

# CAMBERWELL HISTORY

## RECORDING THE HISTORY OF CAMBERWELL AND DISTRICT

Camberwell Historical Society



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### HONORARY MEMBER WENDY BADEN-POWELL



At the society's general meeting on 24 March the members unanimously approved the awarding of an Honorary Life Membership to the Honorable Wendy Baden-Powell who joined the Society in the 1980s. Wendy retired as secretary at the annual general meeting last November after serving in the position since mid-1995. In presenting the medal president George Fernando said, 'Wendy and Camberwell Historical Society have become synonymous [and she] has helped steer our ship in both good and difficult times. [She] has been a loyal and dedicated member, always acting in the best interests of our society and its survival and well being. All these matters were always dealt with humbly and with no fuss at all'. Congratulations, Wendy.

### MMBW PLANS AND THE HISTORY OF CAMBERWELL

#### John Maidment OAM

John Maidment was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for service to Australia's cultural heritage through the Organ Historical Trust of Australia of which he is chairman and editor of the OHTA Newsletter. He is a member of Camberwell Historical Society.

The Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works was founded in 1891 to manage Melbourne's water supply and sewerage systems. In 1894 it began to issue plans of the metropolitan area that outlined drainage and sewerage patterns, these being intended to facilitate the design and development of Melbourne's sewerage system. These were produced until 1952 and constitute an historical record of inestimable value.

Apart from the drainage that is shown, the plans include outlines of all roads and properties. The latter incorporate building layouts (including verandahs and sheds), garden layouts, house names, the material from which the property is constructed, and also include vacant land, which can be a valuable indicator of when a property was developed. The whole of the Melbourne suburbs as they existed at the time were incor-

porated within an overall grid and the individual maps showing specific areas; each has a serial number.

South of Camberwell Junction, there are a number of plans:

MMBW detail plan 1852 (1904) that includes Camberwell and Inglesby Roads;

MMBW detail plan 1854 (1919) that includes Alma Road and Sunnyside Avenue;

MMBW detail plan 1855 (1919) that includes Rowell Avenue, Camberwell Road, Trumper Street and Tarawera Avenue (later renamed Radnor Street). The previous 1904 version of this map includes far fewer houses – a substantial subdivision took place in 1911 entitled the *Town Hall Estate*;

MMBW detail plan 2699 (1919) that includes Currajong, Cochrane and Pine Avenues.

To the north-east of the Junction there are further plans:

MMBW detail plan 1844 (1904) that includes the land between Riversdale and Prospect Hill Roads, from Burke Road to Fairholm Grove;

MMBW detail plan 1845 (1904) that includes the land between Riversdale and Prospect Hill Roads, from Fairholm Grove to Waterloo Street;

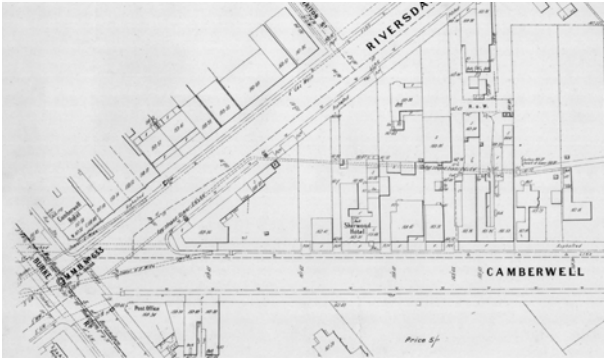
MMBW detail plan 1851 (1904) that includes land in the triangle Riversdale Road, Camberwell Road and Avenue Road;

MMBW detail plan 1860 (1904) that includes the land north of Prospect Hill Road up to the railway line and from Burke Road to Lorne Grove.

At Camberwell Junction there were two hotels shown in maps 1844 and 1851. The first is the Camberwell

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MMBW Plan No 1851 (detail) 1904

Hotel right at the north-eastern corner of the Junction. It may not be realised that this building still exists be-



Camberwell Hotel remnant

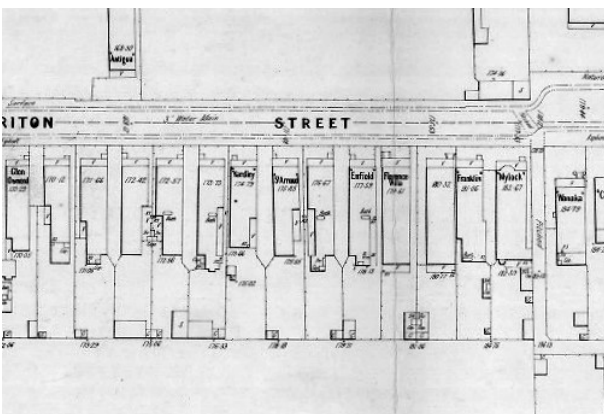
hind a 1930s facade. If the rear of the building is inspected from Burke Road, earlier brick chimneys



Former Sherwood Hotel

may be observed; on the Riversdale Road frontage, the basalt pilasters of the hotel are faced by stainless steel cladding – some years ago these were replaced, revealing the original surfaces beneath. Map 1851 shows the Sherwood Hotel in Camberwell Road (now number 257). The classical-style facade of the hotel is still visible above the existing shops. A fire station was also on the site of the present petrol station in Riversdale Road. These hotels were closed by government order in the 1920s after the local residents had voted for the prohibition of sales of alcohol in the municipality.

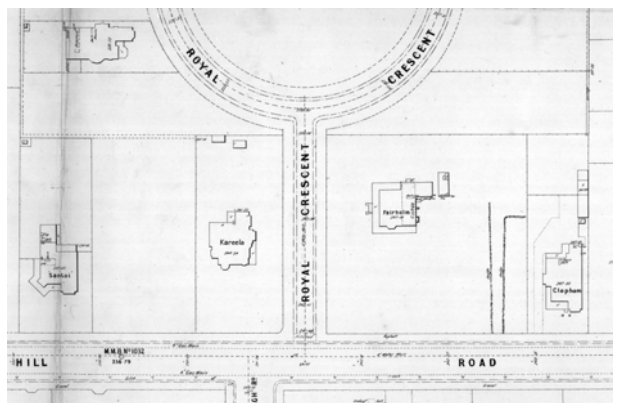
North of the junction, MMBW detail plan 1844 (1904) shows a succession of houses along Cheriton Street,



MMBW Plan No 1844 (detail) 1904, Cheriton Street

which ran from Riversdale Road to the north. This was a continuation of what is now known entirely as Station Street and all of the houses have been demolished. Some readers may recall the orphan timber house that remained in the mid-1970s that belonged to Mary Ann Campigli (1889-1982), who firmly insisted that she wouldn't move out. There are very few of these smaller houses left in the area and they may only be observed in Avenue Road and St John's Avenue, to the east.

Along Prospect Hill Road, many of the large houses or mansions that are shown on maps 1845 (1904), 1846 (1904) and 1860 (1904) are still present, such as *Fair-*



MMBW Plan No 1860 (detail) 1904

*holm* and *Ubberholm*. One house – *Santoi* – which was occupied by theatrical entrepreneur George Tallis was demolished to make room for a Christadelphian Ecclesia and is now occupied by Tallis Close. These are level one plans, 40ft to one inch so they have very full and clear detail.

The plans are fascinating as they give a full perspective of what had been built at the date of issue. The size of the houses, their materials and their gardens are useful socio-economic indicators. It is possible even to make an accurate guess of what houses had been built before 1900 – the fairly standard pattern of a bay window to one side may be seen in Inglesby Road and Seymour Grove.

The range of different house names is equally revealing. The post-World War I maps show that the houses were sometimes named after events that had taken place in the preceding years, or have a strong nationalistic flavour. Inglesby Road has a remarkable collection of house names: *Erie*, *Mundara*, *Tourello*, *Glenifer*, *Westralia*, *Portilla*, *Eumina* and *Ontario*; and Rowell Avenue: *Broxburn*, *Norfolk Cottage*, *Barskim-*



*skimming, Anzac, Raylan, Lamook, Hurada and Clytha.*

It is interesting, too, to see what has been demolished over the years – the last three houses mentioned above, in Inglesby Road, have been replaced by the City of Boroondara car park, behind the Camberwell Town Hall and when the Seymour Grove bypass went in, four houses where Rowell Avenue joined Camberwell Road were demolished. Butler Street originally didn't join up with Camberwell Road. There is even a substantial house Te-Aro shown set back from Burke Road, on the eastern side of the hill between Riversdale Road and Prospect Hill Road, the site now occupied by shops.

Some houses are not named – alas, my house falls into this category, although the wooden inserts in the brickwork near the front door indicate where what would have been a repoussé copper panel had been fitted.

Most of the plans are digitised and are available

through the State Library of Victoria. The Map Library at the University of Melbourne also holds original copies. To access the maps online, first of all bring up the State Library of Victoria catalogue at <http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/explore/research-tools/>

Select search and then enter three terms: Camberwell AND maps AND the name of the street for which you are looking for information (for example Inglesby). This will bring up the digitised maps; these may be enlarged to reveal further detail, but the whole map is barely legible.

Images of some of the properties are available either through the City of Boroondara Library Service at the local history collection currently housed at Ashburton Branch Library, or on the National Library of Australia website Picture Australia <http://www.pictureaustralia.org/index.html>

These sources would make the basis of another article.

## THE MEMORIES OF A HARTWELL LAD

**Donald Hirst**

This is the second part of an article in which Donald Hirst describes life in Hartwell in the 1950s.

### The Regal Cinema

At the intersection where Camberwell and Toorak roads meet, wedged onto a V-shaped block like a slice of pizza, once stood the Regal Cinema or "Theatre" as it was called in the 1950s. Erected in 1937 on the site of the old Tyrone Hotel it had the appearance of a locomotive about to pull out of its foundations and steam up Toorak Road to escape into the bush which then still grew on the other side of Warrigal Road. When it was first erected the Regal was one of the most modern cinemas in Melbourne, featuring



Adrian Crothers photograph in Simon Brand, *Picture Palaces and Flea-Pits: Eighty Years of Australians at the Pictures*, Sydney 1983

plush Art Deco fittings, a roof garden and a crying room. For children of my post-war generation, the Saturday matinee was a regular form of entertainment to look forward to, though in my case permission to attend was

often given erratically. On more than one occasion, with a foul Melbourne winter day raging, permission was denied, while at other times, with sunny weather prevailing, permission was granted without question.

Congregating in a crush on the pavement outside, our two shillings (upstairs) and one shilling pieces (downstairs) at the ready, the cinema staff would fling open the heavy glass doors, ready for the stampede of the young who they knew would soon be organising entertainments and diversions of their own. Sometimes the manager offered door prizes or special attractions to

bring in the paying customers - one memorable occasion being an appearance by famed ventriloquist Ron Blasket and his wooden doll, Gerry Gee from *The Tarax Show* on GTV9. Being upstairs I couldn't see whether Ron



moved his lips or not. Rumour had it that he did. Many years later I saw the two of them in cabaret in a Perth nightspot where Gerry used language that would make a sailor blush. Gerry had become bad.

The matinee would commence with the old National Anthem (God Save The Queen) featuring a rippling young Queen riding a *pommel* across Horse Guards Parade. The rippling was due to the still opening translucent drapes which gathered and bunched together before swooshing into the wings revealing another identical set, all accompanied by a light show of alternating red and green. First up on the screen were the Sydney-centric Cinesound or Movietone newsreels. Cinesound's opening scenes featured a kookaburra in a gum tree laughing with full voice, a ground shot of steeple horses going over a jump, a line of young girls on water skis waving happily, and a passenger liner docking at Circular Quay, Sydney. Movietone's was more simple, with just a single shot of a kangaroo jumping out of a hoop that read "Movietone News" (perhaps he was escaping the dross about to appear). This 'news', usually read by Jack Davey or Kevin Goldsby, always seemed to follow the same themes of floods in NSW with people being rescued by rowboat or Army DUKW, the seemingly never ending *Redex Trial* and over the course of some weeks, the Prime Minister Mr Robert Menzies leaving Station Pier on a visit to England. ("Bon Voyage, Mr Menzies!"), the Prime Minister, Mr Robert Menzies arriving in London and the Prime Minister, Mr Robert Menzies arriving *back* at Station Pier. ("Welcome home, Mr Menzies!") Other stories which featured regularly were dramatic shots of Australian soldiers in the Malayan jungle wading a swiftly flowing creek as they "flushed out Reds", Bathing Beauty competitions on a Sydney beach or scenes of an immigrant ship docking – Sydney again - loaded with cheerfully waving young Continental men wearing sparkling Persil-white shirts and ties.

After the 'news' came the serials, the plots and characters easy to follow as they had been colour co-ordinated – black hats for the Baddies and white hats for the Goodies. Baddies were booed during a chase scene, Goodies were cheered and *any* hint of romance with the (rarely seen) heroine was immediately met with howls of derision. The serial might consist of about a minute showing what happened in the previous episode, two minutes of current plot which would end just as the hero was *seen* to be going over a cliff in a runaway wagon or struggling to escape the grips of an octopus's tentacles. A further minute of 'teaser' would follow, dramatically structured to ensure the return of the young patrons the following week, by which stage we had more than likely forgotten

what had occurred and they probably didn't show the episodes in sequence anyway. A *Three Stooges* or an *Our Gang* comedy short would appear next, followed by Interval where there would be another stampede, this time *out* of the building, snatching a Pass Out from the usher as we flashed by to hurtle over the road and be first at the milk bar to buy a choc-dip, or in winter, sixpence worth of chips at the fish shop which had water running down the inside of the window. Years later when the Arts Centre installed in its entrance an enormous pane of glass featuring a watery cascade it was dubbed - by columnist Keith Dunstan I think - "Sam's Fish Shop".

If the chips had not been consumed by the time Interval was over they were then smuggled back into the cinema inside a coat or jumper which on a winter's day gave a pleasant warm glow to the chest. It was also adventurous, as the eating of chips in the cinema was *ERNSTHAFT VERBOTEN*, resulting in immediate eviction if nabbed. As the House Lights dimmed, cinema staff trained in the arts of potato detection would prowl the aisles following the scent like blood hounds, sweeping powerful torches along rows of seemingly innocent faces until a culprit was sniffed out and snared with the incriminating potato wedge in hand. Hauled from his or her seat they were frog-marched up the aisle and shown the door, to the boos and jeers of their compatriots. Although potato consumption was the most serious of offences in the Regal Cinema Code Of Conduct, other acts which might result in immediate eviction were, *inter alia*, the firing of air gun pellets or wads of paper from a bicycle pump, the throwing of projectiles made from flattened Dixie ice cream cups and Jaffa packets or rolling marbles down the aisle steps.

When "The End" appeared on the screen there was another rush for the doors, this time to escape yet another rendition of the National Anthem. The aim was to make it out into the lobby before the anthem's drum roll sounded, which, if you were well brought up or not Roman Catholic, was your cue to stand to attention while Our Monarch's theme was played. For all the manager's efforts to provide a pleasant afternoon's entertainment he must have wondered, as he reflected upon the afternoon's mayhem and his harassed staff, whether it had been worth all the effort. They pulled the Regal down in 1965. It was only twenty-eight years old, far too young to die. In time the site became an Ampol garage, a chicken take away and finally a restaurant – which served chips. [The site is now being developed as apartments. Ed]

To be continued

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## NAMING OF CAMBERWELL

Camberwell is generally known to be named after Eastaway's 'Camberwell Inn' at the Junction but L Bolger, former rate collector and valuer, suggested an alternate source for the naming of Camberwell. He reported that people named Camm lived opposite the Town Hall. They were supposed to come from Burwell (towns in Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire) in England hence Camm-Burwell. CHS Minutes 7 Oct 1966





## MY RIDE ON THE OUTER CIRCLE RAILWAY

**Bill Mackie**

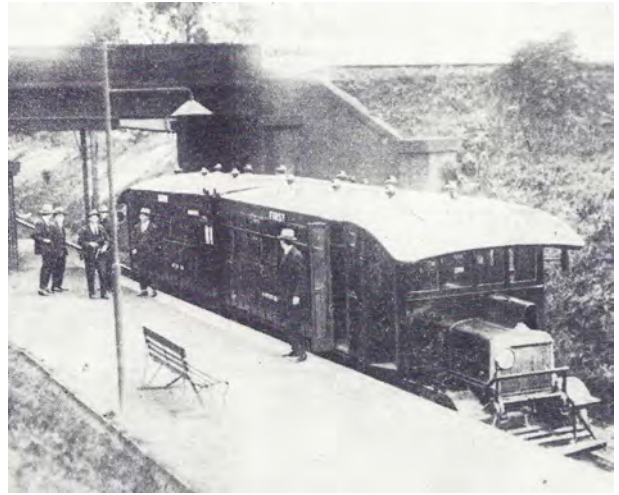
Bill Mackie is a past contributor to CHS Newsletters and has served as president of the Society. He is a descendant of Henry Sallows Walsh, first chairman of the Boroondara Road Board.

The first six years of my life were spent on a tea estate in central Ceylon. Periodically my father had leave, when our family returned to Melbourne and stayed with my mother's parents, Kate nee Reid and Will Bates, at *Larino*, Balwyn, (now replaced by *Balwyn Manor*). In the summer of 1926-1927 we were back in Balwyn when my brother Jim (age 2½) and I (age 5) were introduced to Melbourne's public transport.

Miss Martin, Mar Mar to all the family and governess to two of its generations, took Jim and me on to a tram at the corner of Maleela Avenue and Whitehorse Road. At the Deepdene railway crossing we left the tram and walked to the nearby Deepdene Station. Jim, who was just developing a vocabulary, identified a motor car as a lah-lah and a steam engine as a pooh-bah. So when our train arrived at Deepdene he exclaimed loudly 'Ooh! Lah-lah pooh-bah!'

The railmotor was something special, looking like a big square motor bus with a large square bonnet over the motor and a big radiator at its front; it was high off the track on its railway wheels.

From Deepdene we travelled by the railmotor to East Camberwell Station, where we changed to the city-bound electric train for our next destination, Camberwell Station. Here, we left the train and climbed the stairs with their many steps to take a tram in Burke Road to Whitehorse Road. Then it was a Mont Albert tram for our return to Maleela Avenue and *Larino*. It was a memorable introduction to Melbourne's suburban transport.



The type of railmotor that travelled from Deepdene to East Camberwell in 1926-1927. For this service two railmotors were coupled back-to-back so there was a driver's cabin at each end. Locals called it the 'Deepdene Dasher'.

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## LAST MEETINGS

### **24 March 2011      Court Houses of Victoria—Michael Challinger**

At the Society's first meeting for the year barrister and author Michael Challinger entertained us with a lively description of some of Victoria's historic Court Houses and anecdotes about the business of the courts and their 'patrons'. Michael writes on travel and is the author of *Historic Court Houses of Victoria*. His latest book is *Anzacs in Arkhangel the untold story of Australia and the invasion of Russia 1918-1919*.

### **16 April 2011      Walking Prospect Hill**

A small group of members and friends toured the area around Prospect Hill under the leadership of member John Maidment. John described the architectural styles and features of buildings on the route, and walkers heard something of the history of the buildings and their occupants, and were also provided with tour notes. The walk was staged as a contribution to the Australian Government's new 'Heritage Week'.

### **21 May 2011      Tour of Camberwell Grammar School**

A report on this meeting will appear in the next newsletter.

### **26 May 2011      Dame Nellie Melba - Ann Blainey**

A report on this meeting will appear in the next newsletter.



## MEETINGS FOR 2011

29 July (Friday)	Reflections of an Accidental Councillor	Cr Jack Wegman
18 August	Annual General Meeting	
3 September	Excursion	Heidelberg Historical Society
22 September	Baillieu Family	Hon Ted Baillieu, MP
29 October	Excursion	Maling Road - Don Gibb FRHSV
6 November	Excursion	Villa Alba
24 November	Writing a history of Hartwell: The trials and tribulations of a researcher	Volkhard Verhner

Meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of March, May, July only (fourth Friday), September and November at 8pm

All meetings held at **Meeting Room, Hawthorn Town Hall (side entrance via car park)**  
**360 Burwood Road, Hawthorn at 8.00pm**

## NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Camberwell Historical Society's Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> August in the Library Meeting Room, Hawthorn Town Hall, 360 Burwood Road, Hawthorn, Victoria 3122 at 8pm.

In accordance with the Society's rules, the current committee members retire and nominations are called for the ensuing year. In terms of the rules, up to seven members may be elected. Retiring committee members are eligible for re-election.

The Society's rules state that the Committee shall consist of: a) The Officers of the Society and b) up to four ordinary members. The Officers of the Society shall be: (a) President, (b) Treasurer, (c) Secretary

## SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE

In accordance to the Society's Rules, the Society's financial year operates from 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> June and subscriptions are now due and payable in advance on or before July 1<sup>st</sup> each year.

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### CAMBERWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC

A.B.N. 79 935 200 741 Incorporation No A0041541Y  
Affiliated with The Royal Historical Society of Victoria

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President – George Fernando; Secretary – Adele Fernando-Swart; Treasurer–Steve Watson  
Committee members Jan Alexander, Val Goldsworthy, Trevor Hart