

# CAMBERWELL HISTORY

## RECORDING THE HISTORY OF CAMBERWELL AND DISTRICT

Camberwell Historical Society, Inc.



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**Principal Patron:** Professor Emeritus Geoffrey Blainey, AC  
**Patron:** His Worship the Mayor of Boroondara, Cr Heinz Kreutz, PhD

## PRIVATE SCHOOLS OF CAMBERWELL NO 4

### CAMBERWELL GIRLS GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Rosemary Barkley

Miss Rosemary Barkley, BA, BEd, MEd (Melb.) joined Camberwell Girls Grammar School at the beginning of 1983. Over the next 21 years she held the positions of Head of History, Year 12 and VCE Co-ordinator, Head of Curriculum and Deputy Principal. Rosemary retired from the School at the end of 2003, and has since researched Camberwell Girls Grammar School in fine detail, writing the school's history *In Deeds Not Years*, published in 2010.

#### St Mark's School

Camberwell Girls Grammar School originated in the parish hall of St Mark's Church of England (on the corner of Canterbury and Burke Roads) in 1920. The Rev. Hubert Brooksbank had been charged by the Archbishop of Melbourne to establish a new Church of England north of the railway line in Camberwell. He enthusiastically supported the establishment of a day school and on 10 February 1920 St Mark's Preparatory School and Kindergarten opened.<sup>1</sup> Eight students attended the first day of St Mark's Church School and twelve attended on the second day. They were boys and girls aged between 4 and 8 years. By the end of 1920 there were 16 students and the Headmistress was an experienced Kindergarten teacher, Miss Elizabeth Lockley.

By 1922, the school, now called St Mark's Day School, had 38 students and by 1925 there were 70 students on the roll. With this rapid growth in numbers, a new building was required. In 1926, *Torrington*, a gracious old home in the district, was purchased, and the school moved to its new building in 1927. To widen the curriculum to Intermediate and Leaving standards, the School Council, now chaired by Rev. James Schofield,<sup>2</sup> appointed two new staff members with University degrees – Miss Louisa Stafford Taylor and Miss Jean Sussex.

In 1927, the school was renamed St Mark's Church of



*Torrington, 1927*

England Grammar School and adopted the motto *Utilis in Ministerium*.<sup>3</sup> Miss Lockley stated in her 1927 Speech Night report that 'energetic and progressive work has been done in each department of the school in the new buildings....' The school was divided into four classes, with Miss Taylor teaching the senior class. The main subjects were arithmetic, algebra, Australian and British history, civics, physiology, botany, geography, French, English literature, drawing and music. Physical culture was provided by the Bjelke-Peterson Institute.

In 1928, Miss Taylor was appointed Headmistress and Miss Lockley remained in charge of the Junior School. 1928 also saw the school become a girls' school (although boys still attended the kindergarten). The girls now wore a navy uniform and produced the first school magazine, *The Marcian*. Because British influences were strong, a house system and a prefect system were introduced.

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## Camberwell Church of England Girls' Grammar School

The first years of the 1930s were difficult because of the economic depression experienced by the whole country. The Melbourne diocese suggested that Cam-



Miss Taylor 1928

berwell amalgamate with Tintern Grammar School. The proposal was abandoned and the school continued with a population of 65 students, many of whom did not pay full fees. That the school survived as an independent entity can be attributed to the perseverance and dedication of Miss Taylor. Although there are no official records, some of the ex-students claimed that Miss Taylor served for a year without salary.

Miss Louisa Taylor believed strongly that the Christian religion would provide guidance for character development. In her own words:

All the varied activities of the School are framed to the one end – the true end of education, the building of character, the development of the innate power of the child, so that the child is fitted to take its place worthily in the community and is conscious of its grand heritage and its duty toward society....<sup>4</sup>

Miss Taylor was progressive in her outlook and always stressed the need for a broad and liberal education. She stressed the methods of teaching, with girls prepared to make their own investigations. Sport, drama and music were also important to this innovative school.

By 1936 there were 100 students on the school roll, and parents, staff and Council worked tirelessly to raise money for the building of an assembly hall. This building was opened in 1936, and allowed assemblies of the whole school, concerts and gymnastics to be held there.

With Miss Taylor's devotion to all things British, it was not surprising that the school gave strong support to the war effort from September 1939. The school opened its doors to children evacu-



Miss Taylor 1931

ated from England and the Dutch East Indies. Its buildings were used in the evening for Red Cross first aid classes and it became a depot for clothing and food destined for overseas. Girls recalled knitting dozens of pairs of khaki socks and writing letters to the soldiers. At the end of 1941 air raid precautions required that trenches be dug in the school grounds and arrangements for evacuating the school had to be made. Miss Taylor conducted evening mathematics classes for trainees at *Frognall*, the nearby Air Force Training School in Mont Albert Road.

In 1945 the school celebrated its Silver Jubilee and had 300 students, with a waiting list. New buildings became a priority and a new classroom block on Woodstock Street was opened in 1951. The school was now fully registered as a secondary school, and Miss Taylor still taught 21 periods to the senior girls. Extensions to the laboratory, the opening of a sports ground, the provision of a tuckshop and, with an enrolment of 333, an upper storey was added to the Woodstock wing.

Louisa Stafford Taylor surprised staff and students with the announcement of her engagement in 1958 and her retirement from the end of June, 1959. She had devoted her life to the school for 32 years and had achieved much. She had great vision and commitment. She would certainly be delighted to see the present Junior School located on a campus across the road, as she had tried to persuade the Council to buy property in Oak Street for this purpose. Miss Taylor was a lady with personal charm, an impeccable demeanour and an indomitable will – a woman of integrity who spent years '...striving that the girls might have a broader education to fit them for abundant living with a fuller realisation of the wonderful opportunities that life affords...'<sup>5</sup>

## A New Era

Miss Dorothy E Hall became Headmistress in 1959 – she had been a student teacher in the school in 1931, and was assistant Headmistress from 1951 to 1959. She led the school at a time of changing social and economic customs. The highlight of 1960 was the opening of the LS Taylor Science Wing by the Prime Minister, Rt Hon. RG Menzies and His Grace, the Archbishop of Melbourne, the Most Rev. Frank Woods. Miss Hall considered that the teaching of the physical sciences was probably the most important issue in 1960s education. The 1960s also saw the school welcoming students from Thailand, Hong Kong, Hungary, Malaysia. South Africa, Japan and Papua New Guinea.

1965 saw great change. Camberwell Girls Grammar School merged with Ormiston Girls School, the oldest surviving independent girls' school on the Australian mainland. Located in St Johns Avenue, Mont Albert, the Ormiston property became the Junior School site.



With the coalition of the separate traditions of *Utilis in Ministerium* and of *Spectemur Agendo* <sup>6</sup>...we have seen to emerge, like the phoenix, a new entity with the intermingling of the history, ideas and activities of the two schools...

From 1965 to 1973 the Council was particularly active in acquiring new properties and implementing both renovation and new building programs. In 1966 a new science laboratory was added and in 1968 a new classroom block was completed. A new classroom block was also added at Ormiston. Extensive alterations to 880 Burke Road provided an art and music centre. In 1970, a two storey structure was built on the site of the original Torrington house. While it was disappointing to lose the old house, there was no alternative site for a building that would house a biology laboratory on the ground floor and a modern, large library on the first floor. However, students were delighted that the Moreton Bay Fig tree at the front of the house was, and is, safe from destruction! Student enrolments had reached 500 and there was an unexpected increase in enrolments following the closure of Stratherne College<sup>8</sup> in 1969.

1973 saw the retirement of Miss Dorothy Hall who had been at the school since 1931. The new Principal, a former student of the school, was Miss Barbara Sutton and she continued the progressive nature of the school.

*... The purpose of the School is the education of the whole person, the liberation of the potentialities of the individual student. This involves the intellectual development of the student in her academic studies through work done in the classroom, through research undertaken in the library and through practical work and excursions. The School seeks to enlarge the interests of its students and to elevate their tastes, to help them develop the resources within themselves that will make life rich and satisfying and enable them to use their leisure time happily and well...* <sup>9</sup>

Miss Sutton saw many changes and additions to the curriculum – VCE and computer studies, as well as the building of a new classroom wing, an administration

wing, a new sporting complex and specialist rooms for art, craft and home economics. Finally, in 1988, the Barbara F Sutton Assembly Hall and Cultural Centre was opened, just before Miss Sutton retired after completing fifteen years of devoted service.

In 1989, Dr Barbara Fary took over the leadership of the school and continued the fine example set by her predecessors; she prepared Camberwell to meet the challenges of the new millennium. The current Principal of the school, Mrs Anne Feehan has led the school with wisdom and dedication through the first decade of the twenty-first century – a decade where the world has seen change at an unprecedented rate. The modern Camberwell



Girls Grammar School today – Woodstock Building officially opened 24 April 2012

bluestone and the Moreton Bay Fig tree to remind us of Torrington; but the school still retains its high standards, its values and its distinctive culture.

#### Endnotes

- 1 Margaret A. Hookey, *St Mark's Camberwell The First Seventy Five Years*, The church, Canterbury, 1988, p.10.
- 2 Schofield also chaired the Council of Camberwell Grammar School 1925-1938. [Ed.]
- 3 Translated as *Usefulness in Service*
- 4 Speech Night Report, 1932
- 5 Speech night Report 1958
- 6 Translated as *Let us be judged by our actions*. This motto is also used by Camberwell Grammar School.
- 7 Editorial, *The Marcian* 1965
- 8 Power Street, Hawthorn
- 9 Speech Night Report, 1973

## 140 YEARS AGO LODGE OF GOOD TEMPLARS

*The final arrangements have been completed to hold a grand concert and entertainment in connection with the Hope of Hawthorn Lodge of Good Templars. The programme includes some of our best local favourites, also several talented amateurs from the Emerald Hill lodge. These, combined with the efficient lodge choir, will be sure to draw a full house, especially as the chair is to be filled by Mr. T. Macpherson, ex-mayor of Melbourne, who is also a Good Templar. The entertainment will take place on Tuesday, the 15th October, at the Town hall, Hawthorn. The tickets are already meeting with a fair demand, nearly one-half having been disposed of. The Hawthorn lodge having achieved such a decided success in numbers and influence, it is proposed to open another lodge at Camberwell, and signatures are now being obtained to the charter requisition.*

**South Bourke Standard**, Friday, 27 September 1872, p2





## A RADICAL CAMBERWELL LADY

Susan Priestley

Susan Priestley, MA is a freelance historian with a special interest in the history of Victoria. She has written eleven commissioned histories as well as entries for the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* and the new edition of the *British Dictionary of National Biography*. She is a Fellow and former President of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria.

In 1872 Henrietta Augusta Dugdale, then in her early forties and separated from her second husband, moved from Queenscliff to a timber house standing on half an acre which she had bought in Molonys Road Boroondara, now Riversdale Road east of the Junction. Its previous owner was Henry Harris but it had been tenanted since 1870 by Frederick Johnson, a clerk in the city solicitor's firm of Lynch & Macdonald. She and Johnson (whom she married in 1903) lived there until Johnson's death in 1913. Soon after that, one of her sons Carl took her to old friends at Point Lonsdale where she died on 17 June 1918, a month after her



Henrietta Dugdale c1868

ninety-first birthday. The house,<sup>1</sup> which she named *Telko*, was bequeathed to Carl who retained it until January 1935, when it was sold for 835 pounds to a single woman in her early forties who thereafter built Hatfield flats.

From the near self-sufficient haven of *Telko*, where she used her talents in carpentry, growing vegetables and making clothes - divided skirts and swimming 'breeks' among them, Henrietta shaped a public

life which included publishing a futuristic allegory *A Few Hours in a Far-Off Age* in 1883, founding the Victorian Women's Suffrage Society in 1884, writing public lectures and submitting letters to the press, all of which she claimed were published. As was common in most published letters, she began by using pseudonyms, but from 1882 she signed as 'H.A. Dugdale Camberwell', adding 'Mrs' once *A Few Hours* was published with that as the author's name. The female identifier may have been omitted from earlier *Argus* letters as a subtle sleight of hand since the paper was generally antipathetic to women in public life. One letter published on 28 April 1883 concerned the new train service to Camberwell which was run as a shuttle from Hawthorn. She plainly wrote from recent experience.

Sir, - Is it not within the area of man's intelligence to devise a more distinctive method of showing to strangers the difference between the Melbourne and Camberwell trains when those two are waiting together at the Hawthorn station? The present arrangement resolves itself into a factor for strong language; for however patiently women suffer being carried whither they have no wish to go, men will not be so carried without the use of intem-

perate and irrelevant words, injurious alike to livers and morality. Allow me to suggest the very simple remedy of drawing the trains in question apart for about 20 feet. This would obviate all unpleasantness.

Her radical opinions on matters such as women's political, legal and social rights, and the God debate, were well-known locally, to Reverend AW Cresswell of St John's Church of England in particular. On 1 August 1883, Justice George Higinbotham gave an address to 'a very numerous audience' in the Scots Church Assembly Hall at the invitation of the church's Literary Association. His topic was 'The Relations of Modern Science with the Christian Churches' abbreviated by the press to 'Science and Religion'. This was a generation after the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species*. One of Higinbotham's concerns was the waning influence of religion, particularly among educated people, because of the failure of clergy to incorporate scientific revelations about the earth's formation and the origins of matter into the 'system of religion' revealed by Christ 'the Great Teacher'.

Reports of the lecture and its subsequent publication as a pamphlet drew a sensational response, not least a charge of heresy against Reverend Charles Strong by the Presbyterian General Assembly because of his failure to counter the Higinbotham address. Among clergymen who did counter with a 'review' was Reverend Cresswell at a Sunday evening service on 19 August. He then put it out as a pamphlet and sent a copy to Mrs Dugdale who responded with a pamphlet of her own. She recognized that 'Mr Cresswell knows from previous discussions that my ideas of religion are very much in accordance with those of Judge Higinbotham', while accepting the Cresswell challenge 'in all courtesy, and with great satisfaction ... because only by the conflict of minds can truth be evolved and become a general peace-maker'. It typified her well-mannered but vigorous and sometimes witty approach in all kinds of public debate over the ensuing decades. Her acquaintance with Cresswell almost certainly stemmed from her love of music and his decision to have a Fincham organ installed at St Johns shortly after his appointment to the parish.

Researching a life such as hers where private archives are minimal and there are no remaining direct descendants is a challenge, but a rewarding one when it reveals in particular detail the emerging political, social and cultural life of Victoria in the post-gold era, and of the England in which she and her family lived for generations. The words of the American poet philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson continue to resonate: 'All history becomes subjective; in other words, there is properly no history, only biography'.<sup>2</sup>

### Endnotes

1 Then described as 44 Riversdale Road, Camberwell [Ed.]

2 All references for this article to be found in Susan Priestley, *Henrietta Augusta Dugdale An Activist 1827-1918*, 2011, Melbourne Books, Melbourne Victoria.



## BOOK REVIEW

### Guide to Camberwell.

By JD\*, self published [?], Camberwell, no date. pp 32. \$6.00, paperback.

Clearly written with affection, and no doubt with honourable intentions, this *Guide to Camberwell* fails. It is poorly organised, meandering and very poorly edited. It doesn't seem to meander much past Camberwell Junction and Prospect Hill Road, except for an excursion to Denmark Hill and Redfern Roads in Hawthorn, and Jeparit in the Victorian Mallee. Facts are incorrect, street names and numbers are wrong and typographical errors appear from time to time. Yet this reviewer's newsagent (the source of this copy) says it is selling well.

Devoid of the usual bibliographical apparatus the booklet bears no date nor place of publication unless the post office box address is such.

The booklet opens with the usual ascription of the naming of Camberwell to George Eastaways' possibly fictitious connection with Camberwell Green in London. It then proceeds to compare the hilly tram-scapes of Camberwell with San Francisco's almost vertical streets:

*Anyone who has been in San Francisco has seen Camberwell and vice versa. Partly it is the cable cars and their abrupt rises and falls, up and down, almost breathless ascents just like Burke road. There are other links, like blue skies, a golden gate and some flamboyant counting houses, all aboard street travellers.*

The compiler, a former ES&A Bank staff member, thought that his bank *apparently rode out the storm* of the 1890s depression. He is clearly unaware that, like many others, this bank closed and reconstructed during the 1890s. He admires the spires of a number of churches including the Trinity and Presbyterian church

[sic] in Waterloo Road [sic] and the Uniting Church nearby in Riversdale Road [sic], but actually Camberwell Road. The Trinity and Presbyterian church appears again, this time in Church Street, with a stone recording Rev. Peter Murdoch's forty year ministry, but in reality recording the erection of the spire in Murdoch's fortieth year as minister. Perhaps Rupert Murdoch would know his grand-father better as Patrick! St Christopher's German Speaking Catholic Church built twelve years before the date given as 1900 is *suffering from falling members* (is there woodworm in the rafters?) St John's Anglican church, built not of red, but cream brick, sits comfortably on Burke Hill Road [sic] while Sir Robert Menzies' father James found a house in *Fairgrove, off Prospect Hill Road, or Kew, according to some sources* – well, one or the other! but actually Kew. Sadly, despite a diligent search, this reviewer was unable to find the 1890s house at No 3 Cookson Street *half clothed in leaves ... [with] the tower, so dignified ....* And what do we know of a Californian bungalow in Malley [sic] Avenue or of Geoffrey Rushing? - is this an alias for the famous actor?

A list of five *Flashy Words* is useful for including stucco, spandrel and terra-cotta, but perhaps *Clink, very hard yellow Dutch brick and Spar a rafter, pole, undressed tree stem, general term for masts, yards, booms* are not so useful, particularly as there aren't many ships in W Creek. A discussion between two old school boys entitled *Meet the Cotta* merely wastes two pages. It certainly doesn't enlighten us as to what is the *terracotta* style although the booklet's cover exhorts us to *Explore Terra Cotta Country* at the same time praising the slate roofs of Prospect Hill Road.

Sadly, with its extremely limited compass and the extraordinary number of errors in its 32 pages this *Guide to Camberwell* is best consigned to recycling.

\* I have chosen not to record the name of the compiler of this unfortunate booklet. TH

## ILLUSTRATED LECTURE

### Alexander North: an architectural free spirit

This illustrated lecture will be given by CHS member and architectural historian John Maidment OAM at the Grainger Museum, University of Melbourne on Sunday 16 September at 2.00 pm

Alexander North, a prolific and gifted architect, was a close contemporary of Percy Grainger's father John. Born in England, North settled in Tasmania in 1883 where he became an outstanding church architect. A brief partnership with Louis Williams (also to become

an outstanding church architect) brought them both to Melbourne where Williams remained (and later designed the imposing Methodist Church in Balwyn Road, Canterbury) after North returned to Tasmania. The sojourn in Melbourne resulted in the design, amongst other buildings, of St Mark's Church Hall in Burke Road.

## NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER

We congratulate Anna Carina who has joined the committee of the society.



## MEETINGS FOR 2012

The September meeting will be held on the **second Thursday** at the **Phyllis Hore Room, Kew Library**. The November meeting will be held on the fourth Tuesday in a meeting room in the new **Camberwell Library** in Camberwell Road. **All meetings commence at 8.00pm.**

Dates for remaining meetings in 2012 are:

13 September	Sidney Myer	Stella Barber
	at <b>Phyllis Hore Room, Kew Library</b>	Note change of day to Thursday for this meeting only
29 September	Excursion — Lilydale Historical Society	
27 October	Excursion — Church Tour	John Maidment OAM
18 November	Excursion — Labassa, Caulfield North	
27 November	The Architecture of Boroondara	Professor Conrad Hamann Senior Associate, Lovell Chen

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## LAST MEETINGS

### **24 July**      **Recollections of living in Camberwell — Professor David de Kretser AC**

David de Kretser came from Sri Lanka (where his family had settled after leaving the Netherlands in 1660) to Australia with his family in 1949. He gave a brief account of his family's arrival in Melbourne and the challenges of a migrant settling into Australian Society. With subtle humour he described his boyhood in Deepdene where his family moved to a house in an unmade street with no electricity. He recalled broad paddocks and a creek where he and his friends fished for yabbies and performed cliff-jumping in almost country-like Camberwell. He spoke nostalgically of a childhood with little supervision and no need for it; of Guy Fawkes bonfires, billy-carting, and wandering through the now forbidden barrel drains. At the age of ten he watched, 'from a discrete distance' the 'bodgies and widgies' of those days. His schooling was at Deepdene Primary and Camberwell Grammar Schools. The latter provided many challenges because of the generally poor level of teaching, although several teachers stood out as inspirational. Church attendance was also important for the family and the church also provided a venue for learning to dance. Professor de Kretser spoke of his university days and study time in America, his move to a marital home in Notting Hill, built in six weeks on the Jennings Estate. He talked of his time as governor of Victoria and his return to the family home in Surrey Hills. This was a delightful ramble through a part of Camberwell of the 1950s delivered in his characteristically low key style. A delightful evening

**28 August**      **Annual Meeting** — see supplement.

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## NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members:

### **Ordinary Members**

Robert D'Andrea

Barbara Milh  
Robert Monaghan

### **Family Members**

Tuncay Beckler  
Peter and Amalie Wilkie

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## CAMBERWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC

ABN 79 935 200 741      Incorporation No A0041541Y

Affiliated with The Royal Historical Society of Victoria, Inc. and a member of the Boroondara Historical Societies Association

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Committee members – Jan Alexander, Anna Carina, Val Goldsworthy. Editor – Trevor Hart