



SEPTEMBER  
2005

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](mailto: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

Our Society remains very active, with interesting and informative speakers arranged well into next year. A brochure promoting the Society is in its formative stage, and we look forward to the completion of the East Melbourne library where the Society will maintain a permanent display of historical items relating to East Melbourne.

We have received some items from the archives of the Mercy Hospital, and are keen to build up more information about the hospital now that it has transferred to Heidelberg. A few more photographs of the houses that were demolished to make way for the Mercy Hospital also would be a welcome addition to our collection.

Most importantly of all, Bridget Basham is filming East Melbourne to

provide a permanent record of East Melbourne as it stands at the present time. It will provide an interesting comparison to the Wilfred Burchett film made in the 1960s.

Please do not hesitate to make available to the Society any documents, newspaper items or photographs relating to East Melbourne, perhaps even your house. We will take copies at our own expense and return the originals. And, if you are thinking of becoming a member, please just turn up at one of our meetings. Our next meeting is at 8.00pm on Wednesday 19 October 2005 at Clarendon Terrace, 210 Clarendon Street East Melbourne.

*Best wishes to you all,  
Malcolm Howell, President,  
September 2005*

## Brunton Avenue: Things we take for granted

An article in the June issue of Melbourne Cricket Club News includes a photograph of the MCG taken by the RAAF in 1937, with Brunton Avenue nowhere to be seen. The article states that another RAAF aerial photograph taken in 1944 shows Brunton Avenue, and that Brunton Avenue probably was built shortly after 1938 when former Lord Mayor Brunton died. Our Society, and possibly the Melbourne Cricket Club, would welcome further information about Brunton Avenue (so well known to MCG patrons).

## Bruce Trethowan — Speaker

At our June meeting architect and local resident, Bruce Trethowan, gave a most interesting illustrated talk on history and development in East Melbourne, and some of the forces that have shaped our architectural heritage. He focused on the one block, bounded by Wellington Parade, Simpson, George and Powlett Streets. First he conducted us on a virtual tour of the streetscape as it is now. Then layer by layer, using a range of illustrations, he stripped back the years, finishing with

Continued

an isometric drawing done in 1866 of the CBD and part of East Melbourne, which showed us in extraordinary detail this same block as it was back then.

Along the way we learnt of the changes that had happened to the house at 86 Wellington Parade. It was first built in 1855 for J.D. Pinnock, who may be familiar to some from another talk given to the society by Dr. Liz Rushen. It was designed by John Gill and although a very large house was then of more simple and classic appearance.

A member of the audience, Bruce McBrien, had his own story to add to the history of the house, telling us about a murder which took place there. The full story of this is the subject of our feature article.

## Prof. David Aspin — Speaker

At our August meeting we enjoyed having Professor Aspin speak to us on the subject of our local Anglican parish, starting with the building of a school at East Melbourne's north east corner in 1857. The school served as the parish's first place of worship. It has since been sold to the Catholic Church and is now the site of St. John's School. In 1863 718 people signed a petition asking for a parish church, an enormous number considering the population of East Melbourne even now. Bishop Perry refused a parish church, in expectation that the cathedral would be built on

the cathedral reserve at the top of Hotham Street, but compromised, allowing a chapter house. This was built in George Street in 1864. It was given parish church status when it was decided to build the cathedral in the city. A vicarage was built next door, but when the church burnt down the new Holy Trinity was built on the corner of Hotham Street and the original site sold.

The talk touched on not only the history of the parish's buildings but also of its politics, its people and its impressive involvement in local community life.

Elizabeth Cam had prepared a display of early photos and documents to accompany the talk, which we were able to view afterwards while enjoying, as always, the products of Elizabeth's exceptional baking skills.

**Notice of Annual General Meeting and nomination form are enclosed with this newsletter.**

**All financial members of the EMHS are eligible to be nominated for the committee.**

**The committee needs new members – please think about it.**

# Outrage at Lauriston Hall

By Travis M. Sellers

Lieutenant-Colonel Eric William Tulloch, M.C. & Bar was no nondescript member of the public, but a distinguished citizen, an honoured war-hero and a loving husband. Which is why his death in mysterious circumstances was all the more tragic. Born at Ballarat in Victoria the son of a brewer, he received an upper-class education at Melbourne Church of England Boys' Grammar (1897-99) where he excelled as a sportsman and went on to represent Victoria in the eight-oared rowing crew that won consecutive interstate championships between 1902-04. He worked in Victoria and Western Australia as a brewer before enlisting in January 1915 with the rank of captain with the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion; at Gallipoli he was in charge of one of two bodies of men who in an extraordinary feat managed to reach their immediate objective during the disastrous landing; while on the Western front he was awarded the Military Cross in two separate acts of bravery. He returned to Australia in August 1919 and took up a senior position with "Victoria Brewery" – Victoria Parade, East Melbourne; in 1921 he was appointed head coach of Melbourne Boys' Grammar School rowing crew.

Lauriston Hall at 92 [now 86] Wellington Parade, East Melbourne was a fashionable guest house in a fashionable part of the city catering to a well-to-do clientele; a home-away-from-home where guests could mingle



Eric Tulloch. Reproduced with kind permission of Melbourne Grammar School

freely while maintaining a degree of privacy. It was in every way the last place to expect a cold-blooded murder but all this was shattered on the night of Friday 7 May 1926. Tulloch had been living at Lauriston Hall for the last six months while his wife, Lilian had been recovering her health in Sydney since 9 April; she had been in poor health for some time.

At about 8.30pm on the fateful night, an impromptu dance party was held amongst the guests to celebrate the success of the rowing team in the heats of the Head of the River; the final of the fiercely fought public schools' boat race was to be held the following day. It had been raining heavily that night. Tulloch was believed to have been suffering from a heavy cold and

retired to his room at 10.15pm; at about fifteen minutes to two in the morning the last light was extinguished by the proprietress Mary Beveridge. A few moments later guests were awoken from their slumber by the commotion of struggling noises, cries for help and the firing of two shots. Eileen McIntye, a clerk who occupied a room near Tulloch was awoken by scuffling noise outside her door followed by Tulloch saying "Now I've got you". A shot was then fired and Tulloch shouted "Help!" before a second shot was discharged. She jumped out of bed, looked out of the door and saw Tulloch in the act of falling while grasping a rung of the banisters.

William Archibald Lawrie, an officer of the "English, Scottish & Australian Bank" occupied a room on the ground floor next to the sitting room and was one of the first to rush to the scene. Before running upstairs he heard the front door slam and momentarily caught sight of a "very small" hatless man of 5 feet 5 inches in height, medium to stout build wearing a dark suit and "running as fast as he could"; bloodstains were found on the front doorstep. Lawrie indicated the man turned left at Wellington Parade and ran away in the direction of Richmond. A doctor was called for but it was to be in vain; Tulloch was dead. A post mortem by Dr. Crawford Mollison (1863-1949) revealed two bullet wounds to the left side, one on the chest and the other to the lower part of the abdomen; both had been fired at point-blank range.

Not since the tragic death of Alma Tirtschke\* in December 1921 had a

murder caused a greater sensation nor a more baffling case for the police. Nothing was stolen, his room had not been ransacked nor did he have any enemies leading Truth to speculate that Tulloch had been the victim of an act of jealousy or revenge; the paper said that "Tulloch was a popular man with the ladies and was "in the habit of taking women into his brewery at late hours". The paper said one lady whom Tulloch was "particularly friendly with" had "married a small shopkeeper a few days before giving birth to a son" and that the husband permitted "dinners at Menzies and other hotels, to shows and entertainments" right up until a short time before Tulloch's death. At his funeral held at the Brighton General Cemetery on 10 May 1926 before some 2,500 graveside mourners, the woman "gave way to uncontrollable grief" and was alleged to have said "My God, my God, what will I do? 'X' said he would shoot Eric if he came between us".

All the evidence suggests a murder cleverly planned to look like a house break-in gone awry. Mrs. Beveridge testified having secured all doors and windows just prior to the murder; the kitchen window was found open and the back door unlocked, yet no tracks were left by wet boots. Tulloch's bedroom was situated on the first floor in the remotest part of the house and to reach it, one had to pass a dozen other rooms along a maze of passages before reaching a blind passageway where his room and a women's bathroom were located; it required prior knowledge. A fawn or grey coloured hat bought at "Mountford's" of Bourke Street

some weeks before was left behind in the struggle (near Tulloch's body) as was an electric torch case (inside the front door) and battery (in the bathroom), two .25 calibre automatic pistol cartridge cases (bathroom) and a number of waistcoat buttons. The torch had been stolen from the room of a boarder some weeks before; all were likely to have been deliberately laid to deceive police.

The coronial inquiry held on 29 June before Mr. D. Berriman P.M. took just two and a half hours to find that "Eric William Tulloch died from bullet wounds of the heart and lungs, the bullets having been fired from a pistol by a man whose name is unknown, and who, I find, is guilty of the murder of Mr. Tulloch". And so yet another crime went unsolved.

As for the Melbourne Boys' Grammar eight-oared crew, they were to finish third place behind Scotch and Geelong in the final of the Head of the River.

Source:

ADB Volume 12 1891-1939 (Smy-Z).

The Argus 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 19 & 20 May 1926, 16, 29 & 30 June 1926.

The Herald 8 May 1926

The Truth 15 & 22 May 1926, 19 June 1926, 3 July 1926.

The Age 10 & 11 May 1926.

"Liber Melburniensis", Centenary Edition (1965)

\*Alma Tirtschke's murder is the subject of the new book, *Gun Alley: Murder, Lies and Failure of Justice*, by Kevin Morgan. Alma lived with her grand-mother, Elizabeth Tirtschke, in Jolimont Road, Jolimont.

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## Harold Parsons Champion Motorcyclist

The historical society has received a query from an officer of the Melbourne City Council asking if we had any information on a statue of a cyclist which used to stand in Weedon Reserve, East Melbourne (corner of Wellington Pde. and Hoddle St. She believed it had not been there for about 40 years. We were able to inform her that she undoubtedly meant the memorial to the motorcyclist, Harold Parsons, who was killed in an accident in 1921, and that the memorial is still there. The query aroused the need to know a little more about Harold Parsons and a Google search provided some snippets.

Soon after World War 1 Harold Parsons smashed 25 world records in 24 hours. He lived in Punt Road and met mates in Elizabeth Street [Melbourne]. He won world fame and was a local hero.

The Harold Parson's Reliability Run at Maffra, Victoria's longest and toughest annual reliability run, was set up to remember the achievements of the late Harold Parsons who broke 12 World Records in the Maffra-Sale area in 1920.

## EMHS and the Internet

Remember our catalogue is available on-line. Go to the Royal Historical Society of Victoria web-site: [www.historyvictoria.org.au](http://www.historyvictoria.org.au) and follow the link to the Victorian Local History Database.

Our newsletter is now on-line via the local history pages of the Yarra Melbourne Regional Libraries website: [www.ymrl.org.au](http://www.ymrl.org.au) This will help introduce the EMHS into a wider local history network and increase our public interface. It will make joining the society easier as it will be possible to print out the subscription form which appears on the back of the newsletter.

## Coming Events

**Wednesday, 19 October at 8.00 p.m.  
- AGM**

At Clarendon Terrace, 210 Clarendon Street, East Melbourne.

After the formalities of the AGM, our speaker, Meredith Gould, conservation architect, will explain the process of researching the history of houses. We hope that all who come will put their new knowledge to practical use.

**Wednesday, 7 December – Christmas function**

We are delighted that Roger Freeman has agreed to allow us to use his house, Mozart, 105 George Street for this year's Christmas function. In deference to his pristine timber floor we will be asking that people wear flat shoes (or be prepared to take heels off at the door).

Diarize now

## Membership Subscriptions 2004

**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: \_\_\_\_\_

