



Nepean Historical Society
Sorrento

The Nepean

Volume 13 Number 4

December 2018

Season's Greetings



NEPEAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

827 Melbourne Road, Sorrento

Postal Address: P O Box 139 Sorrento Vic 3943

Phone: (03) 5984 0255

Email: admin@nhs.asn.au

www.nepeanhistoricalsociety.asn.au

Photo: Watts Cottage, Sorrento Museum, NHS Collection

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Summertime, and the livin' is easy . . .

- George Gershwin

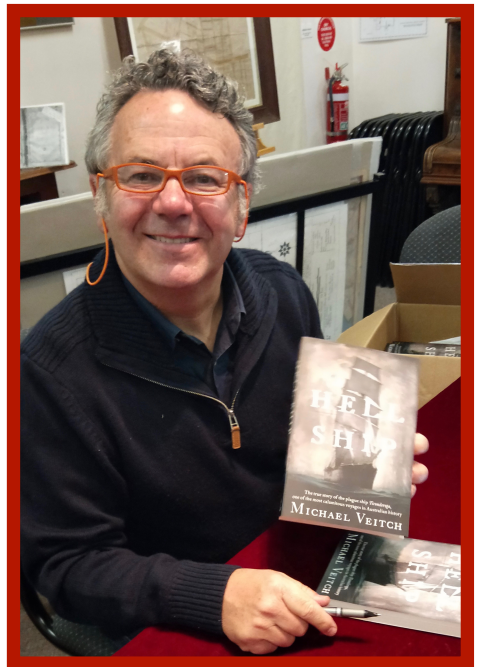
. . . unless you're on a leaky clipper with dozens of people dying around you, in 1852 heading from Liverpool to Melbourne.

The production of **'Hell Ship - The Journey of The Ticonderoga'** by Michael Veitch, at the Quarantine Station on Saturday November 17th was a great success and we've had feedback from many of our patrons saying how moved they were and how much they enjoyed the event.

I'd like to thank all the NHS members who helped with the production. With setting up, Joy Kitch and Annette Buckland. . . the Stall team of, Suzanne Ewart, Jan Weston and Geraldine Carrodus. . . with Parks Vic liaison and other testing tasks Natasha Wicks . . . with door duty and packing up Marie Clark and ushering (sometimes with slightly testy patrons!) the Stieglbauers and Meadens. All did a great job in very different conditions.

Parks Vic have asked us for feedback on how we found the facilities and their organisation. I found the entire experience quite illuminating, particularly in relation to how the Quarantine Station might operate in the future under the Management Plan.

For those who still want to read the story the book **Hell Ship** is available at the Museum.



The ongoing saga of the Museum Storage/Workroom extension continues. We have again made submission to the Shire for funding of this joint Shire/NHS project. We made a presentation in support of our case at the recent meeting at the Shire offices. As far as we are concerned the project is ready to go pursuant to Shire funding.

As we approach Summer, visitor numbers are increasing at the Museum. Anyone who feels they might be able to assist our Volunteers, even for a couple of hours, should get in touch with Annette Buckland at the Museum.

Finally, I would like to thank all of those who have kept the Museum running smoothly over the year and wish you, and all of our members and their families, the very best for the Christmas Season.

Clive Smith

Photo: Michael Veitch signing copies of his book at a recent General Meeting. NHS Collection

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome to the following new members to the Society, we look forward to meeting them at functions and meetings:

Georgina Howitt, Celeste Milano, Calvin Johnston, Kaye Mackay,
Graeme Houghton, Stuart & Marion Gooley and Barry Friswell & Lynn Auld.

Val Stieglbauer, Membership Secretary

HERITAGE WATCH

The Palms, 154-164 Ocean Beach Road

A Consent Order has been issued for a modified proposal. It involves removal of the marquee, limitation of patron numbers to 150, and approval for a pop-up bar.

Morgan's Bar

The shop front of this limestone heritage building has now been re-painted. It is no longer blue, a colour which had been opposed for this Sorrento Esplanade property by many in the community.

Sandarne

At time of writing, only a limited amount of architectural detail of the proposed new development at this Ocean Beach Road property remains to be settled before VCAT approval is given. It is to be noted that at an earlier Hearing the Tribunal had been informed on instruction from Council planners that the Shire had nothing to report as to any investigation proceeding into the heritage significance of the Sandarne cottage which is proposed for demolition.

Heritage Review, Blairgowrie, Sorrento and Portsea

The consultant for this Shire project has sought heritage information on a list of local private houses from Clive Smith and Archivist Janet South. The Council's Reference Group awaits the heritage citations which are expected to result from the consultant's eventual report. Some other heritage places (including Sorrento Pier, the Anchorage-Baths Restaurant-Baths jetty alignment, Sandarne, Old Sorrento Post Office, Point King-Lentell Ave clifftop walk) were also listed last year by the Council Reference Group for investigation. Results from those inquiries are also awaited.

Appreciation

With 2018 drawing to a close, I wish to record appreciation of the great efforts of H&P members in what has been an unusually difficult and demanding year. Anna Hackwill and Ian Gray are relatively new to the Working Group, but made very helpful and distinctive contributions over the year, notably so in areas of detail informed by their extensive legal and court experience. It was a great pleasure also to have Barry Nicholls join in the work of the Group from October, to give us the benefit of sound advice based in part on his very extensive public administration experience.

*Frank Hindley
Heritage and Planning Convenor*

TOURS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

A Family Matter

Drayton Grange - a meat cargo ship converted into a troopship to repatriate Australian soldiers from South Africa at the end of the Boer War. The name is associated with disaster, disease and tragedy. The ship was badly overcrowded despite complaints from the Australian Naval Surgeon and the customary checks were not conducted, leading to a serious outbreak of measles within a few days. By the time the ship steamed into Port Phillip 28 days later, five men had died and been buried at sea. 75 more of the severely ill were disembarked and transferred to a hastily improvised hospital at Fort Franklin. Here six more died over the next ten days. Five of them are buried in the Sorrento Cemetery where, in April 1905, a monument raised by public subscription and bearing their names was unveiled.

One Tuesday I fielded an enquiry from Darry Simondsen in Brisbane. His great-uncle's name was on the monument in the Sorrento Cemetery and he and his wife planned to visit Sorrento later in the year to find out what The Nepean Historical Society could add to the information he had gathered in his research. His relative was E.P.Barton, dubbed the unluckiest soldier to be buried there.

Edward Percy Barton from Queensland was one of the last group of enlistments in early 1902. He arrived in Durban a fortnight after the war ended and spent the next month waiting patiently to return home. Sadly he was fated to be a victim of the *Drayton Grange* tragedy. By coincidence, Darry's wife, Margaret, has a family connection to Archibald Humphries from NSW whose name also appears on the monument.

On September 9th Peter Munro and I met with Darry and Margaret at the Sorrento Cemetery. It was an emotional time for them. Margaret brought daffodils to place on the monument and Annette Buckland recorded the occasion for them and for our archives [See photo].

We then spent time in the Museum exchanging information and Peter, who has made a special study of the disaster, presented the Simondsens with a copy of his slide show. An important link has been established.



Bergliot Dallas

POLICE POINT ARTIST IN RESIDENCE – TRISH BOURKE

Would you like to spend 3 weeks living in the historic Gate Keeper's Cottage at Police Point ?

I would.

But sadly I am not a recognised artist like Trish Bourke who will be living there in December. The Mornington Peninsula Shire offers short residencies for artists at the cottage. As an established water colourist and botanical artist, Trish will enjoy this precious block of time to focus on her work.

Trish has loved the Peninsula's beauty and variety since childhood while on regular family holidays here and now brings her own children.

While researching material for her paintings over the last 3 months, Trish has been visiting the museum regularly. We enjoy a chat as she does beautiful sketches of artefacts of relevance to her projected works. Endlessly curious, she has a keen interest in history and the development of ideas. The focus for the 10 landscape watercolours Trish plans to complete while at the cottage will be Harold Holt and Cheviot Beach.

Why Harold ?

'His story resonates with our generation with the conspiracy theories, Holt's lively character and love of this area and the sea. And he was a Victorian Prime Minister.' Trish had an uncle in federal politics in the 1950s so heard much political talk. She tells of her delight in discovering that during Parliamentary sessions Holt would practise holding his breath to expand his lungs for snorkelling and diving.

An unexpected donation of precious local indigenous artefacts arrived by post at the museum some weeks ago. Trish shares my excitement in examining each piece. We discuss the often big gap in the telling of Australian history. 'We step over this hole in our history. There is still a conspiracy of silence, the missing First Nation's People.' She has read widely and refers to the recently acknowledged findings that when people are brutalised they lose connection as happened to the convict escapees in Tasmania.

In her 10 paintings of Cheviot Beach Trish plans to somehow reference the 'ghosts of this past' with some story telling elements.



You will be able to view Trish Bourke's paintings and preparatory drawings at Sorrento Museum next year in a special exhibition. And she will speak at our March meeting about the intriguing stages of creating these works. I look forward to seeing the final pieces very much.

(And now I am off to painting classes or should that be poetry ? in preparation for my application for time at Police Point. Joy Kitch)

Photo: Trish working at the museum, NHS Collection



Parks Victoria have granted Trish permission to paint & draw *en plain air* on Cheviot Beach and you can view her work at the Gatekeeper's Cottage, Police Point Shire Park - bring a picnic and explore beautiful Pt Nepean.

VOLUNTEER CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT 2018

We have had fewer duty volunteers this year, due mainly to health problems. The Society runs on their (almost) endless energy, and those who can continue as Museum hosts enjoy the interaction with the many and varied visitors, and also get to know much more about our collections and their background stories.

I thank all who have helped me meet the big challenge of keeping the Museum open as often as possible, and been flexible with days, especially at short notice. Closing on Sundays June-August, and only opening Tuesday, Thursday and weekends in holidays has been unfortunate but necessary, due to shortage of volunteers. Training has been ongoing to cope with changes.

With two possible new helpers, we extend a heartfelt invitation to any other members to join us and look forward to a brighter new year list.

Annette Buckland
Volunteer Co-ordinator

PROMOTIONAL STREET STALLS

The last four street stalls had combined takings of approximately \$1,500 which is a quite pleasing result given the weather and the fact that the NAB teller in Sorrento has closed resulting in a reduction of foot traffic in our stall area.

If you are looking for well-priced, interesting gifts please visit our forthcoming stalls:

Sorrento	22 December	Blairgowrie	5 January
Sorrento	19 January	Blairgowrie	2 February
Sorrento	16 February	Blairgowrie	8 March
Sorrento	23 March		

Jan Weston

Page 10

COMING EVENTS

**Our meetings are held on the first Friday of the month at 8pm in the
Sorrento Museum, Mechanics' Institute**

Corner of Melbourne & Ocean Beach Roads Sorrento

Free and open to all - Tea or Coffee afterwards by donation

If you would like to join us for dinner prior to meetings, we meet
at 6.15 pm in the *Sorrento & Portsea RSL*, 1-33 Hurley St, Sorrento.

Sunday 20th January, 9am to 2 pm

Point Nepean Market

Friday 1 February at 8 pm Monthly Meeting

Speaker to be announced

Friday 1 March at 8 pm Monthly Meeting

*Speaker: Trish Bourke, December Artist in Residence
at Gatekeeper's Cottage, Police Point Shire Park,
whose work will be on display.*

National Trust Heritage Festival: 18 April - 19 May 2019

More details to follow.

BOOKSHOP NEWS

We have two new titles in the book shop:

Hell Ship by Michael Veitch, the story of the Ticonderoga, and

From Dreamtime to Armageddon by Phillip Gray,
a new book about William Buckley.

Jan Weston

NEPEAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

Office Bearers of the Society 2018-2019

PRESIDENT: Clive Smith

VICE-PRESIDENT: Joy Kitch

SECRETARY: Val Stieglbauer

TREASURER: Clive Smith

COMMITTEE: Annette Buckland, Marie Clark,
Jenny Nixon, Janet South, Natasha Wicks



The Nepean Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the support of:



Disclaimer: Opinions expressed in The Nepean are not necessarily those of the Society, whose stated values are non-sectarian and non-political.