

# CAMBERWELL HISTORY

RECORDING THE HISTORY OF CAMBERWELL  
AND DISTRICT  
Camberwell Historical Society



No. 55

December 2023

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Principal Patron: Professor Emeritus Geoffrey Blainey, AC  
Patron: Her Worship the Mayor of Boroondara, Cr Lisa Hollingsworth

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**George Fernando**

I am pleased to announce that Cr Lisa Hollingsworth, following her appointment as the Mayor of Boroondara, has accepted our request to be a patron of our Society. We wish her well for her forthcoming term of office and thank her for accepting the role of our patron. I would like to thank Cr Felicity Sinfield for her support during her time as Mayor of Boroondara.

I thank all those who helped make this year a success for CHS. Thank you especially to our committee. Thank you to the CHS membership for your continuing support. I look forward to a good year in 2024 and I extend my best wishes to all members and their families for the Christmas Season.

Volunteers are urgently needed to help scan files as we need to build our digital collection. We have many files to scan from our collection. We have been given a Boroondara Council / Rotary grant to purchase a book scanner. Please contact Adele if you are able to assist.

## Glenferrie Oval and the Tuck Stand Heritage Centre Redevelopment



Recently Boroondara Council had a meeting about the proposed development of the Tuck Stand. The proposal to develop the Tuck Stand was passed. This development will house sporting bodies, brass bands and historical societies. Surrey Hills and Canterbury historical societies will be located near Canterbury Gardens as soon as the redevelopment is finished. Boroondara Council is aware that Camberwell Historical Society does not wish to move from 25 Inglesby Road, Camberwell to the Tuck Stand.



## FAIRHOLME

### 35 Prospect Hill Road



Above: Fairholme before October 1881

verandah supported on Tuscan columns with a cast iron balustrade.

The original land grant in 1853 was to James Gill, who sold it to Alexander McArthur. Alexander McArthur then sold it to James Copeland in 1861. James Copeland lived in a house called “The Hollies” on the property. In October 1873 R S Ekins of Carlton submitted a contract price of £2,358/10/7 to build the house now known as Fairholme. The house was completed in 1874.

James and Harriett Copeland sold Fairholme in December 1878 with 7 acres to George Anthoness. Three of the ten Copeland children had been born at Fairholme. George Anthoness was a wine and spirits merchant. The top floor balcony was added after September 1881. The valuation of the property doubled between 1884 and 1886. By 1888 the property comprised 10 acres. George Anthoness died in 1890. Fairholme was then leased to Annie McNamara, a teacher, and a school was run there by Ms Henriques, a family member. Fairholme was sold to a solicitor, Arthur J. Johnson, in 1907 and the lot was listed as 180 x 230 feet.



Fairholme was classified by the National Trust in December 1963. Fairholme was owned by the founder of the Bristol Paint company until 1992. The current owners, from September 1992, have maintained the extensive and magnificent garden. The gardener at Fairholme from 1958 to 2013 was Mr Armando Raneiri. Heritage architect Ms Victoria Hamer restored the original hothouse in 2013.

Left: Fairholme by Bill Beasley c 1978

## **SHENLEY CROFT**

**Elizabeth Golding**  
**Boroondara Heritage Action Group**

In the early hours of Saturday morning, 9 December 2023, a fire occurred at 'Shenley Croft' a Queen Anne style home with Old English/Medieval overtones, located at 7 Mangarra Road, Canterbury.

This **individually significant** home was built in c1905 by architect John Edmund Burke for Hans W H McNalty, manager of the Melbourne Savings Bank in Port Melbourne. I understand that there were approximately eight fire units at the scene and it took an hour and a half to get under control. Police are investigating the cause of the fire.

I am very distressed as others in the community are about this beautiful and unique home and the loss of the built heritage in Boroondara.

First photo sourced from realestate.com.au showing the house when it was sold in 2019.



## **LE JARDIN DE CAMBERWELL GREEN**



**Meg Boyle**  
**Camberwell Green Chair**

There was great excitement at the official opening of 'Le Jardin de Camberwell Green' on 25 November 2023. Following a five-year long campaign by community group, Camberwell Green, the car park has been removed and a new park has been created, with beautiful native plants, a playground and playing field. The new park, which is now part of Camberwell Primary School, will be open and available to the community outside school hours.



The land was reserved way back in 1882 as public gardens by the Governor of Victoria and was used as a playground for school children for decades. In 2010 Boroondara Council converted it into a car park primarily to provide free commuter parking for their staff. Camberwell Green saw the possibility of better use for this land, the use it was intended for and that would benefit the environment and many, many, more people. We saw the possibility of a recreation space for our community, including our children who had little playspace.

Our community were inspired to work together and make change. Almost exactly 5 years ago, the amazing Victor Franco led the launch of Camberwell Green. I would like to acknowledge the core group of people who have been part of the team at Camberwell Green for many years: Sarah Groves-Taylor, Graeme Christianson, Julianne Jacques, Lauren Pant, Bryony Cosgrove, Danielle Conquest, Anna Yang, Liz Molyneux, Katie Boyle, and Alana Green.

Camberwell Historical Society were wonderful partners in this project, assisting with research on the area and providing support at council meetings for the return of the historic park on the land.

Camberwell Green has had the support of state politicians from many political parties over the years: John Berger, MLC Southern Metropolitan Region, Labour MP Nina Taylor, the former lower house Labour MP for Hawthorn John Kennedy, and John Pesutto MP, Victorian Liberal leader, Member for Hawthorn. We are grateful to the Victorian State Labour Government for the \$1.8 million that made this all possible.

We are particularly grateful to Camberwell Primary School and Janet Gale for her leadership and true collaboration, Sue Squire and Kim Carpenter, Stuart Lindsay and the school council he leads for their continued work behind the scenes for the best interests of the school children. We are grateful to every person in our community who spoke at council meetings, signed petitions, wrote letters or helped in any way to see Le Jardin de Camberwell Green grow from an idea into this beautiful space for us all to share and enjoy. It took many people working collectively to achieve this result. This is what community is all about and you all made this happen together!

The Camberwell Green vision will not be fully complete until a segment of Reserve Road Camberwell is used to benefit the whole community with more green open space for recreation, trees, and improved safety for school children. We are looking for a new generation of volunteers to lead this campaign, which has already started.



People who are interested can contact:

[camberwellgreenboroondara@gmail.com](mailto:camberwellgreenboroondara@gmail.com)

<https://www.keepourchildrensafecamberwell.org/petition>

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



Mr John Berger MLC  
Southern Metropolitan  
Region and The Honorary  
Consul of the French  
Embassy in Melbourne,  
Myriam Boisbouviere-Wylie



Dr Monique Ryan MP Member  
for Kooyong and Stuart Lindsay,  
Camberwell PS Council President



Victorian Liberal leader,  
Member for Hawthorn John  
Pesutto MP



Centre Left: Stuart Lindsay, Camberwell  
PS Council President, Meg Boyle,  
Camberwell Greens Chair, John Berger  
MLC and CPS Principal Janet Gale



Centre Right: Cr Victor Franco,  
Boroondara Council, Meg Boyle,  
Camberwell Greens Chair and George  
Fernando Camberwell Historical  
Society President



Left: George Fernando with Members of  
the Camberwell Green Steering Committee:  
Graeme Christianson, Sarah Groves-  
Taylor, Julianne Jaques, Meg Boyle, Victor  
Franco, Bryony Cosgrove, Danielle  
Conquest after the opening of  
Le Jardin de Camberwell Green 25.11.2023



## REFLECTIONS OF THE LATE QUEEN ELIZABETH II'S CORONATION

Wendy Baden-Powell



In this year, when our current King Charles III had his Coronation celebrated on the 6 May 2023, I thought that it would be appropriate to reflect on another Coronation - that of his mother, the late Queen Elizabeth II, on the 2 June 1953.

My parents, Lord and Lady Baden-Powell, received an invitation from the late Queen Elizabeth's Earl Marshal, the Duke of Norfolk, for them to attend the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II at Westminster Abbey. Naturally my father, being a Peer of the Realm, accepted.

The family spent the night of 1 June with my mother's late cousin Norma and her husband Roy. They owned an apartment in Kilburn, North London. On 2 June, the family arose at 5 in the morning to witness our parents proudly dressed in their coronation robes ready to leave by taxi for the Abbey. They had to be seated in the Abbey by 6 am.



My mother made her own coronation dress. Material was hard to find, as it was just after the war, but she did find a couple of yards of white taffeta with gold stars. She embroidered the front with white and gold beading. In addition to her robe and coronet, my mother wore a tiara and long white leather gloves and carried a crimson-coloured velvet small bag with a gold rope drawstring as a handle. My father wore a black morning suit with white shirt and bowtie beneath his robes. He too had a coronet.

The day in question was cold, pouring with rain but the atmosphere was jubilant with all of Britain about to witness the official crowning of our new Sovereign. Plenty of Union Jacks decorated the main streets and buildings of London.

In 1953 there were only a very few television sets around as it was just after the War. Norma

and Roy were lucky to have owned one of these very small 14-inch black and white television sets. Norma had invited friends and neighbours to the apartment to watch the ceremony. I can remember helping her in the kitchen to prepare sandwiches; my job was to spread butter on numerous pieces of bread as she completed making sandwiches and making endless cups of coffee and tea.



The coverage of the lead-up to the Coronation began early. Richard Dimbleby was the main commentator along with other BBC commentators who described the events leading up to the service. The BBC coverage of the Coronation was a breakthrough in the history of broadcasting. It was the first time that such an event had been televised and for most people, it was the first time they had watched such an event on television. It began with the procession of the Royal Navy, Army and the Royal Air Force from England, followed by other forces from around the Commonwealth. The Household Cavalry, the British Grenadier Guards, the King's Troop of the Royal Horse Artillery (they later fired a Gun Salute in honour of the Queen), Reservists and Administrative Troops, all marched past, then other officers and Royal Military Police and the Metropolitan Police came next. These all proceeded the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh who were driven from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey in the Gold State Coach pulled by eight grey gelding horses. They returned to Buckingham Palace in the same coach. Apart from other members of the Royal family, there were many other Royals and Sovereign Heads of

State from other countries represented, riding in carriages in the procession. They had preceded the Queen in their arrival at the Abbey. The timing was much longer than the lead up to King Charles's Coronation. The Coronation Ceremony was much longer also, about three hours long. The service itself followed the same pattern as King Charles's. The most memorable part was the actual crowning of the Queen, when the then Archbishop of Canterbury, the late Dr Geoffrey Fisher raised the crown and placed it on the Queen's head, and a loud chorus rang out, "Vivete Regina" and then "God Save The Queen", followed by the singing of "Zadok the Priest" by the Abbey Choir. The procession after the ceremony to Buckingham Palace also took a long time. Finally, the Queen and her family and attendants took to the balcony, and they gave an acknowledgment to the large crowd assembled outside Buckingham Palace and down The Mall. They were smiling and waving as were the members of the public.

My father was presented with a 16mm cine of the Coronation. My brother Michael was able to transfer this onto a CD, and so it is well preserved. My father had managed to take some footage of the procession after the Coronation. Norma's husband Roy was a professional photographer, and he too had recorded the day. He also took a photograph of my parents dressed in their robes. A close artist friend of the family painted a portrait of my mother. I am very lucky to be the proud owner of these two pictures, a befitting legacy of this historic time. Another legacy of this time was that my parents were given the beautiful Coronation chairs that they sat on while they were in the Abbey. The seats and the backs are blue velvet with the late Queen's cypher "E II R" in

gold on the front right corner of the backs of the chairs. The main frame and legs of the chairs are painted silver. Both my late brothers each received a chair.



Several days after the Coronation my parents took me to the Abbey to view the special way in which it was furnished for the Coronation. The area where King Edward's throne stood near the high altar was a raised golden carpeted dais which had a couple of steps leading up to the throne. The seating area near the high altar was decorated in a dark pink and gold and on the altar there was a display

of all the Coronation artefacts used in the service. There were special areas in the Abbey that had been built to accommodate extra seating.

It was a very memorable day, of which I was strongly reminded by the recent Coronation of King Charles III.

## **Sir John Michael Higgins, G.C.M.G., K.C.M.G., and Chevalier De Legion D'Honneur, of Holyrood, 816-822 Riversdale Road, Camberwell, from 1901 to 1924 (Part 1)**

**Gretta Cockerell**



While researching the history of Compton Street, Canterbury which was subdivided in 1919 from market gardens owned by early Camberwell's Dunn family, I was directed to a 1908 photograph from the Canterbury Primary School Archives by long-term Compton Street resident Doug Walker. (See photo below.) This photograph shows the new Canterbury Primary School in 1908, the Dunn family's market gardens (now Compton Street) and a mansion, Holyrood, with acreage in the mid background looking south which was owned by John Michael Higgins (later Sir) and his wife Frances Anna from 1901 to 1924. During this period J.M. Higgins was prolific in his assistance to Prime Minister William "Billy" Hughes regarding metals procurement for Commonwealth World War I armaments and also for organising the Australian wool industry for Commonwealth military uniforms, in an honorary capacity.

Caricature by Tom Glover, 1922

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:John\\_Michael\\_Higgins\\_-\\_Tom\\_Glover.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:John_Michael_Higgins_-_Tom_Glover.jpg)

The Dunn family at the time owned 11 acres of market gardens and farmland opposite Holyrood from Riversdale Road to Prospect Hill Road (across from the new school). They also owned land further to the east of Holyrood along Riversdale Road, which later became Highfield Park in 1914, purchased by Camberwell Council.





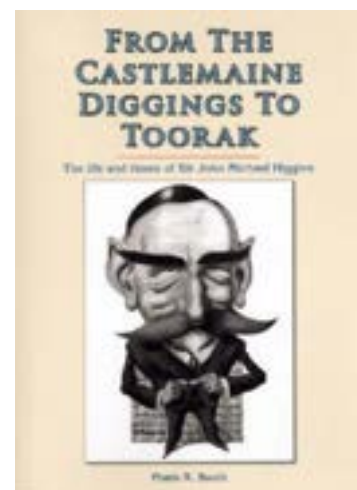
Holyrood had been built in 1891 at what is now 816 Riversdale Road for the Colonial Investment and Agency Co. and has been gazetted as “Significant” Heritage status by the City of Boroondara in Heritage Overlay HO 228 and is notated in the Victorian Heritage Database. The mansion has been owned by St. Dominic’s Church and operated as a Priory since 1924.

Holyrood, later St. Dominic’s Priory,  
816 Riversdale Road, Camberwell

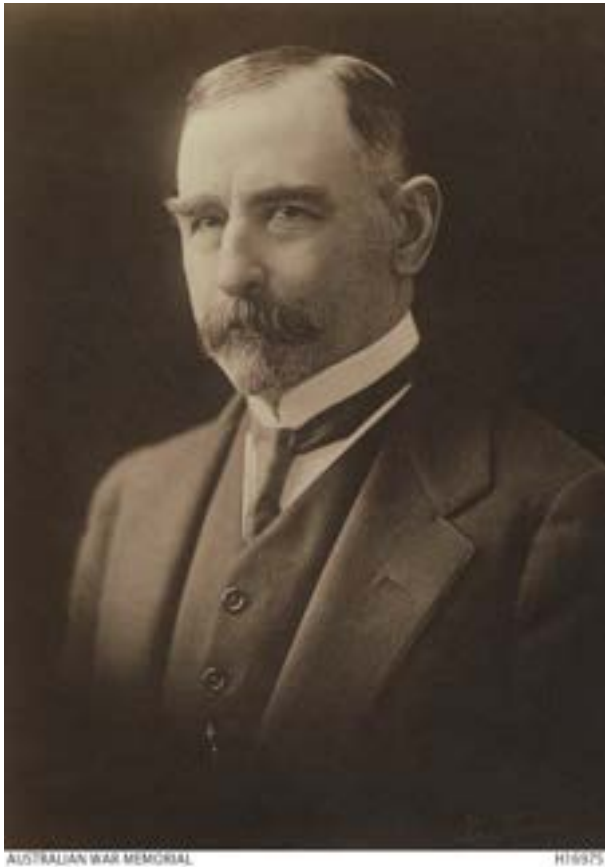


Study Grading: A  
Precinct: 6.00  
Construction Date: 1891  
First Owner: Colonial Investment & Agency Co.  
Architect: Reed Smart & Tappin  
Bulldien Fly, W

Photo of house and heritage  
citation info from  
Camberwell Conservation Study  
1991, Vol. 4A,  
Part 1, Butler, G., McConville,  
C., and Associates  
and also refer to:  
[vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au](http://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au)



My first main reference for Sir John was via the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (online) with extensive information about the man and his achievements which piqued my interest. I then found that one extensive biography had been written about Sir John Michael Higgins by Frank R. South and his wife Janet (a distant relative from England of Sir John’s) in 2006. Although Boroondara Library did not have a copy, the State Library of Victoria did, as did Castlemaine Library: *From the Castlemaine Diggings to Toorak – the Life and Times of Sir John Michael Higgins*, Penfolk Publishing, Blackburn.



Source: Castlemaine Art Gallery and Historical Museum (both photos).  
Photos of Sir John Michael and Lady Frances Anna Higgins.

The blurb on the back of the book states:

“This is the story of one of Australia’s forgotten heroes, a Cornish miner’s son born in the humblest of circumstances on the goldfields near Castlemaine in 1862.”

Through innate ability and sheer hard work, Higgins became expert in the fields of metallurgy and the wool industry. He first gained public attention early in World War I when he played a major role for the allied cause in totally reorganising Australia's two most important industries onto a war footing. Honoured by governments and enjoying well-earned public respect he gave most of his services to the State over a 12-year period in an honorary capacity.

In his private life he acquired considerable wealth for the times and many institutions, mainly in Melbourne and Castlemaine, benefited from his donations and bequests, including the University of Melbourne, RMIT University, Castlemaine Art Gallery, Melbourne Legacy and several hospitals.

Although mentioned in many books on history and the lives of others, there has never been a biography of Sir John Michael Higgins. This book by Frank South also includes a fascinating insight into the turbulent political, economic and social issues of his times.

## Prominent Personalities

## Sir John Higgins



ONE of the effects of a great war is to project into the public eye remarkable characters who would otherwise have lived and died in comparative obscurity. When nations are in danger the fiction that Brass Hats are necessarily competent has to be thrown overboard. In every army glorious officers whose medals for Coronations, jubilees, Durbars, and the like, have blazed at a thousand public functions are superseded by mere civilians, and in every Government Ministers who seemed omniscient when there was nothing much to be done are forced to turn for help to business men who know little about the finer points of the party game, and who have never fought a stiff pre-selection campaign in their lives. In this way such personifications of efficiency as the Geddes brothers of England, and our own John Monash, surged suddenly up from the depths, did their work, and the immediate danger being at an end were replaced by professional politicians and professional soldiers.

Sir John Higgins is one of the little band who helped to save the Empire and made so little noise in the process that few knew they were at work. He began life as a chemist's assistant in Bendigo. Then he became a metallurgist. He went in for mining, and prospered. The pastoral industry looked promising, so he tried that, and did even better financially than he had in his profession.

And now came the World war.

One of the first points realised by Mr. W. M. Hughes was that the Germans had control of the Commonwealth's metal trade, and one of the next that he had not the remotest notion of what to do about it. Someone mentioned a metallurgist named Higgins who was said to have ideas. "Send for him," said the dictator, "I know his brother." (Sir John and the High Court judge are of course not related, but the error emphasises the former's obscurity at the time). The hand that smote the Germans in their tenderest industrial region was the hand of Hughes and the credit for the damage done went to him, but the brain which actuated each blow was the alert, specialist brain of Higgins.

Most people know the history of the Central Wool Committee and of "Bawra." The wool markets of Europe were dead, and shipping was scarce. But Australia had to sell wool or go bankrupt. It was a crisis that called for one with a knowledge of the trade,

stock of wool. The market for the new clips was in danger. Again Australia was faced with bankruptcy. "Bawra" was organised with Higgins as chairman, the country was saved, and the industry has been turning out millionaires and near-millionaires ever since.

There is nothing spectacular about the man who evolved most of the details of these highly spectacular schemes. He cares less for advertisement than anyone now before the public. He has several of the idiosyncrasies of the mole, together with a capacity for indulging his retiring fancies which the animal lacks. When he digs himself in at his office it is practically impossible to get at him. A Hindenburg line of secretaries and typists bars the way. He is courteous to everybody—but he will not speak one word for publication. The populace hears from him from time to time—not that he ever likes opening his heart, but because there are occasions when duty demands the sacrifice. When something of earth-shaking interest happens to "Bawra," or when there is a failure of the Melbourne gas supply, or a strike (he is deputy-chairman of the Gas Company) he will issue a Statement. It never goes to the world till it has been typed, revised, and typed again, and usually not till it has been printed. One word is never used where three will serve. Someone has called these tremendous pronouncements Jovian. Actually they do not read as though they had emanated from the most human of the gods; they more suggest the work of Leviathan—who, it will be remembered, was a cold monster.

Yet Sir John Higgins is not temperamentally cold. The illusion is produced by the fact that he is an absolutely Perfect Official. He is a living contradiction of the rule that one who never makes mistakes never makes anything. He provides for everything and against everything. It is said of him that before each "Bawra" meeting he was in the habit of going to the committee-room to rearrange the chairs! All had to be in precise order, or he would have been miserable. He is devoid of vanity, yet he dresses with as much care as the youngest of his clerks.

(Continued on Page 44.)



## SIR JOHN HIGGINS—A Character Study (Continued from Page 43.)

This strange being, who has given years to the public service and yet shows, if he does not actually dislike, the public, is pre-occupied in another direction. He has been making money all his life for himself and for others. It is his job. The growers of Australia begin by electing him, then a year as Chairman of "Bawra." Then they find that Sir Arthur Goldsmith

was being paid £120,000 a year for doing similar work in England, so they raised Sir John Higgins's remuneration to that figure. Every year, in a manner so unobtrusive as to be almost invisible, the chairman of Victoria's behalf, to the tune of £100,000 a year. It is Sir John's method of obtaining that money as such, making no particular appeal to him.



The ARGUS 7/10/1937



SIR JOHN HIGGINS.  
**SIR JOHN  
HIGGINS**

## Death After Illness

Sir John Higgins, whose advice to the Commonwealth on metallurgical subjects and on wool-selling methods was of immense value to the nation in the war years and the period of reconstruction which followed, died at his home in Toorak yesterday morning.

He was aged 74 years, and had been ill for several months.

The funeral to-day will be private.

In private life he was a man of remarkable personal charm, with a kindness of character which won him close friendships.

In 1919, in recognition of his great public services, he was created a Knight Commander of St. Michael and St. George, and in 1934 was made a Knight Grand Cross of St. Michael and St. George. He was also made a member of the Legion of Honour. He was local director of the Bank of New Zealand.

Lady Higgins died in 1932.

(Other References, Page 4)

## Sir John Higgins

(Continued from Page 1.)

# GAVE HALF SALARY TO CHARITY

Sir John Higgins will be best remembered as the man who, as chairman of the Central Wool Committee, directed the purchase of Australian wool by the Imperial Government during the war years.

Born in the Castlemaine district in December, 1862, he was indentured at the age of 14 to Mr. Glasdale, a chemist at Bendigo, and he studied metallurgy and chemistry in the Bendigo School of Mines. Among his fellow students was Mr. C. W. Chapman, and the two qualified in both the subjects. Later in life they were associated in successful ventures in metallurgy and in pastoral pursuits.

About the time that the silver boom occurred at Broken Hill, John Higgins disposed of his pharmacy business and accepted a position as analyst at one of the New South Wales mines. Later, Mr. Chapman asked him to accept the post of metallurgical chemist to the Australian Smelting Co. at Dry Creek (S.A.). He did, and subsequently became manager and part-owner.

On the closing of these works he practised as a consulting metallurgist and visited each of the principal mining fields of Australia. He became interested in the pastoral industry and with Mr. Chapman as partner took up holdings in Queensland and New South Wales.

## Studied Wool

While occupied in woolgrowing, his fondness for laboratory work continued, and he made a close study of the technology of wool. This proved of great service to the Commonwealth in the war. Having retired from active business, he travelled round the world, visiting the Far East, Russia, and the principal countries of Europe.

He had not long returned to Australia when war broke out, and as many matters connected with the metal industry of the Commonwealth were of vital importance, he was requested by the Federal Ministry to act as its honorary metallurgical adviser.

In that capacity he practically founded and became the Government nominee on the Zinc Producers' Association and the Copper Producers' Association. He also founded the Australian Metal Exchange. For a year he was adviser to the Federal Treasury on the flotation of new companies and the reconstruction of other companies.

When the Imperial Government bought the Australian wool clip in 1916 Higgins, as he was then, was appointed chairman and Government nominee of the Central Wool Committee.

With the loyal help of wool experts the buying and selling houses, the Central Wool Committee divided the Australian wool clip into 848 distinct types, each type a number and descriptive terms familiar to the trade.

Wool has been bought and sold on descriptions alone and, to quote an expert, his work gave the industry an alphabet.

## Bawra Founded

With the close of the wartime and the British Australian Wool Real Association was established to real wool carried over from the war and Sir John Higgins was appointed man of directors.

He held the position until 1926, the association went into liquidation from then until 1932, as trustee of Wool Selling Brokers' Commission distributed the commission on the made by Bawra on carry-over wool.

Although his position as chairman of the Central Wool Committee honorary, he was at his office daily after 9 a.m. and he remained up p.m. or later.

Sir John Higgins was a generous. During his chairmanship of Bawra and Lady Higgins yearly distributed £5,000—half his salary—to charitable educational institutions.

When he had completed the liquidation of Bawra he received a commission of £5,652, which he accepted on condition that he was allowed to give the directly associated with the trust a bonus. The remainder—£4,250 divided equally between charitable educational institutions, the Melbourne University's share being £2,000.

He has a fitting memorial at thebourne Technical College in the "B and Lady Higgins Chemistry Laboratories" to which he contributed and he did not forget the charitable Castlemaine, his native district.

The Argus newspaper article; 7 October 1937

I have been in recent contact with Janet South, co-author of the Sir John Michael Higgins biography, who has expressed an active interest in some physical form of recognition for his contribution to Australia, especially regarding around the time of World War I. We are hoping that St. Dominic's together with the City of Boroondara, will procure a plaque or a statue or a

similar form of recognition, perhaps outside the front of Holyrood in Riversdale Road Camberwell, so that local citizens and school children may be made aware of this exemplary former citizen. It could then become part of local history society information and tours.

The Higgins' did not have any children and their eventual home after moving from Holyrood in 1924, which was Pentor, Heyington Place, Toorak, was requisitioned by the Australian Army upon the outbreak of World War II. The house contents were sent up to Castlemaine for the Castlemaine Art Gallery and Museum. Subsequent auctions of some of the contents have benefitted the Art Gallery and Museum in addition to bequests made earlier by Sir John years before his death. Their catalogue of many artefacts from the Higgins Bequest does not include any of the three magnificent medals; the Grand Cross of St. Michael and St. George, the Knight Commander and the French Government's Chevalier de Legion D'Honneur which were all bestowed on Sir John. I have made inquiries to the Australian War Museum in Canberra and the



D'Honneur example.



Melbourne Museum and the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne. Castlemaine Art Gallery and Museum also does not have them. It would be exciting if they were rediscovered for posterity. (A formal photograph of Sir John used by Frank R. South has been credited as coming from the Australian War Museum, as well as from Castlemaine Art Gallery and Museum.)

Examples of the GCMG (top left) and KCMG.

Right: Chevalier De Legion



## ST DOMINIC'S PRIORY

### Victorian Heritage Database Report

Report generated 14/12/23.

Image from Harmer Architects

816 Riversdale Road, Camberwell,

Level of significance -

individually significant

Heritage Overlay Numbers HO228 Heritage Listing Boroondara City Statement of Significance Last updated on - January 1, 1991

Architecturally, an outstanding, complete and early example of the English domestic or Queen Anne revival style which was soon to become one of Camberwell's most popular Edwardian styles: of State importance. Historically, important resident, John Michael Higgins, significant figure in war-time administration and in a range of applied scientific work in the public sphere. The house also expresses the previous subdivision by its design, siting and scale and connections



with the Dominican Order are also distinctive. Most Catholic parishes were not staffed by religious orders and hence a priory such as this is unusual in suburban Melbourne: of State importance.

The Dominican church itself is a major landmark and departs to an extent from contemporary Catholic parish church design. HO228 Holyrood Estate and Environs, Camberwell The Holyrood Estate and Environs, Camberwell, is named after the Riversdale Road 'Holyrood' mansion (by Reed, Smart and Tappin, 1890, now St Dominic's Priory) from which the land was taken to create the Estate.

The estate is an area of heritage significance for the following reasons: -The place features a highly intact collection of 1920s-30s housing. - The place strongly reflects the Camberwell municipal by-laws of the time which sought to raise and maintain the level of amenity and consistency within the Camberwell area through controlling the size of houses, front and side setbacks and materials. - The place contains the notable St Dominic's Church, which was constructed at the time the Estate was developed. -The place comprises a generally intact interwar landscape with concrete roads and related mature street trees. Heritage Study/Consultant Boroondara - Camberwell Conservation Study, Graeme Butler, 1991; Boroondara - Review of Heritage Overlay Precinct Citations, Lovell Chen P/L, Architects & Heritage Consultants, 2006; Other Names formerly, Holyrood.

### **VALE: Margaret Rae Anthony (18.2.1936 – 4.12.2023)**

Rae was a former committee member and member of the Camberwell Historical Society. She died after a long illness at Highwood Court Aged Care Burwood.

## **REPORT OF MEETINGS 2023**

### **24 October 2023 Dr Ross McMullin - Life so Full of Promise: further biographies of Australia's lost generation**



Dr Ross McMullin is an award-winning historian, biographer and storyteller. He has written extensively about Australia's involvement in World War I. His latest book, *Life So Full of Promise*, is his second multi-biography about Australia's lost generation of World War I, following *Farewell Dear People* (2012), which was awarded the Prime Minister's Prize for Australian History and the National Cultural Award. *Life So Full of Promise* has been shortlisted for a national award, the Mark & Evette Moran Nib Literary Award.

Included in this book are the stories of a talented barrister whose outstanding leadership enabled a momentous victory in France; an eminent newspaper editor who kept his community informed about the war while his sons were in the trenches; an energetic soldiers' mother who became a political activist and a Red Cross dynamo; an admired farmer whose unit was rushed to the rescue in the climax of the conflict; the close sisters from Melbourne who found their lives transformed; a popular doctor who was more fervently mourned than any other Australian casualty; and a bohemian Scandinavian blonde who disrupted one of Sydney's best-known families.



It includes the story of Bryan Pockley an exceptional student and sportsman who was well liked for his endearing personality. He became a doctor in the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Forces and was killed in Rabal, New Guinea on 11 September 1914, an unexpected early casualty. His brother Jack, another admired officer was to die three and a half years later in 1918.

## 28 November 2023 Chris Long - More of Melbourne's Earliest Films



Chris Long spent 40 years working in documentary broadcasting as well as in film and sound archives and has published extensively on early Australian films. He runs the YouTube channel "Aus Radio Historian", and in retirement he lectures to groups like U3A, Probus groups, historical societies and in livestreaming, mostly on the history of the electronic media.

Chris Long started his superb presentation with short films of Queen Victoria on her last visit to Ireland in 1900. He also showed film from *Living Hawthorn* from 1909, showing Camberwell Market, Riversdale Road and early trams and cars. He showed images from *Living Bendigo* from January 1907. Images of Hawthorn Town Hall from 18 February 1907 included gas lights and Mayor Charles Dalley, Hawthorn's mayor for 25 years, who died six months after the film. Bicycles, a common means of transport in 1907, featured as well. Another film showed Burke Road in February 1907. The 1897 Caulfield Cup was shown, which was onscreen in movie theatres six hours later as was the Melbourne Cup of 1897. The films were presented with a knowledgeable commentary and appropriate music.

Chris featured people such as the Hawthorn inventor Ernest Jardine Thwaites (c. 1873 – 12 July 1933) and Robert William Harvie (died 5 October 1922) who built the first projector and an early phonograph.

The Limelight Department featured in Chris's presentation as it was one of the world's first film studios, beginning in 1898, operated by The Salvation Army in Melbourne, Australia. The Limelight Department produced evangelistic material for use by the Salvation Army, including lantern slides as early as 1891, as well as private and government contracts. In its 19 years of operation, the Limelight Department produced about 300 films of various lengths, making it one of the largest film producers of its time. Joseph Perry helped establish Australia's first film studio in Melbourne and went on to make several early multi-media presentations for the Army's Limelight Department including, with Herbert Booth, *Soldiers of the Cross*. Perry was responsible for capturing the first ever inauguration of a nation (Australia) recorded on film in history. In May 1901 the Limelight Department filmed the arrival of the future George V, the St Kilda junction arch, special functions and the opening of Parliament in the Exhibition building. Black armbands featured for the death of Queen Victoria four months previously.

Films from around Melbourne from 1927 were also shown and included the Tivoli Theatre, Collins Street, Queen Victoria Hospital, electric trams in Swanson Street, the State Library and Museum and the paddle steamer Hygeia.

## **DATES FOR MEETINGS 2024**

<b>Tuesday February 27 2024</b>	<b>7.30pm</b>	<b>Dimity Williams - <i>Nature, Our Medicine</i></b>
<b>Tuesday March 26 2024</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>Zac Gorman - <i>The Menzies Watershed</i></b>
<b>Tuesday April 23 2024</b>	<b>7.30pm</b>	<b>Iambis Englezos – <i>WWI and Frommelles</i></b>
<b>Tuesday May 28 2024</b>	<b>7.30pm</b>	<b>Ian Penrose – <i>The history of the Yarra River</i></b>

## **CAMBERWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS 2023 - 24**

Camberwell Historical Society's financial year operates from 1 July to 30 June. Subscriptions for the 2023 – 2024 financial year are due and payable from 1 July 2023. 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 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, INC**

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