



MARCH
2001

EAST
MELBOURNE
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY



Chancellor Fay Marles, Melbourne University.
Photograph courtesy of The Age

Congratulations

Congratulations to EMHS member, Fay Marles, who has become the first female chancellor of the 148-year-old Melbourne University.

As reported in *The Age* on 6 March, Fay was Victoria's first equal opportunity commissioner and has been a deputy chancellor of Melbourne University for 14 years.

Committee

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Membership

Membership of the East Melbourne Historical Society is open to all who are interested in the history of East Melbourne.

Annual subscription: \$25.00

Guests are welcome
at individual meetings \$5.00

**Affiliated with
The Royal Historical Society of Victoria**

President's Column

A Happy New Year to all those members who were not at our first meeting.

First, some good news. The Melbourne City Council has now approved, in principle, the reconstruction of the East Melbourne Library and the new building is expected to include meeting rooms (with kitchen facilities), a lock-up room for the Historical Society and lockable display cases. This is all however subject to allocation of capital funds in June, but it appears there is an excellent chance of this.

Since our last newsletter, we have had our first Annual General Meeting, at which Dr Miles Lewis spoke on *East Melbourne – the Secret History*. He explained how the present East Melbourne street plan was reached. He advises that after correction, rearrangement and some expansion this material will be available in printed form.

We also had of course, our cheerful Christmas function at which Bruce McBrien spoke most entertainingly of his recollections of Melbourne in the thirties and we hope that in due course, and with the help of Rod Goodwin, his recollections also may be available in more permanent form.

The Christmas function was held at what will be our venue for meetings from now on – the Sir Robert Menzies Memorial Foundation building in Clarendon Terrace. Our speakers during the year – Gary Presland,

Dianne Reilly, Anne Galbally and Dr Miles Lewis attended the Christmas function.

We are extremely grateful for the Foundation's co-operation and assistance. The Foundation's principal activities are the development and support of medical, scientific and educational institutions, and the provision of scholarships, fellowships and lectureships, and the President of the Association is a fellow East Melburnian, Sir Daryl Dawson. Their facilities should make the task of the committee easier and increase the comfort of members.

This year. Our series of lectures cover the period from the Gold Rush to Federation. Our first address was a fascinating exposé of life and conditions in early Melbourne, pre-water and sewerage, by Professor Graeme Davison, Professor of History at Monash University. The remainder of our program for the year is contained elsewhere in the Newsletter. It should be a good year and we look forward to seeing you at our meetings.

I remind members that we are anxious to obtain early photographs of, or information about East Melbourne, and if anyone who has anything of the sort would be prepared to make it available to us we would arrange copying.

FB Lewis

Our new venue

This year, our series of lectures will be held at Clarendon Terrace, 210 Clarendon Street, East Melbourne.

Clarendon Terrace is a terrace of three two-storied houses built in 1857-58 by Robert Huckson for Charles Lister, a wine and spirit merchant. The architect was Osgood Pritchard who also designed 206 Clarendon Terrace, once the home of Sir Redmond Barry. Originally, the houses were leased to a number of occupants, including Mr G.C. Levey, MLA, and Ah Mouy, a well-known Chinese merchant. Charles Lister sold the property in 1874 and the building passed through the hands of various owners. The central terrace, number 210, was converted to flats in the middle of last century.

In architectural terms, Clarendon Terrace is a comparatively early building in Melbourne. Its great significance stems from the main façade, the centerpiece of which is a portico of four columns in the Corinthian order.

Clarendon Terrace was classified by the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) in 1958, but by then it had suffered many years of neglect and a permit for its demolition was issued in 1977. The National Trust recognised the great architectural merit of the building and, with strong financial support from the Victorian Government, purchased the building.

On 30 April 1982, Sir Zelman Cowen, then Governor-General of Australia, opened the building as the headquarters of the Sir Robert Menzies National Foundation which was the principal memorial created by the Sir Robert Menzies Memorial Trust, itself established in honour of Sir Robert who was Prime Minister from 1939-1941 and again from 1949-1966 and who died in 1978.

The Foundation agreed to pay the main cost of restoration and repair and to equip and furnish the building. In return the National Trust has leased the building to the Foundation for a peppercorn rent for 45 years, with first option to buy should the National Trust ever decide to sell.

The Sir Robert Menzies Foundation

The Foundation's task is to promote through research and innovation the health, fitness and physical achievement of the Australian community. It carries out this task by supporting, after careful scrutiny and on the highest professional advice, those projects and programmes





This drawing of Clarendon Terrace is by Charles Bush

Calendar of Events

This years' lecture series will cover the period from
the Gold Rush to Federation.

Wednesday, 21 February

Our first speaker for the year was Professor Graeme Davison, Professor of History, Monash University. Graeme's lecture, entitled *The Wild West and the Genteel East: Melbourne and the Gold Rush* contrasted the development of East Melbourne as one of Melbourne's new, genteel, eastern suburbs, demonstrated by the proliferation of churches and schools, to the pubs and boarding houses of Melbourne's 'West End'.

Wednesday, 18 April

Dr Richard Broome, Coordinator of Postgraduate Studies, History Programme, La Trobe University, will speak on *Writing Local Histories*. Richard will provide the tools and ideas for turning the research materials found in archives such as the PROV, into readable histories.

Wednesday, 20 June

Visit to the new North Melbourne archive centre of the Public Record Office Victoria. Officially opened in November last year by the Minister for the Arts, Hon. Mary Delahunty, the archives centre holds all Victorian government records of enduring value, from the establishment of the Port Phillip District in 1836, to the present day. We are fortunate to have access to this state-of-the-art centre. This

tour will give an overview of the documents held by the PROV, with emphasis on researching East Melbourne houses.

Wednesday, 15 August

Alan Willingham, well-known public commentator on all things architectural, will speak on the building boom and bust of the 1880s and 1890s, with particular focus on East Melbourne. As a conservation architect and a Council member of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, Alan's address is sure to be both lively and informative.

Wednesday, 17 October – AGM

At this, our Second Annual General Meeting, we are privileged that Professor Stuart McIntyre, Dean of Arts, University of Melbourne and member of the Centenary of Federation Victorian Committee, will be speaking on the topic *How popular was Federation?*

Wednesday, 5 December

This year, our Christmas function will take the form of a Musical Soiree, highlighting the talents of various

For further information about any of these events, please contact the Hon. Secretary, Liz Rushen, on 9419 3811

Notices

Yarra-Melbourne Local History Forum

The next meeting of the Yarra-Melbourne Local History Forum will be held on Thursday 26 April at 7.30pm. This Forum has evolved from the highly-successful Yarra-Melbourne Regional Library Advisory Committee Seminar held last year. The Local History Forum is in the process of preparing a submission to the cities of Yarra and Melbourne for the appointment of a Field Historian. Members of the EMHS committee have been attending these meetings, which are open to all those interested in local history.

Further details: Judith Biddington, 9387 8851

Royal Historical Society of Victoria

On 20 March, Dr John Trinca will speak on: In Quest of an Elusive Artist. Of particular interest to East Melbournians will be the address to be given on 17 April, by Alf Batchelder, entitled: Playing the Greater Game - The Melbourne Cricket Club and Its Ground during the First World War.

The 2001 Conference of the RHSV will be held on Sunday 8 April at RHSV Headquarters in the former RAAMC Drill Hall, 239 ABeckett Street Melbourne. The theme of the conference is 'La Trobe's Victoria'. A keynote address will be given by Professor Emeritus AGL Shaw, and a distinguished line-up of speakers will cover various aspects of La Trobe's life. During lunch, the conference party

will travel to Agnes Street Jolimont to witness the unveiling of a plaque commemorating the 200th anniversary of La Trobe's birth in 1801, after which a Swiss picnic lunch will be taken in the Fitzroy Gardens.

Melbourne Museum

Have you visited the new Museum? The current exhibition, *Forging the Nation: Federation – the first 20 years*, celebrates Australia's Centenary of Federation with a series of exhibitions, walks, displays and activities from 3 March until 3 June

Can You Help?

Mrs Olwen Fenton of Euroa is researching Lowe Kong Meng, who lived in 'Valetta', on the corner of Albert and Clarendon Streets East Melbourne circa 1868-1873. If you are able to help, please contact Liz Rushen for further details.

Ideas?

As a new Society, we have concentrated on establishing a solid lecture programme, and distributing an informative newsletter. There are many ways in which we could develop, for example: recording oral histories of East Melbourne residents, helping members with research, development of an archive, publication of a walking tour.

If you have ideas for ways in which you would like to see our Society develop, particularly if you are able to assist, please contact the President,

Some tips for researching your house

When researching buildings, keep in mind:

- the importance of context – locality and place;
- the importance of local knowledge – e.g. historical societies
- the importance of the physical fabric of the building – the physical content.

Resources to consult in researching the history of your house:

House Design:

- Buildings Register may provide original house plans, permits for building alterations; fittings plans and specifications (MCC)
- Investigate architect's files (SLV or Melb. Uni. Architecture Library)
- MMBW records includes close details of pipework, garden paths, etc. (PROV)
- Lands and titles records (PROV)
- Local newspapers provide information on tenders (prior to building); information on what

was on site before; description of building when opened; contemporary values and opinions; details of materials used and tradespeople employed (SLV).

- Old photographs can show the house in its streetscape or how it has changed (RHSV or EM library)
- Heritage Study of area (EM library MCC)
- Oral History – local knowledge

Previous Owners:

- Rate Book Searches – traces previous owners – listed under title of property or address by Ward (PROV, SLV, EM library)
- Sands and McDougalls Directories (Melbourne, suburban & country directories of Victoria). (SLV)
- Burchett Index (PRO, EM library) – contains descriptions and photos of some EM properties.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS 2001

Membership to the East Melbourne Historical Society Inc. is open to all interested in the history of East Melbourne.

Complete the details below and return with your payment of \$25 to:

Hon. Secretary, 72 Hotham Street, East Melbourne VIC 3002.

If you have any queries, please phone 9419 3811.

Receipts will be issued only on request. All members are issued with an annual membership card.

Enclosed is my cheque/cash for the amount of \$25.

TITLE: [Mr/Mrs/Ms/Prof/Dr etc]

SURNAME:

FIRST NAME:

MAILING ADDRESS:

PHONE NO:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

