mention Monsignor Martin. I did not remember that he was an early supporter of CHS. I recall him well, he was a significant community figure during my period as South Ward Councillor and my Mayoralty. In those days South Ward was bounded by Burke Road and Warrigal Road and stretched from Camberwell Junction to Gardiner's Creek, so Monsignor Martin and his church were in my domain. The council called upon the services of either Father Martin of OLV or Canon Russell Manning Clark from St John's Anglican church (brother of the controversial historian) whenever we needed a religious addition to whatever function in which the council was involved - Empire Day, Anzac Day, Mayoral Ball, Naturalisation, etc. We invited either one or the other; in those days the heads of the respective churches would not fraternise with the others.

### **Neville Lee**

## MEETINGS AND EXCURSIONS FOR 2015

All meetings will be held on the fourth Tuesday of each alternate month in the Meeting Room, Camberwell Library, 340 Camberwell Road, Camberwell at 8.00pm.

**Oct 7**            **Town Hall Gallery Archives tour 2pm**

**Oct 27**           **Chris Long Films of Historic Events from the 1890's**

Chris Long has compiled film clips of the development of early movie making and of some historic events.

**Nov 24**           **Bryony Cosgrove *Portrait of A Friendship***

Committee member Bryony Cosgrove will talk about the fifty-year correspondence she edited between writers Barbara Blackman and Judith Wright, which was published as *Portrait of A Friendship* in 2007. In the early 1950s, Barbara and her husband, painter Charles Blackman, lived in the old coach house loft behind what was then a crumbling mansion at 45 Chrystobel Crescent, Hawthorn.

## CAMBERWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF DONATIONS TO THE COLLECTION

Monash University - donation of MMBW maps of Camberwell from 1909-1930's  
Letter about the History of Camberwell Potters donated by Peter Hogan

## CAMBERWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE

Reminder that the Society's financial year operates from 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> June and subscriptions are due and payable on or before July 1<sup>st</sup> each year.

## NEW MEMBERS

We warmly welcome the following new members: Catherine Tiernan, John Riddell, and Alister Bennie.

Contributions to *Camberwell History* contain the opinions of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of Camberwell Historical Society, its committee or members.

## CAMBERWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC

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Affiliated with The Royal Historical Society of Victoria, Inc

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President — George Fernando; Secretary - Adèle Fernando-Swart; Treasurer - Dermot Murray

Committee members — Bryony Cosgrove, Alister Bennie and Jennifer McArthur

*Camberwell History*: Editor — Adèle Fernando-Swart

The Society's logo is taken from an illustration by, and used with permission of Bill Beasley.

*Camberwell History* is printed in the office of Josh Frydenberg, MHR, Federal Member of Parliament for Kooyong