

CAMBERWELL HISTORY

RECORDING THE HISTORY OF CAMBERWELL
AND DISTRICT

Camberwell Historical Society



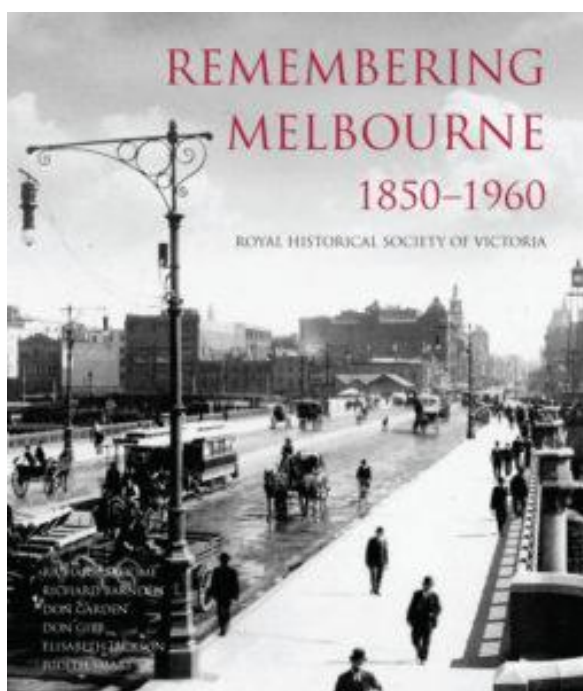
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Principal Patron: Professor Emeritus Geoffrey Blainey, AC
Patron: His Worship the Mayor of Boroondara, Cr Phillip Healey

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I am pleased to announce that Cr Phillip Healey, following his appointment as the Mayor of Boroondara, has accepted our request to be a patron of our society. We wish him well for his forthcoming term of office and thank him for accepting the role of our patron.

2016 has been a successful year for Camberwell Historical Society. The speakers have been interesting and informative. Attendance at the talks has been high. Our excursion to Bishops court was an outstanding success with many members and friends attending the tour of the historic residence of the Archbishop of Melbourne.

Progress is being made with our archival collection. A new cataloguing system has been purchased to record items of the collection. The redesign of the CHS website aims to make our

collection accessible.

The Royal Historical Society's publication *Remembering Melbourne*, for which Camberwell, Hawthorn and Balwyn historical societies contributed a chapter is available for purchase. There is an order form with this newsletter or copies can be ordered directly from the RHSV website: <http://www.historyvictoria.org.au/shop/remembering-melbourne>

I thank all those who helped make this year a success for CHS. Thank you especially to our committee and all those who gave their help throughout the year. Thank you also to the membership for your continuing support. I look forward to another good year in 2017 and wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

George Fernando

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, diaries, maps, plans, books, pamphlets, and reminiscences of former residents and people who worked in the area.

PRAHRAN MECHANICS INSTITUTE SHORT HISTORY PRIZE 2016 WON BY NEVILLE LEE

Congratulations to Neville Lee, the winner of the *2016 Short History Prize* from our society for his entry *The Story of Ashburton Through the Ages*.

The PMI Short History Prize is an award for an historical essay, article or work about a place; or an aspect of a place in Victoria, Australia; or a person associated with a place in Victoria. The essay, article or work must be written by a member or members of a Victorian historical society

or similar organisation. The PMI Short History Prize is judged by a panel from the Professional Historians Association.



The comment from the judges from PMI was, "*The Story of Ashburton Through the Ages* is a well-researched and detailed description of the development of Ashburton. It is also well illustrated with maps and photographs."

Neville Lee with Judith Buckrich who presented the prize.

CRENDON - 24 PROSPECT HILL ROAD, CAMBERWELL

James Goding, Emeritus Professor of Experimental Pathology, Monash University






Prospect Hill Road climbs steeply from Bourke Road, and the crest of the hill is the ideal site for grand houses. The grandest, *Fairholme* (1873) at 35 Prospect Hill Road on the corner of Craig Avenue, is still standing. On the eastern corner of Fermanagh Road is *Chesney* at 26 Prospect Hill Road, which was the subject of an article in the June 2016 CHS Newsletter.

Directly opposite, on the western side of Fermanagh Road at 24 Prospect Hill Road was *Crendon*, where my family lived from 1953 to 1963, when it was sold to the Exclusive Brethren, who had built a large circular church nearby. To our great sorrow, the Brethren demolished *Crendon* a year or two later. Eventually the church suffered the same fate; poetic justice. We have very fond memories of this grand old tower house, and fortunately we have numerous photographs and architectural drawings.

Crendon was built in 1887 for Joseph Frederick Walker, who died in 1909. The architects were Dalton and Gibbins. It is listed in the Melbourne Mansions Database compiled by Professor Miles Lewis, University of Melbourne (<http://mileslewis.net/melbourne-mansions.html>), where the name is given as *Grendon*, though it is frequently mentioned in *The Argus* as *Crendon*. In 1920 *Crendon* was sold to the draper William T. Hattam, and upon his death in 1929 it passed to his widow, Amelia Hattam, from whom we bought the house in 1953 for the sum of 7125 pounds.

The 1953 title lists a frontage onto Prospect Hill Road of 140 feet (42.6 metres), and a depth of 214 feet (65 metres), but the original block was somewhat larger. A portion was subdivided on the western side for a house for Wallace and Olive Hattam, and another on the south side for Amelia's daughter Gwenneth and her husband Frank Thomas, who built a house there in about 1963.

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|  |  |  |
| <p>1945</p> <p>The asphalt tennis court is visible, as is the wooden laundry facing Fermanagh Road at the right. Below the laundry is the roof of a small circular wooden lattice summerhouse.</p> | <p>1953</p> <p>The Hattam house at 22 Prospect Hill Road is to the left of the fountain. The driveway from Prospect Hill Road leads to the fountain and on to the back of the house.</p> | <p>1960</p> <p>The circular Exclusive Brethren church is visible at the top. The laundry facing Fermanagh Road is no longer present.</p> |

Aerial photographs (Photomapping Services, 133 Abbotsford Street, North Melbourne).

The interior

We have very few photographs of the interior of *Clendon*, but we still have a measured drawing from 1953 (below). The entrance hall had high skirting boards and polished mahogany doors with faceted amber glass doorknobs and touch plates, one door leading to the tower staircase. The front sitting room had a black marble fireplace, and the other fireplaces were white or grey marble. At the side of each fireplace was a push button connected to the servants' call box situated near the pantry. A maid's bedroom was adjacent to the kitchen.

As might be expected, by 1953 the house was showing its age. At one stage Mum noticed some change in the heavy plaster cornice just above the head of the bed.

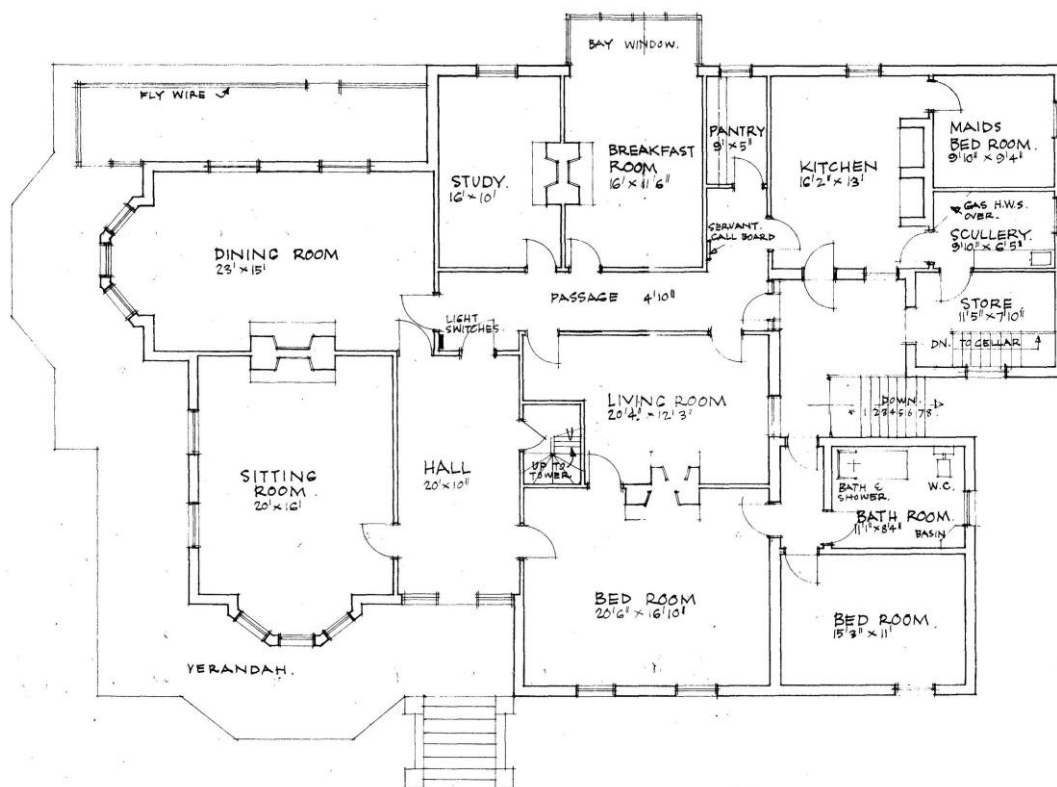
Mum: "I don't like the look of that cornice."

Dad: "Nonsense, there's nothing wrong with it."

Mum: "I really don't like the look of it."

Dad: (With great reluctance) "OK, we'll move the bed away from the wall."

In the middle of the night the cornice came crashing down and would have landed on their heads had the bed not been moved.



The Tower

How exciting it was to live in a house with a tower! At the top of the stairs were two adjoining rooms which connected the roof hatch via a second staircase. The tower roof used to leak and required patching up from time to time. The tower rooms were used by Dad as a study and later as a ham radio shack, with the antenna on a pole attached to the balustrade.

The tower rooms had windows on all sides, including one that looked out onto the slate roof. It was possible to climb through it onto the roof and we children often did. Sometimes the first that our parents knew about our escapades was when water came into the house due to broken slate

tiles.

There was a spectacular view from the balcony to the city and Port Phillip Bay to the west, and the Dandenongs to the east. There was a flagpole, and we bought an Australian flag. On birthdays and other occasions, we used to hoist the flag and throw streamers from the tower. Dad taught me "flag etiquette": never let the flag touch the ground, and lower the flag at sunset. The rope for the flag looped around a pulley at the top of the flagpole. When no flag was attached, the ends of the rope were tied together. This was rather important! The loop had to be undone before the flag could be attached to the free ends of the rope. A moment's inattention and a free end would fly up to the top of the flagpole. Fortunately, we had knots in the ends of the rope so it could not go right through the pulley, which would have required climbing to the very top of the flagpole to feed the rope through the pulley.

Even with knots on each end of the rope, however, if one end flipped up to the top it posed a major problem. It did happen once or twice. Dad attached a pair of pliers to the end of a long pole and used a string to close them round the rope and pull it back down.

Nooks and crannies

The house was a wonderland for children. The tower rooms were lined with wood panelling with hatch doors into the roof cavity and we loved to explore the inside of the roof. Inside a cupboard in a bedroom there was a second door into a space under the tower stairs.

At the rear of the house there was a sunken pathway providing access to two basement rooms which we used as workshops for woodwork and electronics. Under the bathroom near the kitchen was another basement room that was only accessible via a window at ground level.



Crendon front entrance and fountain, with the Goding children

Originally it must have had access from above. There was nothing much of interest in it; just a lot of rubble and a glass soda siphon reinforced with a rusting chicken wire. While exploring under the house we found another cellar under the back porch.

The garden

The Prospect Hill Road frontage had a large lawn with two central stone urns. The garden strip adjacent to the fence had a dense thicket of camellias, rhododendrons, cotoneasters and oleanders, and was separated from the lawn by a privet hedge and a path with arches of climbing roses. Large photinias faced Fermanagh Road.

The entrance from Prospect Hill Road had a long driveway bordered by magnolias, which we

loved to climb. It swept around a large fountain at the front of the house and continued to the rear. There were no fences between us and the Hattam house on the west and the Thomas block on the south.

Overlooking the fountain was a huge, hybrid Strawberry Tree (*Arbutus unedo*) with smooth copper-coloured bark and thick undulating branches that spread out horizontally. It had cascading white flowers and red and orange fruit which had no taste; hence "unedo" meaning "only eat one". I remember exotic palm trees, a giant cactus, a flax plant and a holly bush.

The asphalt tennis court is visible in the aerial photographs. Adjacent to it was a fernery with wooden lattice walls but no roof. In the centre of the fernery was a small palm tree. Near the back gate leading to Fermanagh Road was a circular wooden lattice summerhouse, which is also visible in the aerial photographs.

At the corner of Prospect Hill Road and Fermanagh Road was a large gum tree (*Eucalyptus ficifolia*), with bright red flowers. Our grandfather used some of the timber from the old laundry to make a tree house. The tree is still there but no trace remains of the tree house. We used to throw gum nuts down onto people walking past in the street, and duck below the wall of the platform.

It must have been a very difficult decision for our parents to sell *Crendon* and move on, but Dad's income had dropped when he left medical practice to move into full time research, and the house required more and more maintenance. We were very lucky to have lived in such a lovely and interesting house, and we have many happy memories of our years there.

CAMBERWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE

Reminder that the Society's financial year operates from 1st July to 30th June and subscriptions are due and payable on or before July 1st each year. Thank you to those members who have paid their subscriptions.

THE ORIGINAL NAPIER WALLER STAINED-GLASS WINDOWS IN ST JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, CAMBERWELL

Marnie Rawlinson

In 1930, three stained-glass memorial windows titled "The Apotheosis of David" were unveiled in St John's, Camberwell. These windows, designed and executed by (Mervyn) Napier Waller and his first wife Christian Waller, were commissioned by Elizabeth Brown in memory of her 32-year-old son Dr Charles James Brown (d. 1.11.1911) and her husband Charles Brown (d. 28.3.1927), who had been a church warden at St John's for seventeen years. Elizabeth and Charles Brown were my great-grand aunt and uncle, and I recall being shown these windows when I was young.

The Lost Windows

In 1955, twenty-five years after the windows had been installed, St John's was destroyed by a deliberately lit fire. It was recorded that "the raging of the flames was interspersed with the sound of loud tinkling glass of the stained-glass windows". The loss of these windows was looked on with sadness by my grandparents and within the family over the years. It was much later that I became aware of Napier Waller's amazing artistic talents through his prints,

drawings, mosaics and windows, and it became a quest to try to find out what the “David” windows had looked like. My childhood memory of them was only of three tall windows.

Description of “The Apotheosis of David”

About thirty years ago, when I was searching for information about the windows, it was reassuring to find some references. In R. J. MacDougall’s 1963 publication *The History of St John’s* there is mention of the windows with a brief description of the images and the comment “It was probably the most artistic of all the windows in the old St John’s”. MacDougall also mentioned the inscription added after Elizabeth Brown’s death (12.4.1933). In his 1978 publication, *The Art of M. Napier Waller*, Nicholas Draffin listed all the projects completed by Napier Waller, including the 1929 David windows. I tried unsuccessfully to contact the executor of the Waller estate, enquiring if any material relating to the windows had been found. At this stage I had concluded that I was not going to find any images of “The Apotheosis of David”.



THE APOTHEOSIS OF DAVID.—Three stained-glass windows designed and executed by Mr. Napier Waller and Mrs. Christina Waller, Ivanhoe, for St John's Church of England, Camberwell. They represent David the Shepherd, David the King, and David the Builder. They will be unveiled at the morning service on Sunday.

Serendipity

By chance, in August 2014 during a painting class, I overheard the mention of St John's Camberwell. Afterwards in conversation with the person concerned I outlined my family's long-standing connections with St John's and how I had been searching unsuccessfully for drawings or photographs of the destroyed memorial Napier Waller windows. I explained that I thought there was no chance my wish would ever be fulfilled but it was suggested I contact Keith Dempster at St John's, who acted as the church archivist was extremely knowledgeable and helpful.

This was indeed the case. I received two new pieces of information. One was a rather blurred black and white newspaper image published

7 August 1930, possibly in the *Argus*, reporting the unveiling of the windows.

The other was a detailed description of the windows in the 1952 booklet by R. J. MacDougall *Church of St John's Camberwell - A descriptive account of the church and its history*:

The window is divided into three lights showing the king in three important aspects of his life. In the first we see him as young shepherd holding a shepherd's staff and in the crook of his left arm is a young lamb. Above is the inscription "David - The shepherd - a man after mine own heart". In the second window, he is seen as King, clad in his kingly robes, wearing his crown and holding a sword on his right hand and a sceptre in his left. Here the inscription reads "David - The King - It is God that girth me with strength and taketh my way perfect". In the third window David is seen as a builder. The inscription reads "David - The Builder - Therefore will I offer in his dwelling an oblation with great gladness". The King holds a model of the temple upon which he gazes in earnest contemplation.

In March 2015, I received a message from the St John's archivist that Dr Malcolm McKay, who had sent the newspaper article to St John's, might be worth contacting regarding the windows. I immediately got in touch with him and was invited to come and look at the three paintings he had of "David" by Napier Waller. On seeing the three small coloured and framed paintings, there was absolutely no doubt these were the original cartoons for "The Apotheosis of David". With them was a piece of card with the words DAVID WINDOWS /ST JOHN'S CAMBERWELL handwritten on it. The description and the rather blurred newspaper photographs matched perfectly.



THE APOTHEOSIS OF DAVID DAVID: THE SHEPHERD, THE KING, THE BUILDER.

THESE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS WERE COMMISSIONED BY ELIZABETH BROWN
IN LOVING MEMORY OF HER HUSBAND CHARLES BROWN 1850 - 1927 (A WARDEN OF ST. JOHN'S)
AND THEIR SON DR. CHARLES JAMES BROWN 1879 - 1911
ELIZABETH 1846 - 1933

DESIGNED & EXECUTED BY NAPIER & CHRISTINA WALLER 1929, DESTROYED BY FIRE 1955

The paintings had come to Malcolm McKay from his uncle David Hales who had been given them by his friend Napier Waller. The story is that Napier Waller visited David Hales one day with a print and the three paintings as gifts because his name was David. To have found the original designs, in colour, for the windows was a wish fulfilled. These small paintings also add to the knowledge of stained-glass works designed and crafted by Napier and Christian Waller.

I photographed the paintings, each 28cm in height and 9cm wide. From these images, David - the Shepherd, David - The King and David -The Builder were reproduced as accurately as I could on gessoed wooden board using egg tempera. An explanatory plaque was added below.

In mid-2016 the reproductions were donated to St John's and will be hung in the parish centre, representing a small piece of the church's history. It is also a record of a significant Napier Waller work of art. Many churches in Victoria have Napier Waller windows dating from 1928 until his death in 1972. His body of work includes the magnificent fifteen stained-glass windows in the Australian War Memorial's Hall of Memory, created from 1952 to 1958.

137 BURKE ROAD, CAMBERWELL

Claire Dunlop



This is a dairy produce/grocery shop operated by John Hoare at 137 Burke Road Camberwell from 1905 to 1907. The shop was brick and had 6 rooms. John lived there with his sister and brother-in-law and their family, as there was a residence above the shop.

The photo shows John standing in the doorway with his nephew and niece, Frank and Kathleen McCuskey. The horse and cart which he used for deliveries are in the foreground.

The freehold of this shop was owned by Mrs Rose Harston. Mrs Harston was the second wife and subsequently widow of Alfred William Harston, who owned a legal stationer's and had been Mayor of Camberwell. Mrs Harston owned three shops and land at 143 Burke Road. The other shops were: 139 Burke Road, the Fancy Goods dealer run by Emily Gordon and 141 Burke Road, a hairdressers business run by George Turner.* Some of these shops are still there in Burke Road near the Camberwell Railway Station but the numbers have changed completely. Instead of number 137 and so on, the numbers are now in the 900s.

* Information on the ownership of the property comes from the Camberwell and Waverley Rate Books which are available at the Public Record Office Victoria.

CAMBERWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY DONATIONS RECEIVED FOR THE COLLECTION

A donation was received from: Neville Lee – *The story of Ashburton through the ages.*

MYSTERY SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS

Can you identify the name of the school or any of the pupils in these photographs? It is possible that members of a family named Craig might be present.



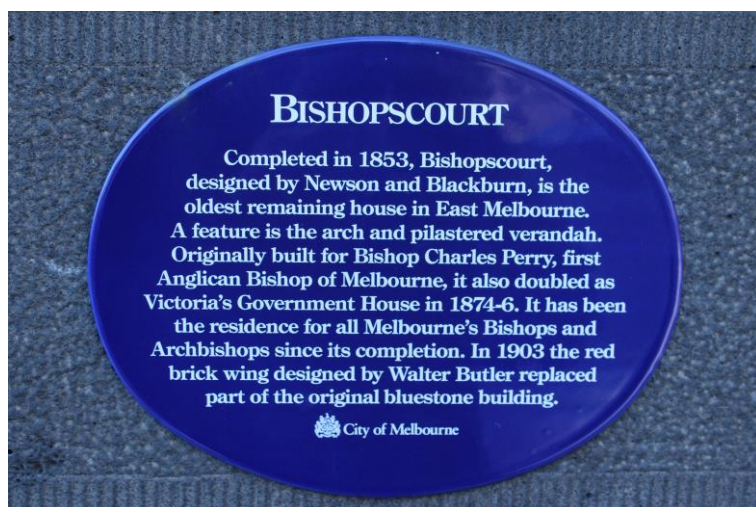
BISHOPSCOURT 20 SEPTEMBER 2016

George Fernando



Our visit to Bishopscourt was a great success. Not only were we visiting an historic landmark of Melbourne but the weather was lovely. CHS members and friends were warmly welcomed by Joy Freier who gave us an overview of the history of Bishopscourt and some of her own and the Archbishop's history.

We were taken inside the older part of the residence where we were introduced to David Woods and his sister Richenda. They gave us a tour of the house and had many anecdotes to tell from their time spent at Bishopscourt (1957 – 1977). A tour of the garden followed. It was a perfect time to visit as the garden was looking lovely.



October 25: Chris and Prue Long with Adele and Alister



November 22: Jenny Brown with George Fernando

REPORT OF MEETINGS 2016

- September 20** **Bishopscourt 120 Clarendon Street, EAST MELBOURNE 3002**
"Bishopscourt" is a large colonial mansion located in East Melbourne. Since completion, it has been used as the residence for all of Melbourne's Anglican diocesan bishops and archbishops. From 1874 to 1876 it was used as Victoria's Government House. The house is on the Victorian Heritage Register. The tour included both house and garden.
- October 25** **Chris Long - Films of the 1890s**
Early films quickly became used to document important historical events such as Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. Balloon ascensions, bicycle races and motor car rallies were all filmed. Various famous people were filmed at work or later being interviewed. The ship launch disaster of 1897 was filmed. The Boer War (1899-1901) was featured in early movies. The first propaganda films started with the Boer War. Australia's Federation was filmed, with the signing at Sydney's Centennial Park on Tuesday 1 January 1901 at 1pm with 60,000 people watching.
- November 22** **Jenny Brown - Strange Tales and True from Melbourne's History**
Writer for 'The Age', Domain journalist Jenny Brown has a knowledge of Melbourne's architecture and design and an interest in the unusual stories of Melbourne. Jenny spoke of many of the people who were important in the development of Victoria who are often completely unknown.

MEETINGS AND EXCURSIONS FOR 2017

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

Meeting dates for 2017: **28 February, 28 March, 18 April (due to Anzac Day), 23 May, 27 June, 25 July, 22 August 2017 (AGM), 24 October, 28 November**

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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Committee members — Bryony Cosgrove, Alister Bennie and Jennifer McArthur

Camberwell History: Editor — Adèle Fernando-Swart

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