



March 2015

**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.

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.

Please contact any member of our committee.

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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Membership

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

Enquiries: Diane Clifford 9486 0793

Annual subscription: \$25.00

Guests are welcome
at individual meetings \$5.00

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

President's Letter

In April 2014, we began the massive task of researching the lives and service of the 758 men and women with an association with East Melbourne who volunteered for World War 1. As I write, in mid-February, and coming up the Centenary of Gallipoli, we have 450 completed biographies, thanks to the hard work and persistence of our small band of volunteers. In October, we commemorated the departure of the Victorian Fleet to Albany in our exhibition 'For King and Country: East Melbourne Volunteers in the Great War'. This year we will have another exhibition, this time of the nurses who served at the front, to be called 'Gone to War as Sister'.

The research gave us insight into East Melbourne as a working class suburb, peopled by labourers, factory workers, clerks, drivers, carpenters, gardeners, with the occasional baker, barman and bookbinder and a thin sprinkling of professional people. Two stand out for me: Rexford Burley, of 94 Vale St., a thoroughly unreliable and untrustworthy soldier from his record, wounded at Pozieres, then later on

the Somme, he went AWL four times, was convicted once of disobeying orders, then deserted his Battalion as they moved up to the front at Villers-Bretonneux and was given 10 years gaol. On enlisting in 1915, Burley had declared himself to be eighteen years and two months old, but checking his birth record and his death notice, he turned out to be only 14 in 1915 and still only eighteen when he returned home.

The second was that 'brave, bright and honourable boy', Stanley Lyons of the 7th Battalion, who lived on Jolimont Terrace and died at Anzac Cove. He was illegitimate, of an unknown father and a mother who abandoned him. Brought up in the state orphanage in Adelaide, he left South Australia after the foreman at the factory where he worked called him a bastard and said he would 'never amount to anything'. He joined up, aged eighteen, to make a name for himself, but was killed by a random shot less than four weeks after the Anzac landing.

*Jill Fenwick
February 2015*

Welcome To New Members

We would like to extend a warm welcome to new members:

Elspeth McLachlan
Alan Haintz
Peter and Collette Gray

Gail Dunston
Kate Wallace

A Cheery Soldier Makes Light Of Wounds

In 'The Broken Years' war historian Bill Gammage traced the changing attitudes of Australian soldiers towards the war through their letters home. Initially, war was going to be a chance to go overseas, a bit of a holiday, over before Christmas and resulting in an effortless victory due to the superior qualities of the allied troops. Prior to fighting, our newly enlisted Anzacs were patriotically imperialistic, optimistic, and yearning for action. One such soldier was James Heaney, of the 60th Battalion.

Heaney was born in 1876 in Casterton, Victoria, the son of Patrick and Honora Heaney, nee Quinn. At the time of his enlistment on 21 August 1914, he was an accountant, probably at 376 William Street, Melbourne, with his home address at 130 Grey Street, East Melbourne.

He was placed in the 60th Battalion, A Company, and left for Egypt two months later on board HMAT Hororata A20 on 19 October, 1914. It was at Anzac Cove that John Heaney was wounded on 14 July 1915, with shrapnel in the left thigh and left leg. Some months later, he wrote to a friend in Melbourne whose brother was missing in action. His letter was published in The Argus, 16 December 1915, P.7, under the title 'A Cheery Soldier Makes Light of Wounds', with the writer commenting

Few more interesting letters from Gallipoli have been received and certainly none

more cheerful in tone ... the writer's breezy recital of the fighting and of the manner of his wounding will be appreciated and it is particularly interesting to read the Australians' impression of England.

The tone of the letter may have been 'cheerful' but the content surely deserved some recognition that war was not merely 'interesting'

I was issuing the midday biscuits & 'bully beef' to my sap sentry squad when Mr. 11.2 (a new high powered gun) came in our front door only about five yards from where I stood. I remember it said 'thud' in a very loud voice. When I woke up, I was sitting on my own neck with my feet neatly folded on my chest and a good mouthful of shell and grit. There were only two of the others left. I got the other two out and then discovered that my left leg was playing fountains. The good red gore was spouting out through puttees and pants in two places. I managed to reach the dressing station about a dozen strides behind the trench. Then I went by-by again. The only trouble was that my left calf was blown away and a new sap was opened up above the left knee. I have been nearly 13 weeks growing a new calf ... and after a few more weeks in hospital and a fortnight's furlough ... I shall be fit to renew the argument with Abdul or some of that ilk.

He did 'renew the argument with Abdul', but only after spending fifteen weeks in hospital in England, followed by furlough, before returning to duty

in Egypt on 25 March, 1916. Three months later, on 15 June, he was hospitalised with Enteric fever, a form of typhoid, making him 'dangerously ill'. On 20 July, he was moved to British Red Cross Headquarters with para-typhoid. He must have been in recovery phase then, because on 11 August, he was discharged to duty and on 27 August. He was promoted to Staff Sergeant 1 on 8 September, to work at Australian Administrative Headquarters in London.

James Heaney remained as a Staff Sergeant in London throughout 1918. At the end of 1918, he was

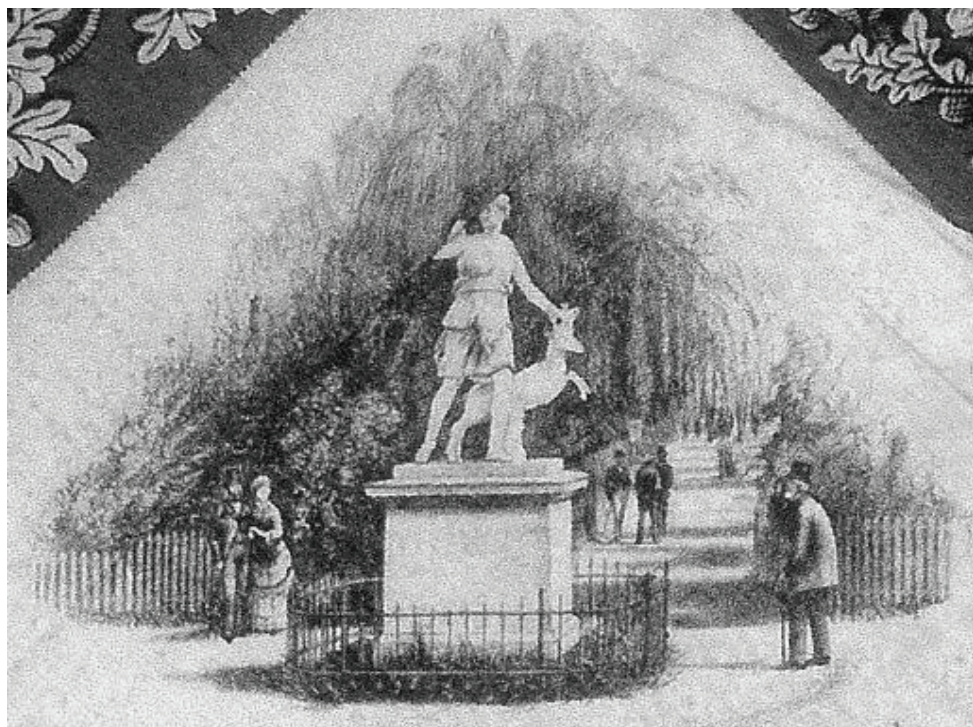
granted 75 days leave with pay, from 13 November, 1918 to 27 January, 1919. He left England to come back to Australia on 7 November, 1919, on board the H T Marathon, disembarking at Melbourne on 24 December, 1919. It is difficult to trace him after that, largely because there were numerous James Heaneys in Australia, and he appears to have had no second name. He was certainly back working in William St., in 1919, but cannot be traced after that. He died on 11 July, 1951, aged 75.

Jill Fenwick

Diana On The Map

A keen-eyed local resident has recently spotted an image of interest to East Melburnians in a book entitled *Maps - their untold stories* by Rose Mitchell and Andrew James and published by the National Archives (UK) in 2014. Originally printed on cloth the image is a map of Australia and New Zealand, surrounded by small vignettes of four ships and four local Melbourne landmarks. There is a border of oak leaves and acorns, and the very edge is trimmed with a life size tape measure, showing the size of the cloth to be 24 x 24 inches. The design was registered by Allan Arthur Fletcher & Co., a firm of dyers and calico printers based in Glasgow. It is thought to have been a small scarf or bandana and possibly produced for the tourist market.

The four illustrations of Melbourne are the Town Hall, the General Post Office, Bourke Street West and View in Fitzroy Gardens. It is the latter which is of such interest to us. The view more specifically is of the statue, 'Diana and the Stag', a copy of the Louvre's 'Diana of Versailles', and one of many cement copies of famous statues dotted around the gardens since the 1860s. Diana stood at the pedestrian intersection at the lowest point of the Hotham Street Walk on the eastern side of the bridge. The vignette shows that the statue was surrounded by a cast-iron picket fence and that the creek, too, was cordoned off with timber pickets. The State Library has in its collection a postcard which shows an almost identical view and is probably the source for this vignette. Although different from how



Diana, Fitzroy Gardens.

the area looks today it is at the same time immediately recognisable. 'Senex' wrote to the *Argus* in January 1864, just after the statue's installation, most indignant at the statue's location, 'it appears to have been placed in the very best locality for passengers to break their necks or their noses against it of a dark night, besides obstructing the thoroughfare in the daytime.' He goes on to say that it would have looked much prettier among the trees rather than 'down in a hollow, where too, in winter, there is usually a large pool of mud.' Nevertheless it remained there until the 1930s when all the old statues were removed due to neglect and vandalism. It is arresting to think that this statue was once seen as a landmark



on a par with the Town Hall and GPO.

Thanks to John Balmford for alerting us to this side-light on our history.

Sylvia Black

The Imitation Game



Those who went to see *The Imitation Game*, the story of Alan Turing and the group at Bletchley Park who broke the German Enigma Code, may not have realised that there was an East Melbourne connection: Keira Knightley plays the role of cryptanalyst Joan Elisabeth Lowther Clarke, a granddaughter of Archbishop Henry Lowther Clarke, Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne from 1903-1920. Daughter of his son, Reverend William Kempe Lowther Clarke, Joan Clarke was a Cambridge graduate who succeeded in her field despite, as Director Marten Tyldun said, working in a time 'when intelligence wasn't really appreciated in women'. Despite achieving a double first in Mathematics at Cambridge, women were not admitted to 'full membership of the body academic' and degrees to female graduates were not awarded until after the Second World War.

Jill Fenwick

The February Hundred Year Walk

I got the idea for this walk after I had read the book *The Hundred Foot Journey* by Richard Morais. One hundred feet turned into one hundred years and the two restaurants of the book were replaced by thirteen historic buildings, in beautiful East Melbourne instead of the quaint village of Lumière in France.

Starting from Bishopscourt, this is the route I selected for our group of about 30 members and friends.

Bishopscourt was designed in 1849 and completed in 1853. It is East Melbourne's oldest house and is unique for remaining true to its original intention as the home of the Anglican Archbishops.

1850s

Allanton House 115 Grey Street.

This bluestone two storey house is another of 3002's oldest surviving houses.

1860s

Lisnamoe Terrace

123-127 Grey Street.

This fine two storey terrace of three houses built in 1867 for John Kennedy, a gentleman. On his untimely death aged only 35, he owned seven houses in 3002.

1870s

Enfield Place 59-61 Powlett Street.

Built in 1872, these handsome houses were constructed in the newly fashionable polychrome brickwork. An

owner in the 1970s was Mrs Kathleen Richman, who was often to be seen fossicking in the rubbish bins for bottles to take to the brewery for sale and re-use.

1880s

Torloisk 118 Vale Street.

This grand house was built for William McLean, a hardware merchant.

William's wife, Margaret, was a leader in the women's rights and suffrage movement in Australia. Hers was the first signature on the Monster Women's suffrage Petition of 1891.

1890s

Clydebank 16 Jolimont Terrace

After several owners Clydebank was turned into flats in the early 1920s. In the 1970s and 80s it was reincarnated as VFA House (Victorian Football Association).

1900s

Tanui 194 George Street.

Mr Frederick Murray purchased the site in 1908 when it was decided to build St Paul's Cathedral in the city instead of East Melbourne.

1910s

Nelson Square 105 - 113 Simpson Street.

Nelson Square was originally designed as flats, based on an American model referred to as a 'two flat house'. The 'two flat houses' are now five single dwellings.

1920s

Avon Court 119 Gipps Street

Built in 1926 for Anastasia Douglas and designed as a boarding house, Anastasia had reconfigured the house

as flats by the time of her death in 1963, and so they remain today. 1930s Regents Gate 53 Powlett Street. Built in 1939, the studio apartments were designed as Bachelor Flats by Bernard Evans who became one of Victoria's largest developers. He was Lord Mayor of Melbourne from 1958 – 60 and knighted in 1962.

1940s

Belgravia Square 155 Powlett Street.

Completed in 1941 and designed and built by RG Russell, who was best known as the founder of Repco, the well-known supplier of automotive parts.

Changing Places – 100 Years of Domestic Architecture in East Melbourne and Jolimont, the reference for the walk, can be purchased for \$10. Please contact a committee member if you are interested.

Rosemarie Smith

Coming Events

Wednesday, 22 April, at 8.00 p.m.

In a talk entitled Farewell, Dear People: Australia's Gifted Lost Generation of World War 1, Ross McMullen will take us through some of the many stories of wasted potential he has uncovered during his research into the lives of those who fought in WW1. Based on his recent book, Farewell Dear People At Clarendon Terrace, 210 Clarendon Terrace, East Melbourne

NB This is the 4th Wednesday and not our usual 3rd.