



**FEBRUARY
2004**

**EAST
MELBOURNE
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER**

Contributions and Suggestions

We invite contributions relating to the history of East Melbourne from our members. Articles of up to 1500 words will be considered for publication. Small articles and items of interest are also welcome.

Contact Sylvia either by post at:
P.O. Box 355, East Melbourne,
telephone: 9417 2037
e-mail: sylvia.black@bigpond.com.

We would be pleased to receive your suggestions and ideas for activities, guest speakers, excursions or anything else you might like us to organize on your behalf.

Aims

A full Statement of Purposes appears in our Documents of Incorporation but briefly the aims of the Society are as follows:

- To foster an interest in the history of East Melbourne.
- To build an archive of material relevant to the history of East Melbourne.
- To promote interchange of information through lectures and tours.
- To promote heritage preservation.

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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.

Enquiries Jennifer Stanisich: 9417 6110

Annual subscription: \$25.00

Guests are welcome
at individual meetings \$5.00

Affiliated with
The Royal Historical Society of Victoria

President's Column

I am confident that the Society will continue to present interesting speakers and events during 2004. For example, we have in mind a visit to the Victorian Artists' Society, in conjunction with an exhibition, where we can learn something of the history of that esteemed East Melbourne institution.

We also are keen to start visiting a few of the wonderful old homes of East Melbourne, many with interesting histories that date from the 1860s, 70s or 80s. If your home has an interesting history, and you are prepared tell us about it, and possibly also allow our members to attend as guests and be shown the main rooms, please give me a ring at home on 9419 4636. Possibly we could visit more than one home on the same night.

The Society will continue to be involved in local historical issues, although often it is a matter of whether the issue is best handled by our Society or the East Melbourne Group. Two current issues that interest us are the possible relocation of Latrobe's Cottage and the much needed renovation of the Tudor Village.

I look forward to speaking with you at our meetings, held on the third Wednesdays in the evenly numbered months (except December), usually at 8pm at Clarendon Terrace, 210 Clarendon Street East Melbourne. You do not need to be a member to attend.

*Kind regards,
Malcolm Howell
January 2004*

AGM and Mirka Mora

At our October meeting, after the formalities of the AGM were over, Mirka Mora entertained us with stories of her experiences as proprietor of the Balzac Restaurant from 1958-1965. Winifred Atwell was the first of many famous faces to be seen at the Balzac when she performed at its official opening. Others included Marlene Dietrich, Sabrina, Stanley Kramer and Ava Gardner.

Mirka reminded us of the strictness of licensing laws in those days when no wine was allowed to be consumed on the premises after

10.00 pm. and how the police would be waiting outside at 10.05 pm. just to make sure.

One of her funnier stories concerned the teacher from Yarra Park State School across the road, who came to lunch and inadvertently locked himself in the toilet. Mirka had to write him a note explaining why he was late for school. An odd experience was having to baby-sit a lion. This had belonged to a circus and its trainer was a friend of the chefs. It took up residence in the garden for two years.

Christmas function at Bishops court

The rain cleared just in time for our party to be held, as proposed, outside in the gardens of Bishops court. The gardens were looking beautiful and it was interesting to see the progress in their rejuvenation under the care of the Australian Garden History Society and its band of loyal helpers. Shelley Wood took guests on a guided ramble which was not only

enjoyable but gave us a good insight into the work involved in maintaining and improving the gardens. Bishop James Grant, later in the evening, gave us a most informative talk on the history of Bishops court and its occupants. It was a lovely wind up to our year with plenty to occupy both mind and body.

William Henry Croker

East Melbourne resident, Susan Koh, has recently leased the rights to establish The International Home of Rest for Champion Horses at Woodlands Historic Park and Homestead, a tourist facility which now operates on the site of the old Woodlands pastoral property first established in 1843. It is opposite Tullamarine airport and is managed by Parks Victoria. As well as providing a home for retired racehorses Woodlands will house a museum which will collect and exhibit memorabilia of the racing industry and of equine sports generally.

A former owner of Woodlands was William Henry Croker, whose principal residence was in East Melbourne. He lived at Airlie, 314 (now 318) Albert Street until 1915 and then at 144 Gipps Street until his death in 1922. He was prominent in the racing industry and bred many

racehorses at Woodlands. He was a highly respected steward of the VRC (Victoria Racing Committee) and founder of the Oaklands Hunt Club. Aside from his equine interests he was a maritime lawyer with offices in Collins Street West.

Susan would like to hear from you if you know of any other East Melbourne racing identities, past and present, involved in the "Sport of Kj8™s" both in Australia and overseas.

Members of the EMHS committee believe that if enough information comes to light it could make the basis of a newsletter article, a talk or even a walk, and would encourage anyone with information to contact the EMHS through Sylvia Black on: phone: 9417 2037 or email: sylvia.black@bigpond.com or to contact Susan on email: slnkoh@bigpond.com

Bourgoyne Cottage – by Ruth Dwyer

Bourgoyne Cottage, a double-fronted symmetrical dwelling on basalt footings, with tuck-pointed brickwork and a bull-nosed veranda, and cellars beneath ¹, was built for François Monichon by Thomas Wright. The basket arch, or *anse de panier*, to the front door gives the building a French appearance. The dwelling stands at 49 Agnes Street in Jolimont, part of East Melbourne. The land, 33 feet by 124, purchased by Monichon in 1865, was previously part of the kitchen meadow gardens of Governor Charles Joseph La Trobe. By 1866, a brick cottage of four rooms had been erected. Additions to the dwelling provided a comfortable cottage of a parlour and three bedrooms leading off the central passage, then a dining room, and down a stairway, a kitchen with pantry, and, perhaps later, a wood-fire stove with a copper for piped hot water. Stables and coach-house, now demolished, gave on to Jolimont Lane with grazing for the horses opposite. The property was originally numbered 3 Agnes Street ².

François Monichon was born c.1817 in Chalon-sur-Saône, Burgundy, France, and emigrated from St. Malo arriving in Melbourne aboard the *Admiral Baudin* on 4 January 1855. He had been one of the chefs of Napoleon III, and in Melbourne opened a restaurant at 98 Flinders Lane East becoming known as a chef, baker, confectioner, and pastry cook soon after his arrival. Later premises were at 101 Flinders Street. He became *chef-de-cuisine* at the Melbourne Club in Collins Street after which he filled the

same position at Scott's Hotel. It is also said that Monichon acted as *chef-de-cuisine* at functions given by the Governor. François was the son of Jacques Monichon and Marie Grace. *Bourgoyne Cottage* was so named in memory of the native place of his father ³.

François Monichon died intestate on 8 August 1879. After the untimely passing of the elder son, also François, the younger son, Louis Alexandre Jean Monichon, then the owner and licensee of the *Hawthorn Hotel* in Burwood Road, Hawthorn, applied for letters of administration of the estate in 1884 ⁴. The subsequent papers contained a comprehensive inventory of the contents of the six-roomed brick cottage, quite clearly described as *Bourgogne Cottage*, using the French spelling of Burgundy ⁵.

Inventory and particulars of the furniture of the late François Monichon of *Bourgogne Cottage*, Agnes Street, Jolimont, Cook.

Parlor (sic)

Six horse hair Chairs
One rocking chair cane seated
One easy chair, Horse hair couch
Once cedar Loo Table
One carpet
Looking Glass (Mantelpiece)
Gild 8 day Clock and shade
Two pair Curtains, pole & appendages
One Velvet pile table cloth
Fender & fire irons
Six pictures (Engravings)
Two vases
Venetian blinds



Bedroom No. 1

Half Tester Double Iron Bedstead, pair pillows

Mattress & bedding

One chest drawers

Washing Stand & ware

Carpet

Fender & fire irons

Looking Glass

Round deal table & Cloth

Sundry chimney Ornaments

Two oil paintings

Two pictures

Two vases

Cornice pole

Two pair curtains & appendages

Venetian blinds

Hearth rug

Three cane seated Chairs

One cane seated Rocking chair

Passage

Oilcloth

Bedroom No. 2

Double Iron Bedstead, pair palliasses

Mattress & bedding

Washstand & ware

Dressing table

Three bedroom chairs

Looking glass

Three pictures

Venetian blind

Pair curtains

Four chimney ornaments

Carpet

Bedroom No. 3

Double iron bedstead

Pair palliasses mattress & bedding

Three Oil paintings

Two chairs

Looking glass

Pair curtains

Venetian blind

Sundry ornaments

Diningroom

Sewing Machine "Wheeler & Wilson"

Six Cane seated chairs

Colonial sofa

Deal table & cloth

Venetian blinds

Pair curtains

Five pictures

Four Oil paintings

Common Clock

Household Linen

Kitchen

Two Kitchen tables

Two Meat safes

Cupboards

Crockery

Glassware

Boiler, Saucepans

Frying pans, &c., &c

Six common chairs

The few sets of probate papers containing such an inventory usually pertain to grander establishments. This set gives a glimpse of the furnishings of a more humble but comfortable dwelling of the mid 1880s, perhaps showing the influence of a French heritage. The valuation of the contents, unfortunately not itemized, totalled £100⁶. This inventory of 1884 adds to our knowledge of *Bourgoyne Cottage*, the dwelling built in 1865-6 for François Monichon and now numbered 49 Agnes Street, Jolimont. The cottage is classified as of local importance by the National Trust. It would be appropriate to amend the spelling of the name reverting to the original, *Bourgoyne Cottage*.

Notes –

(1) In a memoir held by the National Trust it is recorded that from one of these cellars a tunnel leads beneath Agnes Street ending roughly where La Trobe's cottage once stood. This memoir, written by a descendant of François Monichon, Snr., suggests that contact with La Trobe may have resulted. This would not have been possible as La Trobe left Melbourne on 5 May 1854.

Monichon did not arrive until 4 January 1855. According to Burchett, after La Trobe's departure, the military moved in, Sir Robert Nickle and Lieutenant-Colonel Macarthur and some of their staff.

(2) National Trust of Australia (Victoria), *Tasma Terrace*, 22 Parliament Place, East Melbourne, File No. 5248, *Bourgoyne Cottage*: City of Melbourne Rate Books 1866-1870, Agnes Street File, East Melbourne Library.

(3) Naturalization Papers, Series A712, Item 64/ F1961, Australian Archives, Canberra, ACT; *Argus*, 11 August 1879, p.1; File No. 5248, op. cit.

(4) Probate Index, Victoria, 28/271, François Monichon, Snr.; Borough of Hawthorn Rate Book, 1884-5, p. 8, No. 210, Louis Monichon.

(5) Public Record Office of Victoria, VPRS 28 Unit 335 28/271 François Monichon, Snr. It is, however, somewhat disappointing to find that the contents of the cellars were not listed in the inventory.

(6) *Ibid.*; File No. 5248, op.cit.

Research Queries Urban Activism

Dr. David Nichols, Faculty of Arts, Deakin University, seeks help with a project he is working on. He writes as follows:

“The project is officially entitled ‘*Community and Governance: Urban Activism in Melbourne in the 1960s*’, and it aims to explore the issues and events of inner-city residents’ resistance to attempts by government (eg the Housing Commission, freeway-builders, public agencies) and private enterprise to reshape Melbourne’s inner suburbs.

East Melbourne was the site of the first real residents’ resistance to inappropriate development, in the 1950s and I know the suburb has continued to be highly valued by those who live there since that time. With this in mind, I would be very pleased to hear from any of your readers/members who might have had experiences as an ‘activist’ in the inner city between 1965 and 1975, who might like to share their recollections. We are also hoping to build up an archive of material relating to inner-city activism and residents’ action groups, and would like to hear from anyone with photographs, newsletters, and other documents that would throw light on the ‘urban activism’ experience at this time.

I can be contacted at Deakin University, Burwood on 9251 7206, via email at dgnichol@deakin.edu.au, or via mail: Dr. David Nichols, Faculty of Arts, Deakin University, 221 Burwood Highway, Burwood Vic 3125.”

Coming Events

Wednesday, 18 February, 8.00p.m.
at Clarendon Terrace –

Panel discussion

Vice-regal Pre-fab to Move? East Melbourne resident, Nerida Sampson, has made a submission to Council that La Trobe's Cottage, currently languishing in the King's Domain, be moved to the recently vacated nursery depot in the Fitzroy Gardens and closer to its original site.

Come and join the discussion and debate between Nerida and distinguished guest panelists: Susan Balderstone, Heritage Victoria; Prof. Miles Lewis, Architectural Historian; and Prof. A.G.L. Shaw AO, La Trobe Society.

Wednesday, 21 April, 8.00p.m. at
Clarendon Terrace –

Talk

Liz Rushen, our vice-president and CEO of The Royal Historical Society of Victoria, will talk on her recently published book,

Single & Free: Female Migration to Australia 1833-1837. The book deals with the first scheme for female migration to Australia from Britain and Ireland in the 1830s. It is a most interesting and carefully researched book, drawing on many previously unexamined sources.

While the scope of the book does not directly concern East Melbourne Liz has found some surprising links which she will expand.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS 2003

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:

Membership Secretary, PO Box 355, East Melbourne, Victoria 3002.

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: _____

