

NEPEAN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY
INC.
SORRENTO
3943

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THE NEPEAN

VOLUME 5 NUMBER 3

SEPTEMBER 2010

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE QUARANTINE STATION?



The Guest Speaker at the NHS meeting on Friday September 3rd will be Mr Stuart Hughes, manager of the Point Nepean National Park. Members of the NHS have long been associated with the Quarantine Station, and the "Friends of the Quarantine Station" group is still actively involved at the site. The Parks Victoria management has recently released a Draft Master Plan of future developments, and members will have an excellent opportunity at the meeting to learn at first hand about the proposed plans for this wonderful part of the history of our peninsula and of our state.

COMING EVENTS

September 3rd at 8 pm—September Meeting with guest speaker Stuart Hughes, Manager, Point Nepean National Park.

September 15th (Wednesday) at 2 pm— Special Meeting at the 1803 Settlement Centre (see page 3)

October 1st at 8 pm—**Annual General Meeting** (see Notice on back page and Agenda below)

October 1 –10—Guided Tours in Sorrento for “Celebrate Sorrento” Week.

October 24—31 - Local History Week

October 30th at 2 pm— Launch of new edition of **Tram to Sorrento** in Sorrento Park (see page 7 and flyer)

November 5th at 8 pm—November Meeting with guest speaker Ian McCaskill from Port Phillip Pilot Service

November 15th—Excursion to South Channel Fort (see p. 3 and flyer)

December 3rd - Members' Christmas Function

PROMOTIONAL STALLS

September 11th Sorrento September 18th Blairgowrie

October 9th Sorrento October 23rd Blairgowrie

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AGENDA

Monday October 1st at 8 pm

Welcome, Apologies

Confirmation of Minutes of previous Annual General Meeting, 2.10.2009.

Business arising from the Minutes.

Reports: President's Report

Treasurer's Report and Audited Financial Statement

Election of Office Bearers

President, Vice-Presidents (2), Hon. Secretary, Assistant Secretary,

Hon. Treasurer, Archivist, Collection/Display Coordinator,

Committee (no less than 3)

Appointment of Public Officer

Appointment of Auditor

Guest Speaker: The Librarian, Mornington Peninsula Regional Library

Close of Meeting.

Proxy Votes

Should a member be unable to attend the AGM, the member may vote by proxy.

Proxy forms are available on application to the Secretary. Please note that completed proxy forms must be received by the 24th September 2010.

Don Ewart, Honorary Secretary

MEETINGS AND EXCURSIONS



COME TO THE 1803 SETTLEMENT CENTRE

A meeting of the Nepean Historical Society will be held on **Wednesday 15th September** at 2pm at The 1803 Settlement Centre Sorrento, Leggett's Way, off Point Nepean Road (Melways Ref. 157 F10). The new DVD ***Boon Wurrung*** will be shown. The DVD which documents the history of the Boon Wurrung people has been produced by The Friends of the Collins Settlement, Sorrento Inc. This will also be an opportunity to see the new Centre, for those who have not already done so. The meeting will be followed by refreshments. All members and friends welcome.



VISIT THE SOUTH CHANNEL FORT

Learn more about the history of the South Channel Fort on the Nepean Historical Society's Excursion on Monday **15th November**. A boat will leave the Sorrento Pier at 9.30 a.m. going to the South Channel Fort and passing other sites of interest. On arrival we will go ashore for a guided tour of the Fort. The boat will return to Sorrento Pier at 12.30 p.m. The cost of \$39 includes morning tea. A flyer with booking form is included.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

SPEAKERS As foreshadowed in the last edition of The Nepean our June meeting included Arthur Hicowe showing us some fascinating home movies of life on the Peninsula in the 1950's and 1960's, to which most members of the audience could relate. In July we had Leonie Foster talking on women and shipwrecks at our lunch meeting at the Rye Hotel, while in August we had Jane Alexander, the Director if the Mornington Regional Gallery discussing the evolution, role and purpose of the Gallery.

Our September meeting (September 2nd) is not to be missed. Stuart Hughes, the Parks Victoria Manager of the Point Nepean Park will be explaining the details of their recently released Draft Master Plan for the site and how it will impact on the Mornington Peninsula.

Don't forget that our AGM will be held on Friday 1st October with a speaker from the Mornington Peninsula Regional Library explaining the role of the Library and the facilities it has to offer. On Friday 5th November Ian McCaskill will talk to us on the history of the Port Phillip Pilot Service, while our December meeting will be the usual social function.

AGM The Society's AGM will be held on Friday 1st October at 8 pm. We hope you will make a special effort to attend to support the Committee and the volunteers, all of whom put in many hours on your behalf to keep the NHS active, relevant and vibrant.



NHS
President
Dr Robert
Barnes

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

NHS ACTIVITIES The Society continues to play an active part of community projects. Discussions are continuing regarding the access from the Collins Settlement Visitors' Centre around to Sullivan Bay via the Eastern Sister, and we are hopeful that an agreement can soon be made with the new owners of the Rand Estate. The Conservation Group and the Council are the other interested negotiating parties. The NHS has had a series of meetings with Parks Victoria regarding the Museum at the Quarantine Station, as well as the provision of guided tours. A museum (or Interpretive Centre) is an integral part of the plans for the Quarantine Station so much of the agenda revolves around the setting up, operations and manning of the Museum, as well as the cataloguing and storage of display materials. Other activities are covered in the Education and Local History Report in this issue of The Nepean.

COMMUNICATIONS We are trying to establish the email addresses of our members to remind them of NHS activities. If you have an email address could you please send a short email to the NHS at nepeanhs@satlink.com.au saying "email address above."

TREASURER AND SHOP MANAGER

We are still seeking expressions of interest from people with book keeping or some accounting experience who could oversee the Society's finances. The financial recording and reporting systems are in place, so there are no arduous or excessive time-consuming duties involved.

We are also looking for someone who could manage the NHS shop. This mainly involves stock control and preparation for our street stalls at Sorrento and Blairgowrie.

We look forward to seeing you at one of our activities.

Robert Barnes

THE YEAR'S GROUP TOURS

From the point of view of the group tour programme, the financial year ended on an heroic note! On the coldest day in the past decade Des Young (without his beanie) guided 25 students from the Defence International Training Centre around some of the historic sites of our area. At the Steam Tram Platform, Point Nepean and Collins Settlement the icy wind blew straight off the Antarctic and everyone was glad to finish up in the museum where we had the heaters on and the DVD of First Settlement ready to roll on the big screen. I lit the lamps in Watts' Cottage to give a semblance of cosiness and the group and their guide were more comfortable by the time they left. Special thanks to Des.

Over the course of the year we hosted a total of 22 groups comprising 611 persons and involving 69 sessions by members and 193 volunteer hours. The number of visitors and consequently the time so generously given by the volunteers is significantly larger than in the previous year. I am grateful for the support of Margaret Broadhead, Richard Cotter, David Dallas, Jo Davie, Rhonda Fitzjohn, Brendan Guy, Joy Kitch, Sue Martin, Naomi Nicholson, Doreen Parker, Janet South, Barbara Stephenson and Natasha Wicks as well as Des Young.

The feedback from our visitors has been pleasing but we continue to work on the task of upgrading our presentations so that we can bring the relevance of local history to all age groups.

Bergliot Dallas, Co-ordinator of Group Tours, 5982 0502

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members:
Christine Anderson, Rye; **Anne and Graeme Rabie**, Sorrento;
Jill and Wayne Bastow, Rye; **Jim and Fay Kerrison**, Melbourne;
Keith and Deidre Anderson, Blairgowrie; **Faye and Bernie Poll**, Rye.

If a membership Renewal form is included with your newsletter it indicates that your membership is overdue, and your attention to it would be appreciated

Judy Walsh, Membership Coordinator

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH THE DISPLAYS?

What are those curiously colourful little stone pieces in the Aboriginal display? If you want to learn more about our small but very precious and ancient **Aboriginal microliths** see the photos and explanations of their significance now in the Main Room. Richard Cotter and the First Settlement people have kindly lent us this display.

Our seven important **Roland Clark paintings** are now finally on display together in the Heritage Gallery. Thanks to Frank South for hanging them. These early water colour paintings of Sorrento provide interesting information about Sorrento's past. NHS member Peter Munro is researching Clark and his findings (and frustrations) so far are available in a booklet near the paintings.

Details about Clark are sketchy. He emigrated from England to New Zealand in about 1881. He married Agnes Flora Wann in New Zealand and they had 5 children, 3 born in N.Z. and 2 in Melbourne in St. Kilda. All his known paintings are of St. Kilda and Sorrento and all were completed between 1899 and 1906.

He became known by some in the Sorrento community as 'the mad artist' perhaps due to his social isolation. He died suddenly on December 27th 1908 at 'The Haven' in Sorrento presumably alone as no family member is mentioned as witness or informant.

We still want to hear what you believe are the significant items in the museum. Write a note or email to

joynev@westnet.com.au

Joy Kitch and Jo Davie

"TRAM TO SORRENTO"

The new edition of this book by A.P. Winzenried will be launched by Mornington Peninsula Shire Mayor Councillor David Gibb at 2 pm on Saturday October 30th at the restored Tram Platform at Policeman's Point, Sorrento Park, Sorrento.

All welcome. See the attached flyer with an

Invitation to afternoon tea

EDUCATION AND LOCAL HISTORY REPORT

1. Sub Committee

At the last meeting, the management committee accepted the resignation of John Alexander as chair of the Local History and Education Sub Committee. Frank Hindley has kindly accepted nomination as the chair of the sub committee.

2. 3080 Point Nepean Road

The Mornington Peninsula Shire Council has now listed a Planning Application conference to be held at the end of July of those parties who have lodged objections to the proposed subdivision.

3. Western Sister

The Shire contractor has cleared the Church Hill site and the area is now suitable for a ground radar survey to possibly locate any items from the 1803 Collins Settlement. This is being discussed with Monash Geoscope of Monash University who have previously surveyed the graves area at the Quarantine Station.

4. Shire Budget 2010-11

\$60,000 has been set aside in the budget for the Shire Police Point Park at Portsea and which will hopefully include picnic facilities. The budget also provides funding for a new pathway from Blairgowrie to Stringers Road, but not all the way to Sorrento. Widening of the junction of Melbourne Road and Ocean Beach Road to improve traffic flow in busy periods is not included in this budget.

5. Quarantine Station

The long awaited Draft Master Plan outlining future development, prepared by Parks Victoria, is now available for public comment.

6. Anzac Centenary Memorial Commission

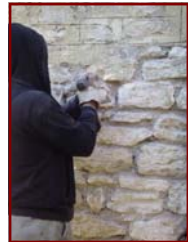
This Society has been asked to assist in developing a proposal covering the Point Nepean Defence contribution, including restoration of the gun that fired the first shots in both World Wars, for submission to the Anzac Centenary memorial Commission.

Don Ewart
Honorary Secretary

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE MUSEUM?

1. Limestone Repairs

Members will be aware that the Shire Council received a grant from Heritage Victoria in 2004 to repair the external limestone walls of the museum building. Following inspection and assessment by consultant Dr. David Young, the Shire has awarded a contract to stone mason Tim O'Connor. Julian Horman, architect, has prepared the necessary documentation. Work commenced on site at the beginning of July and the stonework repairs are expected to be completed towards the end of August. Additional contracts will need to be arranged to address the drainage, downpipes and guttering etc. to be funded from the Shire maintenance budget. On completion of the drainage works it is planned that the existing gravel drive be sealed from Melbourne Road as far as the public toilets at the rear of the building.



2. Emergency Alarm Bell

On Sunday 25th July the old emergency alarm bell located in the grassed area at the front of the museum collapsed across the footpath. The timbers supporting the substantial post to which the bell is fixed had rotted and apparently just gave way. It is anticipated that the Council will restore the post to the same position.

3. Electric Ball

The electric ball is currently stored in the yard at the rear of the museum. When the limestone repair work is completed it is planned to return the ball to its former position at the front of the museum.

Don Ewart

TITANIC - A MORNINGTON PENINSULA CONNECTION

Did you know that there exists a connection between the Titanic Tragedy and the Mornington Peninsula? I certainly didn't until I was fortunate enough to attend The Titanic Artefact preview at The Melbourne Museum. Among the six Australians who were on board on that fateful night in April 1912, was second class passenger Arthur Gordon McCrae. McCrae aged 32 was an engineer who, like 90% of the male second class passengers, perished when the ship struck an iceberg and sank in the early hours of April 15th 1912.

McCrae was the grandson of Georgiana McCrae, one of Melbourne's pioneer women: an accomplished artist and diarist. Georgiana's story is well documented and so is her family's movement to the Mornington Peninsula between 1845 and 1851 in the vicinity of Arthur's Seat. Her name is perpetuated in the byside town of McCrae.



Four weeks after I viewed the Titanic Exhibition in Melbourne, on an overcast Saturday morning I was standing in the midst of the Titanic burial section of the Fairhaven Lawn Cemetery in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Of the 336 bodies recovered from the Titanic, 121 are buried at Fairhaven. The Celtic Cross on one of the graves seemed strangely disproportionate to the uniformity of the surrounding headstones. The grave is that of body number 201, Arthur Gordon McCrae, recovered in the gruesome salvage operation launched from Halifax several days after the disaster.

McCrae's body when recovered was wearing white canvas shoes, a blue suit and a flannel shirt. The possessions found on the body included a diamond and emerald ring, gold cuff links, watch, keys and a pencil case. McCrae who had worked as an engineer in South Africa and Russia was travelling alone. He was intending to visit friends in Canada. McCrae's parents had paid to replace the original stone provided by the owners of Titanic, the White Star Line, with a larger one in the shape of a Celtic Cross. It is the largest headstone in this section of the cemetery.

Before leaving Fairview, I paused momentarily to look once more at the Celtic Cross. I wonder whether McCrae ever visited the Mornington Peninsula, or even the homestead of his heritage or indeed the seaside village that bears his family name.

Peter Munro

CAN YOU HELP????

Our monthly promotion stalls in Sorrento and Blairgowrie require two people to transport stock and tables and set up our monthly stalls held on a Saturday morning from 9am to 12.30pm.

The income from these stalls is vital to ensure our Museum remains viable.

Our rostered volunteers will man the stall once it is set up, so if you can help in this way you would not be required to remain for the entire morning.

**Please call Bev Baker or Don Ewart
on 5984 0255
for further information.**

NEPEAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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Nepean Historical Society
Sorrento

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**The Annual General Meeting
of the Nepean Historical Society Incorporated
will be held in the Museum's Heritage Gallery,
Melbourne Road, Sorrento,
on Friday, 1st October, 2010, at 8.00 p.m.**

See page 2 for the Agenda.

*Guest Speaker from the Mornington Peninsula Library Service;
Topic "Evolution and History of the Library"*

OFFICE-BEARERS

PRESIDENT: Dr Robert Barnes

VICE-PRESIDENT : Ms Val Pepler

SECRETARY: Mr Don Ewart

ASSISTANT SECRETARY : Mrs Bev Baker

TREASURER: position vacant

DUTY ROSTER CONVENOR: Mr Ian Bowers

ARCHIVIST: Mrs Janet South

DISPLAYS AND COLLECTION CO-ORDINATOR : Mrs Joy Kitch

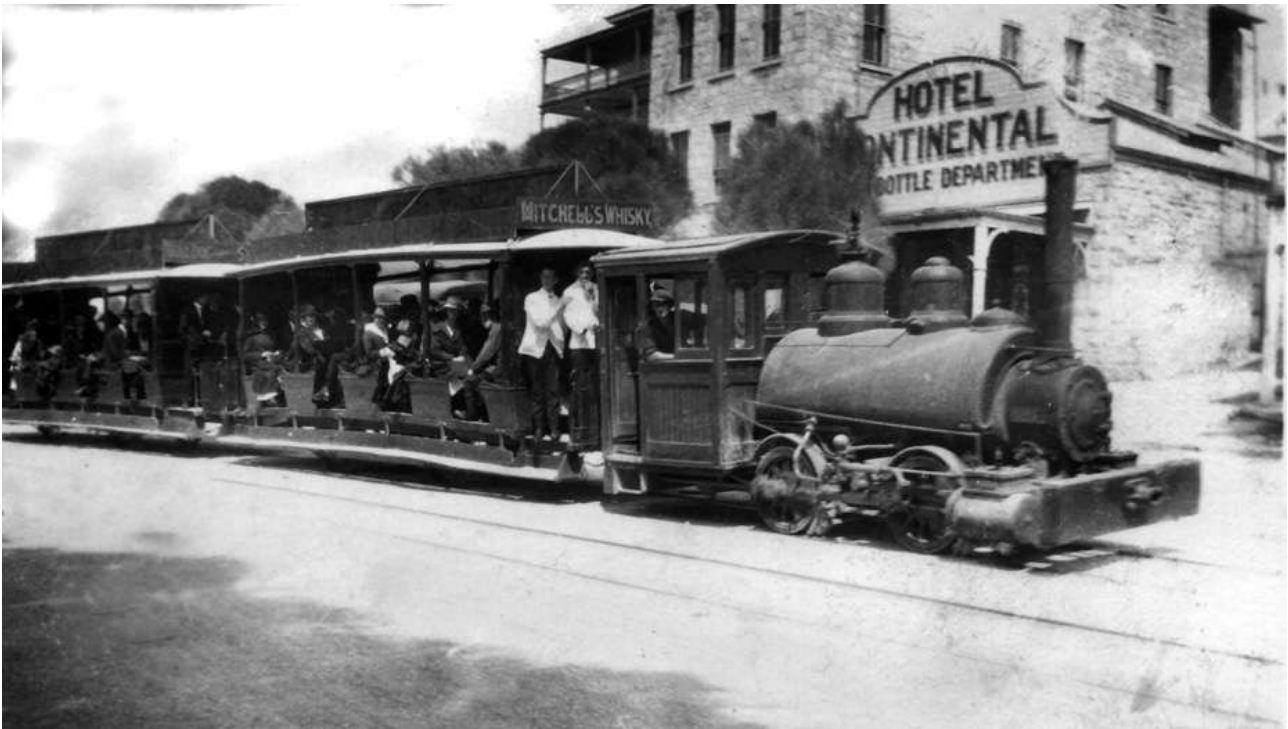
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY : Mrs Judy Walsh

The Nepean Historical Society appreciates the support of -



**COMMITTED TO A
SUSTAINABLE
PENINSULA**





INVITATION TO BOOK LAUNCH

You are invited to attend the launch of the new and updated edition of the book *'Tram to Sorrento'* by Arthur Winzenried at the Steam Tram Platform, Policeman's Point, Sorrento Park, (near Sorrento Pier) at 2 p.m. on Saturday 30th October 2010.

The launch will be followed by afternoon tea. To purchase a ticket for afternoon tea please complete the form below and return it, together with payment of \$7.50 per person, to: Doreen Parker, The Nepean Historical Society, P.O. Box 139, Sorrento, 3943 by Friday 15th October.

Nepean Historical Society Afternoon tea on 30th October 2010

Name

Address for mailing of ticket (s)

..... Postcode

Telephone Number

Payment of \$for ... person(s) enclosed

Please make cheques payable to Nepean Historical Society.



VISIT THE SOUTH CHANNEL FORT

Learn more about the history of the South Channel Fort on the Nepean Historical Society's Excursion on Monday 15th November.

A boat will leave the Sorrento Pier at 9.30 a.m. going to to the South Channel Fort and passing other sites of interest. On arrival we will go ashore for a guided tour of the Fort. The boat will return to Sorrento Pier at 12.30 p.m.

The cost of \$39 includes morning tea.

To book complete the form below and return it by Friday 29th October to: Doreen Parker, The Nepean Historical Society, P.O. Box 139, Sorrento, 3943.

Note that this excursion may be cancelled if weather conditions are unsuitable.

Nepean Historical Society Excursion to South Channel Fort 15th November 2010

Name

Address

..... Postcode

Telephone Number

(This will be the number for contact in the event of late cancellation due to an unsuitable weather forecast)

Payment of \$for ... person(s) enclosed

Please make cheques payable to Nepean Historical Society.