



Nepean Historical Society
Sorrento

The Nepean

VOLUME 9 NUMBER 2

JUNE 2014

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Sunday 8th June Preview for NHS Members and guests



POSTCARDS STORIES FROM THE MORNINGTON PENINSULA

An exhibition exploring a time in history when holidaying was a grand past time and special memories were shared and enjoyed in the iconic mode of communication – the picture postcard!

SUNDAY 8 JUNE - SUNDAY 17 AUGUST
THE SORRENTO MUSEUM

827 Melbourne Road, Sorrento, Victoria
Open 1.30pm - 4.30pm Saturday, Sunday, some public & school holidays

Image: Postcard, The Rose Series, P. 298 The Steam Train, Back Beach, Sorrento, Vic from the collection of the Nepean Historical Society



**14th June-17th Aug Open for public viewing
when the Museum is open.**

COMING EVENTS

Jun 6th **No Monthly Meeting**

Jun 8th **Sunday 1:30pm - 4:30pm at the Museum**
Preview of Mornington Peninsula Local History Network
 Travelling Exhibition '**Postcards of the Peninsula**'.
 All historical society members welcome. Free entry.

Jun 14th - Aug 31st **Travelling Exhibition 'Postcards'**
 On view at the Museum during opening hours

Jul 4th **Friday 11.30am Rye Hotel.**
Mid-year Luncheon, jointly with Rye Historical Society.
Speaker: Dr. Noah Riseman
Topic: Searching for the Black Diggers:
 Aboriginal Australians in World War I.
Music: Patricia Ball, mezzo-soprano,
 with pianist Helen Schneider.
 (Bookings essential : see form on p.11)

Aug 1st **NOTE: CHANGE OF VENUE**
Sorrento Portsea Senior Citizens' Club - 8pm
 Corner of Melbourne and Queens Road, Sorrento
 (beside Mechanics' Institute).
 Jointly with Nepean Conservation Group.
Speaker: Mr Dale Kelly,
 Heritage Planner, Mornington Peninsula Shire Council.
Topic: 'Recollections of a wandering heritage architect/advisor '

Sep 5th **Monthly Meeting 8pm at the Museum**
Speaker: Associate Professor Don Garden,
 President, Royal Historical Society of Victoria
Topic: Loved, Neglected and Exploited:
 Port Phillip in our History

Join us for dinner at Buckley's Chance at 6.15pm prior to the meetings.
 Book on 5984 2888 and ask to join the NHS table.

Apology

In our last issue, there were two errors in "Vale Cec Phillingham":

1. The location of the old Lemonade Factory. Who can tell us exactly where this was?
2. Grace Phillingham's maiden name was not Sullivan, but Dark - a separate family from the Sorrento Darks.

Sorry!

SAUSAGE SIZZLE AT BUNNINGS

Saturday 26 April 2014



Bernie looking
'chef-like'

Once again Bernie Poll did a great job in organising and supervising the day's activities and is to be congratulated on the record result of \$1690.50 nett.

We are grateful for the offers of bread we received from *Baked in Blairgowrie* and *Baked in Sorrento* and the donation from *Bakers Delight* in Port Phillip Plaza. A \$50 gift card from *Coles Supermarket* in Port Phillip Plaza took care of drinks, sauce and paper napkins which helped a lot but the main factor in our successful result was the large number of hungry shoppers who fronted up to enjoy the sausages from *Tasman Meats* during the course of the day.

My thanks to Bernie and Faye and to everyone else who worked so tirelessly for our Society: Wayne Bastow, David Dallas, Rob Edginton, Rhonda & Paul Fitzjohn, Arthur Hicowe, Joy Kitch, Val & Klaus Stieglbauer, Des Young and Glenn Whipp.

Thanks also to Bev Baker for her back-up support. The team effort clocked up 50 volunteer hours.

Bernie has undertaken to organise another of these events on Friday 18th July although we realise that any profit on that day will not match this outstanding result.

Well done Bernie!

Bergliot Dallas



Arthur & Klaus
at the grill

MEMBERSHIP

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members:

Geoff Ockleshaw

Rob. & Suzanne Edginton

Christine Healy

Bruce Woodhams

We look forward to making them welcome at our functions.

Bev Baker

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Congratulations to long standing NHS members John Alexander, Jean Stirling and Eunice McDonald who have all recently celebrated their 90th birthdays. John has been a member of the NHS for 25 years; he was President of the Society for 4 years and chaired the Society's Heritage and Planning Group, of which he is still an active member. Jean Stirling comes from a local family and has been a volunteer at the Museum reception desk for many years. Eunice was Secretary to our sister organization the Conservation Group for some years, and with her late husband Kevin has given great support to our Society.

Meetings

The Society continues to hold meetings with speakers on the first Friday most months at 8PM at the Mechanics' Institute. In March Judy Walsh, President of the Mornington Peninsula Branch of the National Trust, spoke about the work of the Trust on the Mornington Peninsula. In April Jan Humphrey, President of the Southern Peninsula Family History Society, spoke about researching Southern Peninsula families. In May Associate Professor Ursula De Jong demonstrated the Nepean Conservation Group's 'web based application' for use on computers and mobile devices on the Sorrento streetscape. The website, which includes many photos from the NHS archive, can be accessed at the Conservation Group's web site:

<http://www.nepeanconservationgroup.org.au/sorrento-heritage.aspx>

Postcards Exhibition

From June 8th to August 17th the Society will be hosting the Local History Network's Postcards Exhibition. There will be no evening meeting on the first Friday of the month in June; instead members are invited to a special viewing of the Exhibition on the 8th June. There is no July evening meeting; instead we have the traditional mid-year lunch that day. In August we will have the usual evening meeting on the first Friday but with the venue changed to the Sorrento Portsea Senior Citizens' Centre. For details of these events see the events list on page 2 of this newsletter.

Volunteers

The Committee is keen to improve communication with the Society's volunteers. Val Stieglbauer has taken over responsibility for coordination of the Museum reception roster and plans to send out regular information about new developments by email (please ensure the office has your current email address). Volunteers are also invited to contact Val to arrange to meet with a member of the Committee at the Museum for a face to face update. There is also a new guide for volunteers at the reception desk which can be sent to volunteers.

If you are interested in commencing working as a volunteer you will be very welcome. There are opportunities to work in a number of areas including Museum reception, working with the collections and administrative duties.

Doreen Parker

President

LOCAL HISTORY TOURING EXHIBITION

POSTCARDS: Stories from the Mornington Peninsula

The Mornington Peninsula Local History Network in conjunction with the **Mornington Peninsula Shire** is launching a touring exhibition at the Sorrento Museum on Sunday 8th June at 1.30pm. All are warmly welcome to the public launch of this new exhibition which explores a time in history when holidaying was a grand pastime and special memories were shared and enjoyed in the iconic mode of communication – the picture postcard.

The eight historical societies on the Peninsula have worked together over the last 3 years to develop a touring exhibition which highlights a special part of their communities' history. Come and look back at the early history of Sorrento, Rye, Balnarring, , Mornington, Hastings, Somerville, Dromana and Flinders and discover what it was like to live, work and relax on the Peninsula. This was a special time in the early development of the Peninsula – a time which now only exists in images, objects and a few distant memories.



This exhibition was made possible through the generous support of grants from Museums Australia, Arts Victoria, Public Records Office, Victoria and the Mornington Peninsula Shire. An audio visual presentation and online student education kit and teachers resource have been developed to go with the exhibition providing added information and value to our schools and students.

The exhibition will be touring to a number of venues over the next 12 months including:

Sorrento Museum - 8 June to 17 August 2014

Frankston Library – 8 September to 5 October 2014

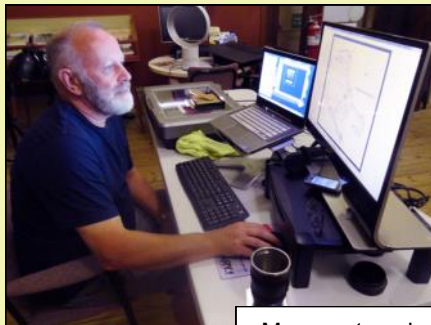
Mornington Library - 11 October to 16 November 2014

Coolart Wetlands - 22 Nov 2014 to 25 January 2015

Royal Historical Society of Victoria - 2 February to 9 March 2015

MUSEUM COLLECTION NEWS

The talented Murray Adams has been **digitally photographing our objects** for some weeks (we do have over 2,000 objects.) This important process means we now have excellent digital records but even more importantly we can now share our collection on line with the world. Murray's terrific photos encourage us to look at the objects in new ways too. How lucky are we to live in a Shire where the Council understands the importance of heritage and will contribute to its conservation and recording.



Murray at work



Noel Turner

Figurehead update – conservator Noel Turner has completed the first stage of the conservation - cleaning and treating the wood for insect infestation and dry rot and stabilising the surface. A grant from the Australian National Maritime Museum plus a generous anonymous donation has enabled us to do this important work. We now await the outcome of another grant from Heritage Vic to allow the next stage.

Sorrento Red Cross

Centenary – we are planning a display and afternoon tea in late August to commemorate the special milestone of this active local group. President Kaye Hafey is working with us. If you have any photos of Red Cross activities or events that we could copy for display please contact us.



W.W.1 1914 – 2014 – of course we shall be acknowledging this centenary with a display. Any photos or memorabilia you are prepared to lend us will be

MUSEUM COLLECTION NEWS cont.

appreciated.

Local History Facebook page – Jenny Nixon has set up a terrific page for sharing local photos and stories. See 'History of Sorrento and Portsea' on Facebook.

Sea Treasure donation- local diver Peter Ferrier has given us a box of old copper coins found under Portsea Pier over years. Sadly no 1930 pennies.

Jo Davie – my Collection partner and hardworking volunteer is recovering well from her hip replacement and we will welcome her back soon.

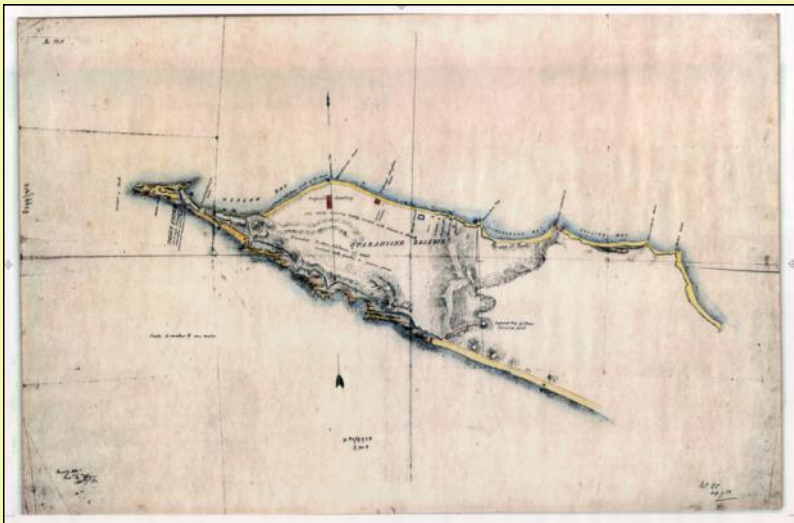
Joy Kitch

Collection Co-ordinator



QUARANTINE PRINT

Printed in a limited edition of 300 prints from an original in Diana Baillieu's collection, this fabulous map of Point Nepean and The Quarantine Station is based on a survey of 1854. Numbered prints are available from the Museum for \$40 with all proceeds going to the NHS. A must for any local enthusiast.



A SPECIAL MUSEUM ARTIFACT

FIT FOR A PREMIER'S CHILD

Some years ago N.H.S. members Pam and Graeme Fraser donated an interesting twisted wire baby's cot to the Museum. This unpretentious little cot had been in their family for many years and has an important connection to Sorrento and Portsea and the political history of Victoria.

Graeme's great grandfather was **James Service**, born in Kilwinning, Ayrshire.

He was a founding member of the Emerald Hill municipal council (now South Melbourne) and the Commercial Bank of Australia. Elected to the Victorian Legislative Assembly in 1859 he was twice Premier of Victoria. James worked hard for the Colony of Victoria passionately promoting the cause of Australian Federation. He died only weeks before the successful second referendum approved the Federation of the States. (Graeme's sister Barbara Fraser has co-written a lively novel, 'Passionate Service', based on James's life.)

James had five daughters, the youngest of whom, Roberta, was Graeme Fraser's grandmother. He had the impressive homes 'Kilwinning' built in St.Kilda and '**North Esk**' in Sorrento.

James Service died in 1899 and when his widow went to the U.K. the house was put up for sale.

And here is the interesting twist to the tale... Pam Fraser's grandfather, Wallace Hugh Smith purchased 'Kilwinning'. Wallace Hugh Smith had 8 children, the youngest boy becoming Pam's father, Clive Wallace Smith. And many of these children slept in this little bassinette.

In 1965 'Kilwinning' was sold, but before it was demolished the family were invited to take mementoes from the house. The Frasers still use the original iron gates brought over from Glasgow. Pam also chose the wire cot and two of the Fraser children and then their grandchildren have used it here at Portsea. It was last used in about 2002.

It was painted many times over in its more than 100 years of use. Pam describes the bamboo rod over which fly netting was draped and the cotton liners that prevented baby fingers poking through the wire.

(Joy Kitch interviewed Pam and Graeme Fraser)



The Fraser Cot

HERITAGE WATCH



Peter Griffin

Sorrento Post Office

Work has commenced on the renovation of this important heritage building in Ocean Beach road Sorrento, with the stripping back of the frontage to reveal the original red bricks. The owner Peter Griffin is proceeding with plans to have the building re-opened in time for next summer.



Taking Heritage Notes

Point Nepean Quarantine Station

Detailed plans from the unknown developers shortlisted by the State Government were due at the end of April, but otherwise the project continues to be shrouded in secrecy.

Collins Settlement

Much attention in recent weeks has been concentrated on the building proposal for Lot 5 on the western slopes of the Eastern Sister. NHS's response to the Shire focuses on the need to achieve proper public viewing of the Western Sister and Sullivan Bay Beach from the existing Parks Victoria viewing platform on the Eastern Sister. There is also concern about the condition of the cliff frontage and the general instability of the Lot 5 land.

Frank Hindley

Heritage and Planning Group

ALMOST A CENTURY AGO

One winter's day, **Cyril Watts** and fellow pupils at Sorrento State School on the 'Portsea Road' were having a lesson from Head Teacher **William Evans** when they were startled by the sound of a loud explosion, seeming to come from Point Nepean. In those days, trees had not yet obscured their view of the Bay, and some time later a 'big white ship', seen earlier steaming towards the Heads, was observed returning slowly back up towards Melbourne. **George White** then arrived straight from the scene to tell teacher and students that a shot had been fired at a German ship, which had been captured. This changed the talk of war into reality for them, and "the children, spontaneously ... rose and cheered".



'First Shot' crew at later reenactment

The date was August 5th, 1914. War had been declared at midnight, London time, August 4th.

The Captain of Nord-deutscher Lloyd cargo steamer 'Pfalz' knew he needed to leave our waters quickly, as war was imminent but, delayed by the need to load more fuel so that he could go much further away than planned, did not make it in time, and a warning shot was aimed across the ship's bows.

You may have read in the newspapers that Mark Ryan and his team at Southern Ocean Exploration are leading efforts to find the shell fired on that day. We have already booked Mark to tell us about the search at our next February meeting.

Thanks to early members of our Society, in particular Mr Alex. M. Robertson, we have most interesting material about this event, including correspondence with a naval officer involved, by strange coincidence, in the first British shots in both World Wars, both fired from Point Nepean. The State Library, the Shrine of Remembrance, and Parks Vic have all requested and received lists and/or copies from us, and we shall make It accessible to our members and the general public this year in various ways including our website.

Janet South,
Research Officer

Sources: Peter Collins' account of Cyril Watts' memories, local newspaper, our Archives.

MID-YEAR LUNCHEON

Nepean and Rye Historical Societies members and friends are invited to a luncheon at the Rye Hotel, 2415 Pt Nepean Rd., Rye, on **July 4th 2014** at 11:30 for 12:00



The charge is \$49 per person which includes a two course lunch in the Blue Water Room plus a pre dinner drink with 'nibbles' in the Cafe Bar.

Music: Patricia Ball, Mezzo-Soprano, accompanied by Helen Schneider on piano.

Speaker: Dr Noah Riseman, Senior Lecturer in History at ACU.

Topic: Searching for the Black Diggers: Aboriginal Australians and WW I

To book, complete the form below and send with payment to:
Doreen Parker, Nepean Historical Society,
P.O. Box 139, Sorrento, 3943 by **Friday 20th June**.

NEPEAN AND RYE HISTORICAL SOCIETIES LUNCHEON , 4th JULY

Name

Address

SuburbPostcode

Telephone number

Names of persons attending

Cheque enclosed for \$

Please make cheques payable to Nepean Historical Society, or

Charge to my [] Visa [] Mastercard Amount \$.....

Card No.Expiry Date MM.....YY.....

Card holder's name.....

Card holder's Signature

NEPEAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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Nepean Historical Society
Sorrento

OFFICE-BEARERS 2013-2014

PRESIDENT: Doreen Parker

VICE-PRESIDENT: Glenn Whipp

SECRETARY: Joy Kitch

TREASURER: Yvonne Watson

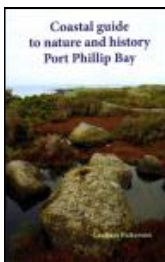
DISPLAYS AND COLLECTION COORDINATOR: Joy Kitch

COMMITTEE: Jane Eldred-Byrne, Natasha Wicks,

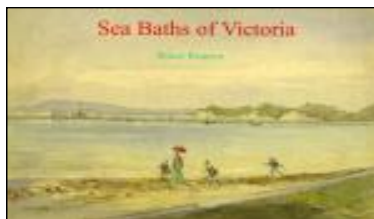
Bergliot Dallas, Janet South, Jenny Nixon,

Marie Clark, Val Stieglbauer,

NEW PUBLICATIONS IN THE BOOKSHOP



Coastal guide to nature and
history Port Phillip Bay \$30



Sea Baths of Victoria \$40

The Nepean Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the support of -



COMMITTED TO A
SUSTAINABLE
PENINSULA

