

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

In an effort to raise awareness about the history of Camberwell, a Facebook page and a new website were created late last year. Please take the opportunity to view them. The committee would welcome more material for these sites, including photographs, personal histories, places and professions.

Having set up a new cataloguing system last year, we are converting our records into the new system. There are many other tasks involved in running the society, in particular setting up for our monthly meetings, suggesting guest speakers, and managing our growing membership base. Please let the committee know if you can help in any way.

Geoff Coe's colourful and entertaining account of his work as a signwriter, which appears in this edition of our newsletter, presents many insights into what might be considered a lost art. Also included are newspaper articles about long ago floods in the Camberwell area and the damage caused and an excerpt from Neville Lee's prize winning account about Ashburton. Many interesting speakers are planned for 2017 and excursions are being organized as well.

George Fernando



George Fernando and Anne Vale

REPORT OF MEETINGS 2017

February 28 Anne Vale – Influential Australian Garden People: their stories

Displaying superb pictures of their gardens, Anne Vale spoke about the lives of Australia's influential Mind Shapers (Jane Edmanson, Paul Plant, Josh Byrne, John Rayner, Tim Entwisle, Annette McFarlane, Marilyn Kuchel and Stephen Ryan) and Garden Creators (Arno King, Fiona Brockhoff, Grady Brand, Paul Bangay, Myles Baldwin, Janine Mendel, Andrew Laidlaw, Phillip Johnson, Kate Cullity, Jim Fogarty and Michael Bligh). Although these contemporary garden creators design gardens of different styles, they often share similar experiences. *Influential Australian Garden People* is a beautifully illustrated, fully indexed and referenced book full of personal stories outlining the influences and concerns of our current generation of garden writers, media personalities and garden designers.

SIGNS GONE BYE!

When George asked me to write a bit about my life as a signwriter I was happy to give a small insight.

Like most stories, usually there is a beginning, middle and an end, but in this case there really is no end anytime soon anyway in my opinion.

My sign story starts in the mid eighties, I was working in a display company doing store front displays. I also worked for Channel nine when Alan Bond owned it, working in an old aircraft factory in Richmond. One day a Greek fellow came in the work shop to do some signs for us. It soon gained my attention, all this fellow had was a box of brushes and some paint. Sparking up a friendship with this fellow, we became good friends.

A few years later we opened our first sign shop in Burnley at, Richmond. Slowly but surely we became well known in the group of shops there and one by one almost we were asked to make signs for nearly every shop.



My second factory



Computer cut lettering



We would develop the chalkboard menu board market I remember doing many take away shops and restaurants and with my business partner being Greek, that seemed a pretty easy task.

It was an interesting business meeting lots of people every week, even the bank manager would drop in most mornings and say hello as he was getting his lunch, like that ever happens anymore, good old days alright!

We also did many signs for rally cars, go-carts etc. for local automotive showrooms.



Chapel st, Sth Yarra



Still there!



Geoff's Sign kit!
& Apprentice (my dad)



Gold Leaf Honour Boards

sign

My Big Neon Project



Doncaster

In the early 1990's we bought a computer and a vinyl cutting machine, I actually had my doubts whether it would even be any good as far as spacing lettering and longevity, How wrong I was I guess. Saying that, I still think the old brush is as mighty as the sword cause it doesn't do this.



No peeling here!
Camberwell
70 yrs old

When we started in the game there was a great bloke named Graham who would drop into the shop once a month with his leather bag to offer us the latest in brushes. I fondly remember the stories of his travels around Victoria talking to the trade.

I still have nearly all the brushes from him. His son took over the business, but with the introduction of the computer age he soon found himself with just not enough customers to make it viable.

Still there!
Definitely not mine!



and no its not mine!
Cheap Vinyl!



Burke rd Camberwell
Prob 80yrs old

Still there!
Definitely not mine!

I went freelance in 2005 and worked on all sorts of projects, mostly smaller ones. It took a bit of getting used to, but I like the freedom and satisfaction I get from quoting, making, installing to completion of the job. To me its all about the fun and satisfaction you get out of the job, not just the money. I also do some contract work for other companies.

Movie Sets!



Get out the brushes again!



In 2014 a mate and I did some work on "The Dressmaker" film set. This was something I had always wanted to work on along the way.

The art of the brush goes way back in early Japanese culture, to me they were the original masters of the Brush. The sign business is a never ending learning curve, that's what makes it interesting I think. It's the work but just as important are the characters you meet along the way.

I have two wonderful sons, Tim and Lucky who have gone into the carpentry trade, but I think they have itchy feet a bit like me, always happy to be in new areas and have new challenges just to see what's next!

*Not Mine!
but where would we be
without this sign for lunch?*



First McDonalds



My Brush Jobs!



I hope I have given you a small insight into my world, its been fun.
The business is a bit like fashion, it keeps changing, then goes back around again.

Digital printing is here to stay for example, but at the same time you
may have noticed a lot of high quality graffiti artwork around too.
Lets see what happens next!

My Neon Signs!

design by
Coeesign

0409 944 839

New Apartments!



19/11/2012

Blackburn

written by Geoff Coe

Coesign@bigpond.com

2017

PRAHRAN MECHANICS INSTITUTE SHORT HISTORY PRIZE 2016

***THE STORY OF ASHBURTON THROUGH THE AGES* BY NEVILLE LEE**

Extract from pages 17-18 (A copy of this publication is held by CHS.)

1950s

As other parts of Camberwell were built over between the wars, Ashburton remained largely a hilly green expanse of dairy farms and orchard trees, with just the occasional cars and carts using High Street to access Glen Iris station and the tram terminus. The Ashburton shopping strip was surveyed in the 1920s with the resulting map showing a few rows of bungalows and Mediterranean villas filling in the slopes from High Street and its burgeoning shopping strip, the legacy of Ward's excellent planning. The diminutive but somewhat infrequent 'Ashy Dasher' train brought commuters to and from Ashburton station.

At the end of the Second World War, the government was faced with the challenge of housing the returning war veterans. The Housing Commission was presented with the task of catering for the needs of some hundreds of families. Port Melbourne, with 374 homes, had been a successful group housing scheme in the 1930s and the open fields of Ashburton and Ashwood were identified as the site for a massive Housing Commission estate. The Holmsglen Munitions Factory, which bordered Gardiner's Creek, now with the war almost ended, was no longer producing munitions so in March 1945 was converted to the production of 962 concrete houses not all of which were destined for the Ashburton estate. By mid-1950, much of the Ashburton Housing Estate had been completed, a combination of brick houses and single-storey concrete, with walk-up blocks of flats. It is hard to understand why they didn't look at the lands to the west of Footscray which was so much closer to the western suburbs' industrial employment opportunities. Perhaps it was a political decision to alter the socioeconomic mix of the southeastern suburbs.

There is a publication in the Boroondara Library titled *The Alameiners*. The stories in this book portray the sadness and loneliness of those residents who had been removed from their social roots, relocated on the opposite side of Melbourne, removed from the close association of family and friends. But it does highlight the genuine source of any community's life blood by recording the emergence of volunteers - people who got on with their lives and worked to improve their local environment, such as mother's clubs, school and kindergarten committees, youth groups and the like. Residents were typically families of ex-servicemen from inner suburbs or else European immigrants previously housed in the neighbouring Holmesglen Migrant Hostel.

But not all Second World War veterans relied on government housing, and the still vacant, although long ago subdivided fields of Ashburton's Solway Hill became prime targets for many newlyweds. Although subdivided it was still without any drains having been installed or the streets formed or paved. This was the period headlined by the popular press as the so called Heartbreak Streets. Camberwell was no different to any of the other municipalities, with miles of muddy tracks and, with limited access to finance, no way of solving the problems in their foreseeable future. In a report to Council in 1957, the City Engineer estimated that under existing Council policies and procedures, it would be twenty years before the last road and footpath could be laid in Camberwell. That report stirred the Council into drastic action. Engineering staff were greatly increased and in a departure from previous policies, outside consultants were employed to draw up the plans and legal documentation which would enable drainage, and then construction schemes, to be adopted. Council also decided on a dramatically new, unpublicised, possibly questionable, and undoubtedly controversial, policy for road financing. One aspect of that policy was to settle the drainage schemes, which are the first phase of road construction, many months before intended commencement. Many ratepayers would pay their estimated contribution in full immediately upon receipt of their notices from the

council, using low interest rate War Service loans in place of relying on the more expensive council finance. This pump primed the construction and council would often withhold payments to the contractors, for anything up to three months, providing the finance for further schemes. Unprincipled? Maybe, but it worked. In 1963 the City Engineer proudly announced the completion of the last drainage and road construction scheme - the twenty-year forecast had been reduced to six!

154 YEARS AGO

THE BOROONDARA FLOOD OF 1863

South Bourke Standard, Friday 20 March 1863, page 2. (From NLA Trove)

On Wednesday afternoon the heaviest flood we have had since December, 1860, visited this district. The rain began to fall in torrents at about three o'clock, and continued almost without intermission till half-past five. By half-past three most of the creeks were running bank high, and in a very short time the lowlands, were covered with water. The creeks soon overflowed the banks, and submerged the adjacent country, sweeping down fences and running over the roads. At about half-past five the waters began to subside, and by seven o'clock they were confined to their legitimate limits. In many places considerable damage was done, the cultivated grounds and orchards on the margin of the creeks have been severely injured.

At Camberwell the water accumulated so rapidly that the two culverts there were quite inadequate to carry it off; consequently the road and the adjoining property were laid under water for a considerable distance. The unfortunate bridge in Auburn-road south, as usual sustained much damage. Following the same creek, we found that it had filled the bridge in Glenferrie Road south, and sent a small portion of its water across the road, much to the detriment of the gravel lately laid down. The bridge on the main road, commonly called Cook's bridge, was covered with about eighteen inches of water, and a great part of the road from Mr. Lynch's lodge to the bridge was submerged. The flood was equally severe on the northern branch of the creek. William, Henry, and Lyddiard streets were flooded, and gutters were washed beside the culverts. In Glenferrie Road north there was considerable damage done. The double culvert was much too small to carry the body of water brought down, and the stream flooded the carriage-way for a considerable distance. All the new earthwork at the outfall of the culvert is washed away, and the fence erected for the protection of the foot passengers is gone. The culvert now stands out bare and unprotected, and the road is in a very dangerous condition.

In Henry Street a handsome fence lately erected by Mr. Moline was swept away, and a great part of his garden suffered severely. The bridges in Lower Hawthorn have not escaped without injury. That opposite the Hawthorn Hotel, on the main road, which has hitherto withstood the force of all the floods for several years past, was seriously damaged, a portion of the flooring having been torn up and some of the supports were carried away. The bridge is now in such a dangerous condition that the traffic has been diverted to Denham Street. Now will be the third to call upon the Government to fulfil their promise with regard to the grant of £1250 for a new bridge and approaches! The culvert in the low-road, the dilapidated state of which has been long known to the Council, was rendered still more dangerous by the flood; the only wonder is, that it was not broken up altogether. In the Kew Municipal district the flood does not appear to have been attended by many disasters, though all the creeks were filled to overflowing. Connor's Creek carried down a large body of water, which was partially held back by the embankment on the Bulleen road; but the works successfully resisted the pressure.

The storm appears to have been more severe in Boroondara and Nunawading, and the earthwork on several of the roads sustained some damage. The loss occasioned to the various local bodies must be very severe, and repairs in most instances must be immediately undertaken, though we

are hardly prepared to say how the expenditure is to be met, nearly all the available funds belonging to them having been laid out already, and the road boards being unwilling to incur fresh liabilities in anticipation of the advent of the new Local Government Bill. We have heard of one narrow escape from loss of life in Reynolds's Creek. A late resident of Hawthorn - Mr. Harry Bruce attempted to cross the creek on horseback, but the horse was swept off its legs by the force of the current, and Mr Bruce was left struggling in the water. Luckily a man happened to witness the accident, and succeeded in dragging Mr. Bruce out of the stream. The horse was swept down the creek for some distance, but whether it was drowned or not we have not heard.

Note:

1863 was a bad year for floods in Victoria. *The Argus*, 14 March 1863, reported flooding through nearly the whole of Gippsland in March while at the end of the year five inches (130mm) of rain fell in Melbourne and flooding occurred from South Yarra right through to Port Melbourne. There was a lagoon ten to twelve feet deep between South Yarra and Toorak. A description of this flood was given by Alfred Grieg Woolley in *The Argus* in 1928. (Trevor Hart)

110 YEARS AGO

COUNCILLORS ON TOUR.

VIEWING PROGRESSIVE CAMBERWELL

The Reporter Friday November 9 1906 (From NLA Trove)

The measure of activity in the building trade, and the signs of general prosperity in Melbourne and its environs, has been rivalled only during the days of the land boom. In the latter instance, however, the wild visionary and inflated state of affairs culminated in financial disaster to thousands of people to whom nothing in the way of land or bricks-and mortar speculation appeared amiss; and it took years after the tremendous collapse to live down the disquieting influences and bitter prejudices following in the wake of the downfall. Happily the worst is long since over.

There has been a gradual return to a haven of security and "the silver lining" this time is unencumbered by mythical perspective. The eastern suburbs are sharing liberally in the revival, and the spirit of vitality is particularly manifest in the municipal area comprising the town of Camberwell. The annual perambulation of the town by the representatives entrusted with the reins of local government was arranged for Thursday, and it was with feelings of pardonable pride that these gentlemen observed on route, a material growth in both the business and residential areas under their jurisdiction. Within the last two years the influx of people preferring to make their homes in that locality has been much in excess of anticipation, and as a natural sequence, there has been an expansion in the volume of local business, and a corresponding increase in the number of business premises. The recent buildings are substantial and artistic. The inspecting party comprised the mayor (Cr Mercy) and Crs Dillon, Maling, Beckett, Green, Cattnach, and Read, the town clerk (Mr A. W. Smellie), health officer (Dr McMullen, rate collector (Mr E. Wilson), treasurer (Mr T. J. Conlon), inspector (Mr H. J. Gunner); also, Mr J. Chadwick (manager of the Camberwell branch of the E. S. and A. C. bank) and press representatives. Cr Baillieu, in consequence of illness in family, was unable to attend, and the only other absent member was Cr McBeath, who is away in England.

A start was made from the town hall shortly after 10.30 a.m. in a stylish drag (supplied by Messrs Hooper & Co., Hawthorn), with a fine four-in-hand team under the control of an accomplished Jebu. The morning drive was via Burke Road to High Street as far as the boundary road; from thence to Norwood Road, and along the Camberwell Road to the Junction; thence via Riversdale and Trafalgar roads to Stanhope Grove, and along the Canterbury Road to Victoria Avenue. The first halt was made at Gardiner's Creek bridge. Some stone and wood work had recently been carried out to prevent a further washaway by the stream which had threatened to

councillors was that the piping in the culvert should be raised a couple of feet, and larger piping substituted. Along the Whitehorse Road the dealing with a drainage trouble from the same source was a rather difficult proposition, and it was thought necessary to endeavour to secure a strip of land in a scheme for carrying the water away.

After a run down Union Road and reaching Surrey Hills, a visit was paid to the Canterbury cricket ground, where the "billy" was boiled and afternoon tea partaken of. The ground has recently been enlarged by the inclusion of an additional block of two acres, the generous gift of Cr Beckett. A visit was also paid to Surrey Park, and various improvements decided upon, and a stroll was, subsequently, taken through Canterbury Park, where satisfactory progress was being made with the erection of the library building. The journey homeward was continued along the Canterbury road, and the town hall was reached about 7 p.m.

Army Practice on Old Bridge

C.M.F. troops took full advantage of an unusual training opportunity on Saturday — and in doing so, removed a dangerous bridge for the Camberwell and Malvern councils.

Men from the 3rd Field Engineer Regiment blew up the bridge crossing Gardiner's Creek at Kerferd-road, Glen Iris, which had become unsafe after heavy floods two months ago.

They were faced with several problems not normally encountered on service—not the least of them was keeping hundreds of small watchers at a safe distance.

The regiment's commanding officer (Lieut.-Col. J. H. Needham) said "there are some 30 men engaged in the operation, and about 24 of them are keeping the small boys away."

64 YEARS AGO

ARMY PRACTICE ON OLD BRIDGE

The Age (Melbourne, Vic.: 1854 - 1954), Monday 10 November 1952, page 3 (From NLA Trove)

C.M.F. troops took full advantage of an unusual training opportunity on Saturday - and in doing so, removed a dangerous bridge for the Camberwell and Malvern councils. Men from the 3rd Field Engineer Regiment blew up the bridge crossing Gardiner's Creek at Kerferd Road, Glen Iris, which had become unsafe after heavy floods two months ago. They were faced with several problems not normally encountered on service — not the least of them was keeping hundreds of small watchers at a safe distance. The regiment's commanding officer (Lieut.-Col. J. H. Needham) said "there are some 30 men engaged in the operation, and about 24 of them are keeping the small boys away."

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.

EXCURSION DULDIG STUDIO, MUSEUM AND SCULPTURE GARDEN, 92 Burke Road, East Malvern

29 April 2017 2pm Cost \$20 - Numbers limited. Bookings essential. Includes a talk by Eva de Jong-Duldig about her parents Karl and Slawa Duldig,



On September 25, 1940 sculptor Karl Duldig, and his wife Slawa, artist and inventor of the first foldable umbrella, arrived in Sydney harbour aboard the Queen Mary. Being Austrian, the Duldig's were labeled 'enemy aliens', and then imprisoned in an isolated refugee camp in Tatura.

Karl and Slawa's only child, Wimbledon player Eva de Jong-Duldig, will talk about the family's courageous personal journey. The museum is full of the family's recovered works of art and the contents of their Viennese apartment. The museum is a tribute to the courage and resilience of one family who continued to survive and thrive amidst great adversity and challenge.

The DVD 'Duldig Studio Documentaries', won the Historical Interpretation category in the 2016 Victorian Community History Awards.



CAMBERWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY DONATIONS RECEIVED FOR THE COLLECTION

A donation of a photograph of Fr Robinson's funeral at Our Lady of Victories from the estate of a Catholic priest, Fr John Riordan was received from John Maidment OAM.

A donation of a book, *The Keith Kent Story* by Keith Landells Kent was made by Gary Kent. This about the Kent family removalists from Gardiner.

MEETINGS AND EXCURSIONS FOR 2017

Meetings are usually held on the fourth Tuesday of each month in the Meeting Room, Camberwell Library, 340 Camberwell Road, Camberwell at 8.00pm.

28 March 2017 8pm Nick Richardson – The Game of their lives

As the Great War raged in 1916, two teams of Australian soldiers played an Australian Rules football match in London. It was the first time the world had seen Australia's national game. But this was more than an exhibition match. It symbolised sport's role in driving young athletes to enlist and fight.

20 April 2017 8pm The Hon. Ted Baillieu – Sir John Monash – Booking essential

(Please note the change of date and place)

Hawthorn Community Precinct, 584 Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn - Thursday 20 April, instead of Anzac Day)

29 April 2017 2pm Duldig Studio, museum and sculpture Garden - Booking essential (92 Burke Road, East Malvern) cost \$20

23 May 2017 8pm TBA - Ashburton Library Meeting Room, High Street, Ashburton

27 June 2017 8pm Judith Smart and Marian Quartly – Talk based on their book *Respectable Radicals: a history of the National Council of Women of Australia, 1896-2006*. Camberwell Library Meeting Room

25 July 2017 8pm Gillian Yung - Camberwell Library Meeting Room

22 August 2017 8pm AGM and Historic Items to share - Camberwell Library Meeting Room

24 October 2017 8pm Joely Taylor - Camberwell Library Meeting Room

28 November 2017 8pm John Rickard- Camberwell Library Meeting Room

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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