

# CAMBERWELL HISTORY

## RECORDING THE HISTORY OF CAMBERWELL AND DISTRICT

Camberwell Historical Society



No. 36

March 2019

ISSN 1838-0875 / ISSN 2208-1828 (Online)

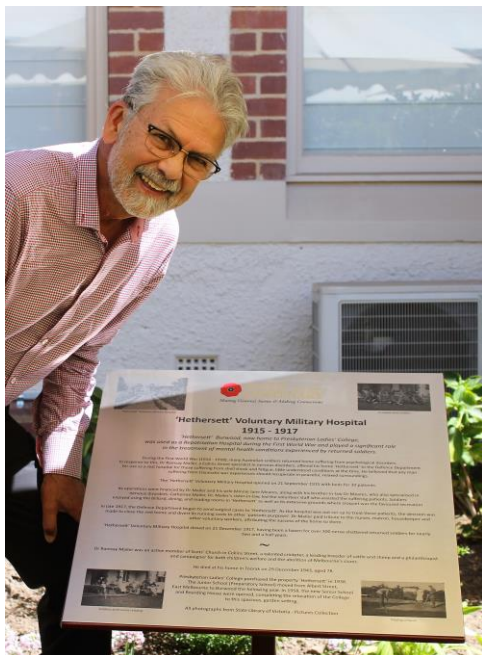
**Principal Patron:** Professor Emeritus Geoffrey Blainey, AC  
**Patron:** Her Worship the Mayor of Boroondara, Cr Jane Addis

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

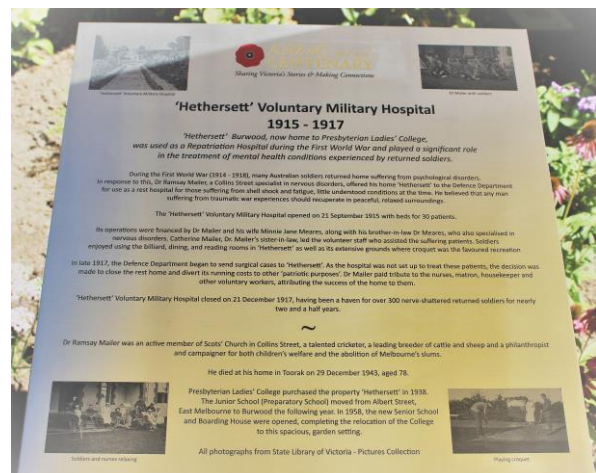
**George Fernando**

Our application for a 2018-19 Boroondara Annual Community Strengthening Grant, funded by City of Boroondara and the Rotary Club of Balwyn, has been successful. The grant was for digitisation and preservation of our collection of early maps of the Boroondara area. We are grateful to Council for their support.

Boroondara Historical Societies Association has continued to meet to work towards joint projects with another project planned for 2019. The close links between the BHSA members, Camberwell, Balwyn, Canterbury, Hawthorn, Kew and Surrey Hills, is very encouraging.



Recently I attended Presbyterian Ladies' College's official unveiling of an Armistice Centenary Memorial Plaque in the beautiful gardens of Hethersett, by Federal Member for Chisholm, Julia Banks MP at the College. It commemorates the role that the heritage 1880s property Hethersett played as a hospital for soldiers suffering from psychiatric illnesses on their return from World War 1.



## THE BELLETT AND COOK TOWER HILL DAIRY

### Gwen Wilson

Gwen Wilson is the youngest and last surviving granddaughter of Frank Cook of Bellett and Cook Dairy. She remembers the house and stables at 12 Bellett Street, and has vivid memories of visiting her grandmother in the 1940s.

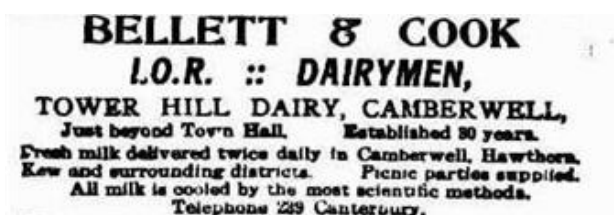


Bellett and Cook Dairy stables, behind 12 Bellett Street. Courtesy of Gwen Wilson

In 1863 John Bellett was a greengrocer in Hawthorn. His premises were almost opposite the Governor Hotham Hotel. Along with this business, he conducted a milk round, and in the early 1880s he sold this milk round to his nephew, Ernest Bellett. Ernest went into partnership with his cousin Frank Cook, and they named their business the Tower Hill Dairy.

They subsequently moved the business to land in Camberwell, in the vicinity of Bellett, Judd and Christowel streets. The actual dairy was on the corner of Judd and Bellett streets, with Frank Cook's house, which is still standing, right next door at what is now 12 Bellett Street. The stables were situated directly behind the house. This became known as Bellett and Cook's paddock, where horses were agisted. The paddock was used for Sunday school picnics at times, and at one stage there were reputedly 4000 children in attendance.

The Tower Hill was a wholesale and retail dairy, supplying other smaller dairies and households as far afield as Kew, Studley Park, and Hawthorn. Deliveries were twice a day, except on Wednesday afternoons, and later on Sunday afternoons. However, some of that free time was devoted to collecting the money.



The business had stabling for up to ten horses at one time and was very labour intensive. Milk was sourced from farms around Yering, Healesville, Yarra Glen (one supplier being Gulf Station, which is now a National Trust property), Launching Place, and Lilydale.

Above: *Spectator and Methodist Chronicle* (Melbourne, Vic. , 1914 - 1918), Wednesday 29 November 1916, National Library of Australia

## MELBOURNE'S MILK

"Best in World"

Melbourne's milk supply is the best in the world, according to Emeritus Professor W. A. Osborne, who gave evidence yesterday before the Milk Board in its inquiry on the fixing of a maximum price for milk.

Professor Osborne said that while he would not stress the value of milk for adults, for nursing mothers and children it was of the greatest value. Children who got sufficient milk showed greater resistance to disease and greater mental vigour than children who did not get enough. Provided proper safeguards were taken, he considered that raw milk was preferable to pasteurised, particularly if it were sold in bulk.

Mr. Samuel George Grimes, managing director of Bellett and Cook Pty. Ltd., of Camberwell, dairymen, said that his company could not afford to sell milk at less than 7d. per quart bottled and 6½d. bulk.

Mr. H. N. Smith, sales manager for Australian Glass Manufacturers Co. Pty. Ltd., gave evidence of the cost to dairymen of the bottles used for milk distribution. The chief demand was for pint and half-pint bottles at 30 and 22 a gross respectively, and cream bottles at 18. During the year ended June 30, 1933, the company sold 12,789 gross of pint bottles and 6,527 gross of half-pints. The figures fell largely as a result of stronger glass being used, and the increased activity of the Milk Bottles Recovery Ltd., to 10,275 gross of pints and 5,118 half-pints for the 12 months ended June 30, 1933.

Mr. L. H. Lambert, secretary of the Milk Bottles Recovery Ltd., said that his company recovered 90,000 dozen bottles in the last recorded 12 months of its operations. These bottles were returned to the dairies to which they belonged, the price paid being 1 a dozen for pints and 6d. for half-pints. Shareholders in the company were dairymen.

The inquiry was adjourned to 10 a.m. on Monday.

Drivers would collect the milk in large milk cans from Camberwell Railway Station at 9 am and take it to the dairy where it would be cooled over a brine cooler. This milk would then become the afternoon delivery. The same procedure would be followed when the evening delivery of milk was collected from the station at around 9 pm.

The dairymen would start work at around 2 am, when they would load the carts with the heavy cans, do their rounds, and return to the dairy. Then the work of looking after the horses and collecting the next load of milk from Camberwell Railway Station would begin. Afterwards, they could relax and have their first meal, after having only a cup of tea and a slice of bread and jam before starting work in the early hours. In the afternoon, the same procedure was followed, often with the dairymen playing cards while waiting for the time to collect the milk from the station.

The work of firing up the boiler for steam, scrubbing the cans and steaming them, cooling the milk and ensuring that all equipment was in good working order, was done back at the depot. This was usually Frank Cook's job, with some help.

The depot contained several buildings: the stables, a hay loft, a large cart shed, the boiler house (presumably using coal), a steam room, a brine cooler and a second one where the unsold milk was set in huge dishes to provide clotted cream, and a utility room.

Householders could bring their own containers to the carts or the dairy to buy milk. The skim milk was bought by outlying farmers for their pigs until a council bylaw was introduced prohibiting this.

Above: *Argus* (Melbourne, Vic., 1848 - 1957), Saturday 2 March 1940, page 6, National Library of Australia

In March 1907, Riversdale Golf Club leased the large tract of land known as Bellett and Cook's paddock, and this was later sold to them.

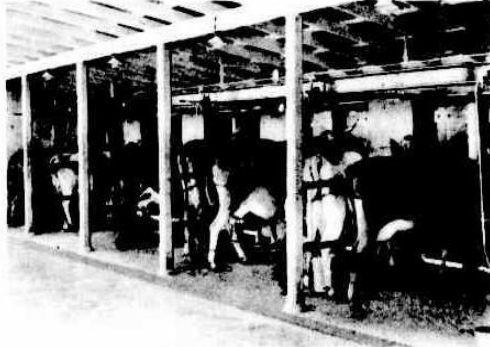
In 1926, the dairy became one of the first to dispense bottled milk. The bottles were filled by hand, and a wad of cardboard sealed the neck. This created more work, as bottles had to be washed and sterilised by hand.

At about the same time, the business bought their first truck, but it was considered inferior to the horses, as they were very familiar with their round and knew where to stop.

In 1930 Frank suffered from failing health, so the business was sold to Mr Sam Grimes. After a short period, he reduced the size of the business, and moved to new premises

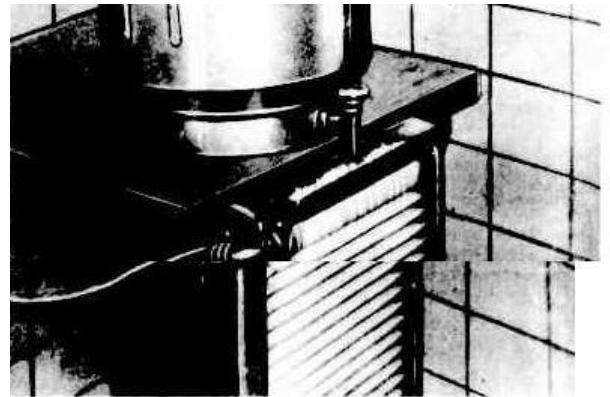


VICTORIA PROGRESSES AFIELD.—No. 3



Here we see one of the marvels of the age—the electric milking machine—in operation. Scientifically constructed cups are designed to exert pressure over the milk duct and draw off the milk. From the cups milk passes direct to the reservoir above the cooler.

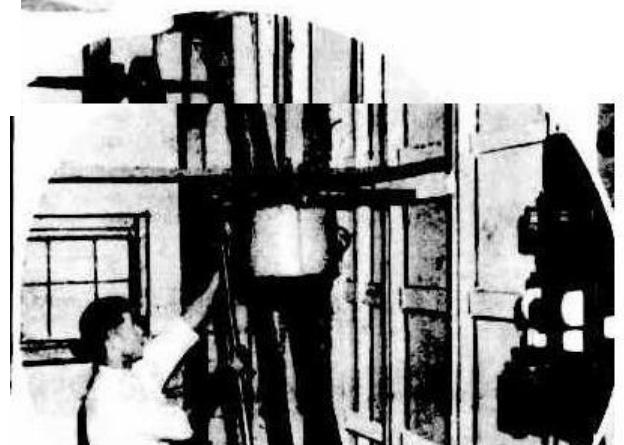
This week we take you behind the scenes in the dairying industry, which gives wide-spread employment in rural and urban districts. In recent years the drudgery which was formerly the lot of the dairy farmer has been greatly alleviated by the application of electricity and modern machinery to the industry. The accompanying pictures show phases of the industry on a dairy farm at Coldstream, in the rich Yarra Valley district, and at the Camberwell dairy of Bellett and Cook Pty. Ltd.



2 The labour-saving milk releaser, shown at the top of this picture, enables milk to be mechanically conveyed direct from the cups to the cooler.



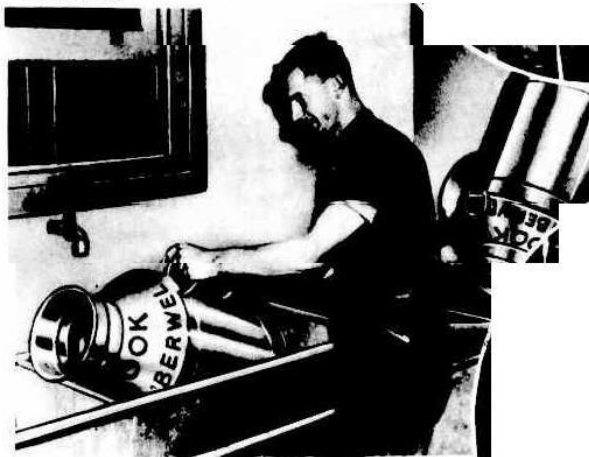
3 From the cooler the milk goes direct to the cans for transport to the city distributor. The white box attachment shown at the top of the can operates an electric bell, which rings when a can is filled to the required height.



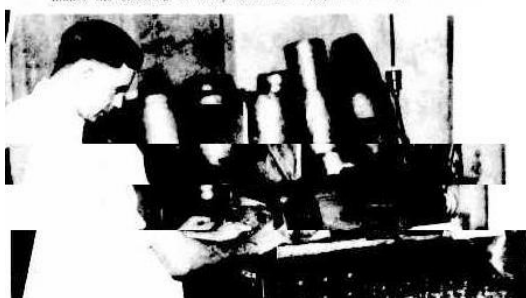
Bellett and Cook featured in the *Argus* in 1939



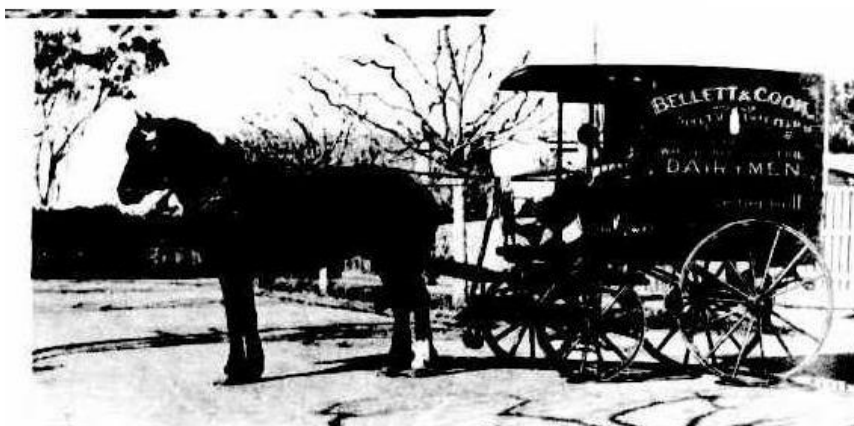
4 The progressive man on the land to-day appreciates the service obtained from modern power.



5 Boiling water, so easily obtained where electric power is available, makes the cleaning of dairy cans and equipment a simple matter.



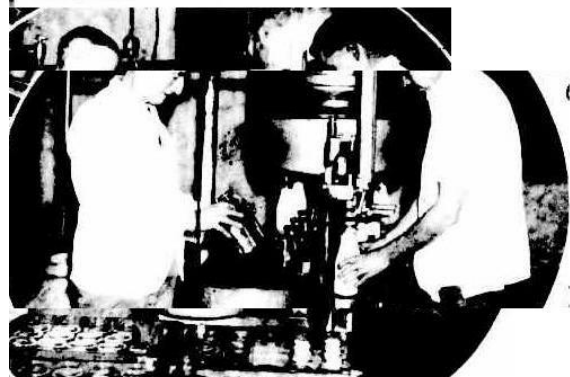
8 Between the time of bottling and delivery to consumers, the milk is stored in the cool chamber, which is kept at a constant temperature.



9 Four-wheeled waggons are used for house-to-house delivery. The growth of delivery in bottles has necessitated the introduction of the four-wheeled wagon in place of the two-wheeled cart, the capacity of which was too limited to carry a sufficient quantity of milk bottled at the dairy.



6 This modern dairy uses the most up-to-date machines for cleaning cans and bottles. Here we see sparkling bottles coming from the bottle washing machine.



7 Milk is pre-cooled and then delivered directly to this bottling machine which automatically fills and caps each bottle.





Bellett & Cook Pty Ltd Delivery Van 1st prize Camberwell Gymkhana Driver Red Hutchins. Image courtesy of Boroondara Library Service

## WHO WAS THE VAGABOND?

### IN CONVERSATION WITH MICHAEL CANNON

**Bryony Cosgrove**

Historian, journalist and newspaper editor Michael Cannon first discovered *The Vagabond Papers* as a child of 10, while visiting his grandfather Montague 'Monty' Grover in South Yarra. Grover, who was himself journalist, worked for a range of newspapers during a career that spanned the 1890s to the early 1930s, including the *Age*, the *Argus*, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Sun* and the *Herald*. In Grover's study, in a glass-fronted bookcase, was a five-volume set of *The Vagabond Papers*, which had been published by bookseller George Robertson in 1877-78. Young Michael was a voracious reader, and although he did not fully understand some of the content of the collection, presenting as they did experiences outside the realm of his early life, he read them all before returning home to the Western District.

Following in his grandfather's footsteps, Cannon would also work for the *Argus*, the *Herald*, the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Age* before being appointed founding editor of the *Sunday*



*Observer* and *Sunday Review* (later *Nation Review*). He was also founding editor of *Historical Records of Victoria*. Cannon's attention returned to The Vagabond after publication in 1966 of *The Land Boomers*, his bestselling account of the extraordinary trail of corruption and chicanery surrounding the land booms that swept Australia in the 1880s and 1890s.



The Land Boomers' success provided Cannon with sufficient free time in which to begin skimming through almost every 19th-century Australian book, newspaper and journal in the State Library's La Trobe Collection. Here, he rediscovered the writings of The Vagabond, an eccentric journalist who disguised his identity to get work in various institutions during the 1870s and 1880s. From these experiences, and writing under the nom de plume The Vagabond, this journalist wrote a series of sensational weekly 'inside' articles for the Argus and then the Age, exposing the miserable lives of Melbourne's underclass. At the time, the city's divisions between rich and poor were marked, and society had become rather complacent in its morality. There was a

warren of laneways in the city centre, with lots of pubs and small businesses. With no sewerage system in place until the 1890s, infection was rife. The Vagabond's descriptions of the poor, the insane, the barefoot children and the street prostitutes both fascinated and horrified the paper's middle-class readers, who wondered at his ability to insinuate himself into institutions where he acted as a whistleblower on social evils. Many social reforms resulted from his efforts.

The Vagabond's regular columns were extremely popular across Melbourne. His audacity sold newspapers. The first-person opinions expressed in his writing were unusual at a time when journalists were charged with simply reporting the facts without any personal opinion. They did not even write under bylines. In the early 1900s, the Australian Journalists' Association banned immersion journalism – a form of research and writing in which the writer goes undercover and takes notes while pretending to be someone they are not – as unethical. Officially, it's forbidden and anyone wanting to write like this now would not be working for a newspaper but rather would publish their work in book form. One of the finest examples of this is English writer George Orwell's 1933 memoir *Down and Out in Paris and London*, in which he described living in near destitution in both cities. More recently, in 2005, Australian journalist Elizabeth Wynhausen published *Dirt Cheap – Life at the Wrong End of the Job Market*.

Few people in Melbourne for a long time knew who The Vagabond was. At one stage, it was even suggested that the writer was someone from Government House going out and about at night. A rumour that The Vagabond was going to catch a train from a certain station resulted in scores of people turning up to see if they could identify him. Interestingly, Michael Cannon recently discovered that The Vagabond had striking red hair and a beard, which would have made him quite noticeable in a crowd. This successful period in his life lasted only a couple of

years before he was outed and identified as ‘Julian Thomas’. He worked for a time at the *Sydney Morning Herald*, but he was unable to repeat his success as *The Vagabond* there, partly because the Fairfax organisation banned him from writing on certain subjects, unlike the *Argus*, which had never censored him. His personal life began to unravel with a serious drinking problem. To make a fresh start, he travelled to New Caledonia to report on an indigenous uprising and then voyaged for a time around Asia and the Pacific, which led to a series of successful travel articles. These led to further writings investigating the Queensland labour trade and joining scientific expeditions to New Guinea.



When ‘Julian Thomas’ returned to Melbourne in 1885, the *Argus* sent him on tours around Victoria’s rapidly developing farms and townships before sending him to Britain to cover the International Exhibition of 1886, where products of Victoria’s booming factories, mines and farms were on display. In 1887, *The Vagabond* fell out with the *Argus* and moved to David Syme’s more radical daily the *Age*, which sent him to Europe to cover the Paris Centennial Exhibition of 1889. For this he wrote, in French, a 56-page illustrated book to publicise the event. He published several other books and wrote plays as well, however his career was dwindling. For the most part, his writing had become hack work done to survive financially. He seemed to have become one of the down and outs he had written about, and his health deteriorated. He died in poverty in 1896, aged 53, and was buried in Melbourne General Cemetery as ‘Julian

Thomas’. Quite a crowd attended the funeral, and an elaborate tombstone was erected the following year, paid for by public subscription.

Michael Cannon found a small paragraph in the *Australasian*, published a year after *The Vagabond* died, which revealed the man’s true identity was John Stanley James. From this information Cannon was able to track down a birth certificate in the UK and other biographical material. He established that James was born in Walsall, Staffordshire in England, the only son of solicitor Joseph Green James and his wife Elizabeth Stanley. In 1855, aged 12, James ran away from his boarding school and began life as a vagabond with a band of gypsies. He returned home but fell out with his father and after working as a casual law clerk and a journalist, and as a stationmaster in Wales for a time, he eventually travelled to Paris where he was imprisoned for several weeks as a spy for writing on the Paris Commune. On his release, he travelled to Virginia in the US, still under the name of John Stanley James, though by this time he had given himself the title ‘Dr’. From here, however, the trail went cold. The Virginia State Library was unable to assist with any enquiries.

In 1969, Cannon published an edited and abridged collection of *The Vagabond*’s newspaper columns, and included a detailed biographical introduction. It was not until 2013 that more information about *The Vagabond*’s life in Virginia came to light when Farmville pressman Robert Flippen began looking into the history of a John Stanley James who had built a fine



residence on the banks of the Appomattox River. The old mansion was unoccupied but Flippen was able to enter it, and he became determined to unravel the mystery that surrounded it.

As had Michael Cannon, Robert Flippen began by reading newspapers, in this case back copies of the *Farmville Mercury*, precursor to the *Farmville Herald*. There he discovered an August 1875 report of a mansion having been completed in ten weeks for a Dr Stanley James who subsequently advertised Stanley Park Academy for a select number of boys under 16 years of age, naming himself as principal. Further investigation revealed that James had come to Farmville in early March of 1875, accompanied by General James R. Slayton, editor of a New York paper, who had been invited to visit Farmville by the *Mercury* editor Joseph Andrew Horner St Andrew. James appears to have been part of a drive to recruit English colonists to the area, and he was welcomed to Farmville by members of the Farmville British Association. In short order, he was named to the bank board and built his mansion. There was also by this time a Mrs James, the former widow of a well-off Shropshire farmer. Yet Dr Stanley James left town in a hurry, having caused the bank to lose money by signing off on unapproved bank loans, and by engaging in a controversy with the editor of the *Farmville Mercury*. According to Robert Flippen, when James wrote his last excoriating letter to the editor and dropped it in the mail, he was already packed and ready to go. He left behind his wife Caroline, giving her the house, land and furnishings and relinquishing her from any further debts. Yet where had he gone?

In 2011, the Melbourne Press Club anointed The Vagabond a foundation member of its Media Hall of Fame. A couple of years later, Michael Cannon received a phone call from the club who had been contacted by Robert Flippen about The Vagabond. Flippen had done extensive research on the internet and had acquired a copy of Cannon's 1969 edition of *The Vagabond Papers*, thus identifying the connection with Dr Stanley James from Farmville, Virginia. When James left the US he had travelled to Australia, where he had relatives, and had changed his name to Julian Thomas.

In 2016, Monash University Press released a new edition of *The Vagabond Papers*, edited by Michael Cannon and including a chapter by Robert Flippen on James's experiences in Virginia. Dr Willa McDonald from Macquarie University in Sydney also contributed material on The Vagabond's reportage in New Caledonia.



After reading the 2016 edition of *The Vagabond Papers*, a descendant of James's former wife Caroline began researching her history. In the process she uncovered missing details of The Vagabond's life, including the likely reason for his falling out with his father: an illegitimate son. Around 1862, at home in Staffordshire, James had become involved with an Irish-born domestic servant named Mary Butler. When she became pregnant in 1863, Mary was sent to Australia to bear her child out of sight. Her son, born in October 1863, came to be known by the name of John Butler Cooper, later a noted Melbourne historian. The father's name was not registered on the child's birth certificate. Throughout her subsequent life, Mary Butler remained close to the James family, usually living at the same address as members who had emigrated to Melbourne. Late in life, she married John James, an uncle of The Vagabond, whose property she eventually inherited. The woman The Vagabond did marry, and then abandoned in Farmville, Virginia was the widow Caroline Ashwood, who married James in Wales and accompanied him with her two young sons to the US. This recent research into the life of The Vagabond was published in 2019 as *Vagabond Voyager: The Untold Story*, edited and introduced by Michael Cannon and with contributions from a descendant of Caroline Ashwood, Kay Ashwood, and from Julianne Spring, a descendant of John Butler Cooper. The latest Vagabond book, to be entitled *The Vagabond as Social Reformer*, will be published towards the end of 2019.

For someone who set out to tell the truth in his journalism and whose writing led to important social reforms in Victoria, the personal life of The Vagabond remained shrouded in mystery and misinformation for over a century.

*The Vagabond Papers: Expanded Edition*, edited and introduced by Michael Cannon with contributions from Robert J. Flippen and Willa McDonald, Monash University Publishing 2016

*Vagabond Adventures in Asia and the Pacific (John Stanley James)*, edited and introduced by Michael Cannon, privately published 2018

*Vagabond Voyager: The Untold Story (John Stanley James)*, edited and introduced by Michael Cannon, privately published 2019

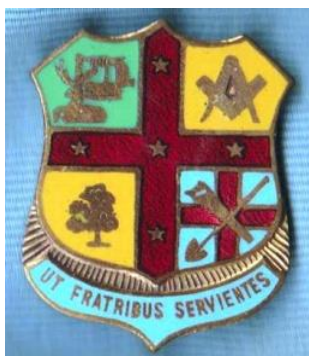
*The Vagabond as Social Reformer: Inside Melbourne's Asylums and Hospitals (John Stanley James)*, edited and introduced by Michael Cannon, privately published 2019

## THE HISTORY OF CAMBERWELL GREEN

**Bryony Cosgrove**



The proposed site for Camberwell Green includes designated Crown Land which has been a meeting place not just for early settlers, residents, school children and town councillors, but also, from much earlier times, for the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation. The whole area was originally the hunting grounds of the Wurundjeri clan. A sacred Corroboree Tree, a fine old river red gum, until recently existed on land near the intersection of Camberwell and Reserve roads. This was a meeting place for Aboriginal ceremonies, initiations and celebrations. Such trees, of which there are now very few around Melbourne, held an important place in the life and memories of these people.



The tree on the badge of the Boroondara Scouts (previous page) represents all of the trees in the Boroondara area, but in particular, the special trees – the Corroboree Tree, the Canoe Tree and other ancient marked trees that played a key part in the ceremonial life of the Wurundjeri people. The Corroboree Tree is also represented on the coat of arms of the former Masonic Lodge of Hartwell (left).

Among the first Europeans to settle in the area were John Gardiner and his family, and his cousin Fletcher, who arrived in 1837. They laid claim to occupy some 15,000 acres beyond the ‘settled districts’ in what was termed the Commissioner’s District on Kooyong Koot (meaning haunt of water fowl) Creek, later named Gardiner’s Creek. Robert Hoddle surveyed the area in the same year and named it the Parish of Boroondara, a name taken from the Woiwurrung language meaning ‘where the ground is thickly shaded’. In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the local council preserved open spaces and parkland, created children’s playgrounds, lawns, rockeries and flower gardens, and fields for many sports. The existing reserve at the rear of the new Town Hall and the Corroboree Tree alongside it, near the intersection of Camberwell and Reserve roads, were retained.

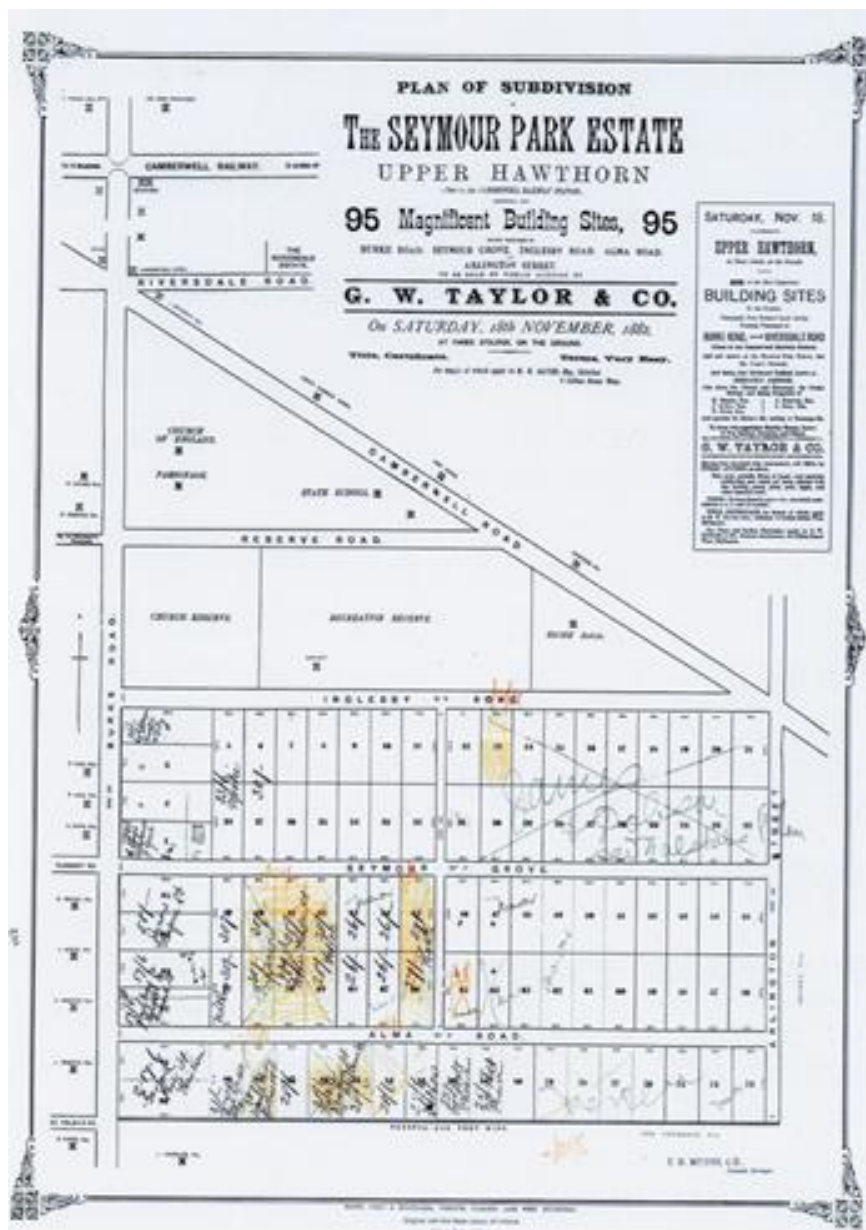
2. Camberwell – from the railway station, 1882, La Trobe Collection, State Library of Victoria.



The reserve was at the time called the Town Hall Gardens. An 1882 engraving from the *Illustrated Australian News* shows the first building of the then 15-year-old Camberwell Primary School (above) surrounded by open fields and trees, which provided play space for the 326 students attending the school.

A subdivision plan from the same year, 1882, titled The Seymour Park Estate, (next page) shows the whole area planned for Camberwell Green had been designated as a recreation reserve with a proposed pavilion in the gardens.





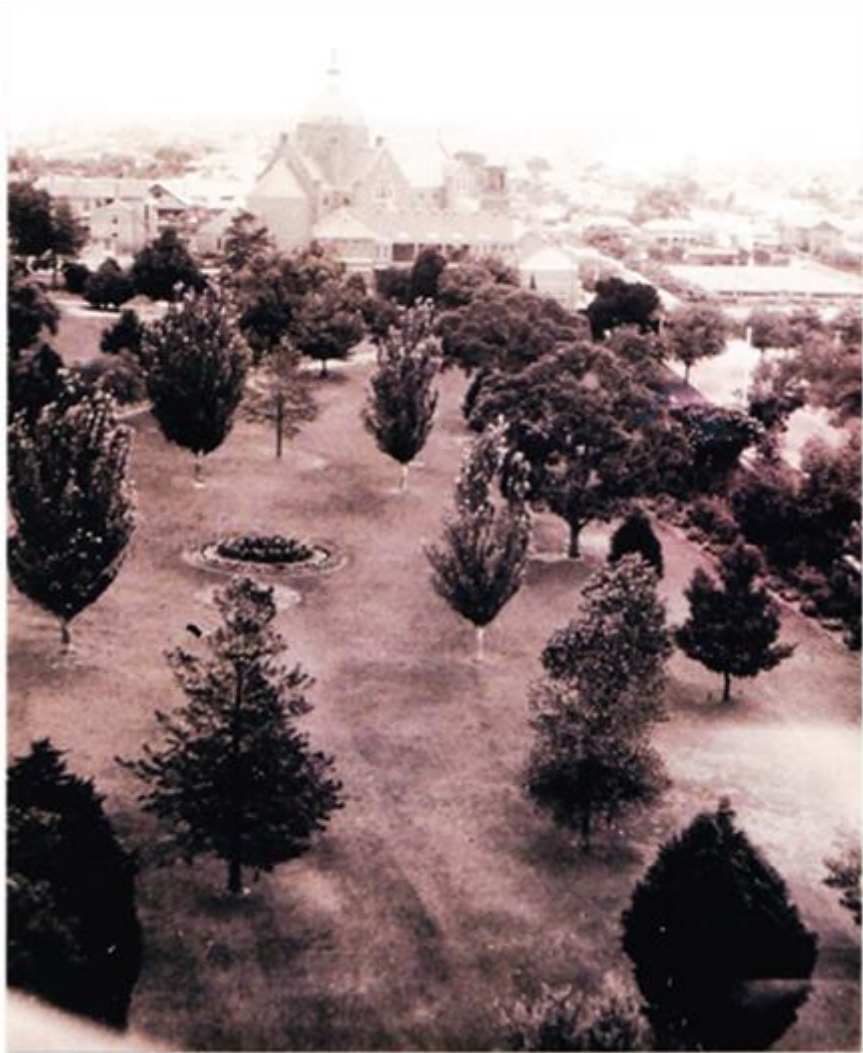
In his commissioned but unpublished 'History of Camberwell', local historian and poet James Alexander Allan referred to council minutes concerning the Town Hall Gardens: 'In May 1897, the Camberwell Council voted £20 for additional trees for the area. Three years later the fine old gum was the subject of speculation. Fears which had been expressed that it was decaying were proved groundless after an inspection by the engineer, who reported that it was quite sound. During 1905 a new layout was planned, and the curator was authorised to remove such trees as he deemed advisable'. It should be noted, however, that even if the tree had been dropping limbs, there are trunks of Corroboree Trees in Richmond and St Kilda which were kept and protected even when the trees had died. There is

also a protected Canoe Tree trunk at Heide in Templestowe.

Following the relocation of the sports ground to a new site in Camberwell Road in 1901, 'the way was opened for a full scheme of beautification, the result of which is apparent today in the reserve's winding paths and lawns'. A photograph (next page) taken from the Town Hall tower in January 1937, shows an extensive area of parkland attractively planted with trees and lawn and crossed by the winding paths described by James Alexander Allan.

More recently, a Department of Lands and Survey aerial photograph of Camberwell circa 1940, shows that the Town Hall Gardens (next page, upper left corner) was still, at that time, a tree-filled public park that extended to Camberwell Road.





Town Hall gardens  
1937 (right)

Aerial photograph  
1940 (below)



Former Mayor of Camberwell Neville Lee recalls debates in council in the 1960s dealing with the building of the Civic Centre, where the library and council offices are now housed. There was concern about taking over so much of the public space in the park. Yet having extended their premises in the late 1960s, the Boroondara Council then appropriated a large section of the public park behind the new building in 2010 for its own benefit. For eight years this area has been used for no-fee, all-day permit parking for council staff, even though it is designated a 2-hour public carpark. From Monday to Friday it is full of council staff's private vehicles. On the weekends it sits empty and forlorn.

Boroondara Council's own Community Plan, released in early 2018, identified the provision of well-utilised green open spaces as a dominant theme of its next ten years' of planning. Council has expressed its commitment to identifying sites in which to create these green open spaces. One of these sites is right on their doorstep: the Crown Land that was once a well-treed and beautiful park and is now a council staff carpark, depriving local residents, visitors and school children of much-needed green open space. Camberwell currently has only 7 per cent of the green open space in the municipality. The creation of Camberwell Green will benefit the whole community by turning an asphalted carpark back into a public park: the purpose for which it was originally intended.

To find out more about Camberwell Green and to add your support to the public campaign to restore our historic park go to the Camberwell Green website and sign the online petitions:

<https://www.camberwellgreen.com.au/>

## **CAMBERWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY DONATION RECEIVED FOR THE COLLECTION**

Nine large scale City of Camberwell maps from Peter Simmenauer.

## **CAMBERWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEW MEMBERS**

Camberwell Historical Society would like to welcome the following new members: Dr Peter and Mrs Glenys Harms and Mr Nathan Black

## **REPORT OF MEETINGS 2019**



**Tuesday 26 February 2019**

**Professor Graeme Davison: Melbourne's suburban dream – is it game over?**

Graeme Davison, Emeritus Sir John Monash Distinguished Professor, was born in Melbourne and educated at the universities of Melbourne and Oxford, where he was a Rhodes Scholar, and at the Australian National University. He taught at the University of Melbourne from 1970 to 1982 and from 1982 to 2005 was Professor of History at Monash University. He has held visiting appointments at Harvard, Edinburgh, ANU, Tübingen and King's College, London.

His books include *The Rise and Fall of Marvellous Melbourne*



(1978 and 2004), *Trendyville: The Battle for Australia's Inner Cities* (2015) (with Renate Howe and David Nichols) and *City Dreamers: The Urban Imagination in Australia* (2016).

He is a former President of the Australian Historical Association, Chairman of the Heritage Council of Victoria, a Fellow of the Australian Academies of Social Sciences and Humanities, and a prominent advisor and commentator on museums, heritage and urban policy. In 2011 he was made an Officer in the Order of Australia.

Professor Davison presented a well-illustrated talk about Melbourne's suburbs, how they came to be established, how they have changed over time and how they could or should change.

He looked at the origins of the suburban idea. By 1890 Melbourne was one of the most suburban cities in the world because:

1. It was established just as the suburban idea was becoming popular and was suburban from the beginning.
2. Wages were high and land was cheap.
3. Migrants escaping urban Britain wanted their own house and garden.
4. New technologies of transport and communication were quickly adopted.
5. Governments helped by providing services and infrastructure.

He examined the differing viewpoints about the suburb.

The suburb was a product of opposing forces of attraction and avoidance. Its creators emphasised the positive attractions of natural beauty, health, accessibility and social cohesion, but, more subtly, they also invented mechanisms of avoidance and exclusion designed to ensure that their creation was safeguarded from the ugliness, disease, congestion and social friction that might destroy its appeal.

The suburb was a product of opposing forces of attraction and avoidance. Its creators emphasised the positive attractions of natural beauty, health, accessibility and social cohesion, but, more subtly, they also invented mechanisms of avoidance and exclusion designed to ensure that their creation was safeguarded from the ugliness, disease, congestion and social friction that might destroy its appeal.

Does the suburb still deliver the goods?

We now see bigger houses, smaller gardens, and longer commutes and working hours. There is less leisure time – 'Nobody's Home'. A higher proportion of income goes to house repayments, and changes in lifestyles have resulted in more playstation and less playground, more eating out less eating in. Yet surveys still show high levels of satisfaction among suburbanites.

#### A New Urban Agenda

Urban consolidation or anti-sprawl aims to curb further peripheral growth and encourage higher-density living, following the models of higher density European cities. Bad development has been fought by many over time, for example the community group Save our Suburbs. There is a need to reduce automobile dependence by encouraging more walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

Low-density suburbia is economically and environmentally unsustainable. Many solutions and reforms are needed, not just diversification.

## **DATES FOR MEETINGS 2019**

### **Camberwell Library Meeting Room**

|                           |            |  |                                   |
|---------------------------|------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Tuesday 26 March</b>   | <b>8pm</b> | <b>Dr Sybil Nolan - Robert Menzies – Bastion of Middleclass Liberalism</b> | (Camberwell Library Meeting Room) |
| <b>Tuesday 28 May</b>     | <b>8pm</b> | <b>Rebecca Jones - Slow Catastrophes: Living with drought in Australia</b> | (Camberwell Library Meeting Room) |
| <b>Saturday 22 June</b>   | <b>2pm</b> | <b>Gillian Yung - Thomas Meagher and Mary Reiby</b>                        | (25 Inglesby Road)                |
| <b>Saturday 27 July</b>   | <b>2pm</b> | <b>Ann Blainey - Charles Kingsford Smith</b>                               | (25 Inglesby Road)                |
| <b>Saturday 24 August</b> | <b>2pm</b> | <b>AGM</b>   |                                   |

## **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.

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 SUBSCRIPTIONS RENEWALS 2018**

Camberwell Historical Society's financial year operates from 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> June. Subscriptions for the 2018 – 2019 financial year are due and payable on or before July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018. Single \$30 Family \$40. Camberwell Historical Society, BSB 633-000 Account No 142260678 Cheques to Camberwell Historical Society, PO Box 1274, CAMBERWELL 3124

## **CAMBERWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC**

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