



Nepean Historical Society
Sorrento

The Nepean

Volume 15 No. 3 December 2020



NEPEAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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Photo: SLV Collection, Troedel, C. (1870). Illustration of Charles Troedel's Occupation and Address [picture] / Charles Troedel. [see article p.4]

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

"Spring is nature's way of saying, 'Let's party!'" Robin Williams

'Party' indeed. Sadly, I can't see much of that happening too soon.

Despite the 'lockdown' now easing, our volunteers' demographic makes it likely we won't be opening the Museum before Christmas.

Nonetheless plenty of things happening by remote control.

Your Committee is reviewing several important policies regarding the management of the collection, with a view to its continuing digitisation, making it more accessible to both our members and the public in keeping with current International Council of Museums ethics.

The new owners of the Continental Hotel applying for adjustments to their plans, nothing too onerous, but we and the Shire are giving them the 'once over'.

Online research enquiries and book sales continue to come in, with great demand for several of our local history books, indicating continued interest in our area, especially while people have spare time to read in between online meetings, bridge games, etc..

We have been in close (but over 1.5m) contact with the Shire regarding street stalls, which have been resumed by younger members, and Point Nepean Market will take place on Sunday November 29th from 10 am - 2 pm.

Under advice from Consumer Affairs Vic, our AGM will occur early in the new year.

In the meantime stay safe, take care and I look forward to seeing you in the Summer and wish you a very merry Christmas.

...and enjoy your haircuts!

Clive Smith

The Nepean Historical Society ANNA and JOHN ALEXANDER AWARDS

Initiated four years ago these annual awards are presented to local school students who show interest and ability in the study of history. The Committee wanted to honour and commemorate the many years of important and committed volunteer work at the museum by John and Anna.

The Committee invites the Principals of Sorrento Primary, St Joseph's School and Rosebud High School to nominate an appropriate student from any level to receive an award. A special certificate is created and some books appropriate to the student's age are put together and presented to the chosen student at their respective school's Award Ceremonies. Even in these COVID19 days this award will occur.

STOP PRESS !!!

The 2020 winners are,,,,,,,,,,,,,
Jack Evans, Year 3, St. Joseph's School Sorrento,
Ella Jensen, Year 5, Sorrento Primary School and
Tom Powell, Year 11, Rosebud Secondary College.
Congratulations Ella, Jack and Tom. Well done!



NHS
volunteers
have not been
idle during the
COVID19
pandemic -
Suzanne Ewart
was kept busy
making toys
during the
long
lockdown!

Truganini and Troedel

Question: What could Truganini, (c.1812-1876), a Nuenonne woman long believed to be the last indigenous Tasmanian, and Charles Troedel (1835-1906), prominent German-born lithographic printer, have in common?

Answer: Both have links to our area!

Historian and author Cassandra Pybus, descendant of Bruny Island landowners, had heard in childhood of an old indigenous woman wandering her country in the 1850/60s ,and learned later that this was Truganini. Her new book *Truganini: Journey through the Apocalypse*¹, short-listed for the Queensland (Non-fiction) Literary Prize, tells in great detail the story of an intelligent, lively, many-faceted woman, who after suffering both personal and community tragedy early in life, became interpreter, guide, and even friend, to George Augustus Robinson, whose diaries proved a major resource for the author. This unusual man, a builder and self-styled missionary, appointed by Governor Arthur as agent of 'conciliation and civilisation' in Tasmania, then became Chief Protector of Aborigines for Port Phillip. On moving to this post in Melbourne in 1839, he took with him Truganini and her partner Wooredy.

In Spring, he took the couple to the Mornington Peninsula camping "for several nights ...near Point Nepean, [where] a natural depression had created an ephemeral wetland with a limpid lagoon .. sanctuary for large flocks of grey herons, black swans and blue-billed ducks .. Surrounding grassland provided food for mobs of large kangaroos. At one spot they found a Kulin burial site where two bodies had been burnt, and in other places the trampled grass indicated the tracks of

¹ Pybus, Cassandra, *Truganini: Journey through the Apocalypse*, Allan & Unwin, 2020 .

settlers' cattle, yet they found no other sign of human activity."² They were reminded of their country on Bruny Island.

When Robinson went on tours without them, many of the Tasmanians and others living near his house would go off on their own trips, to be found and brought back by his sons. Truganini had obviously taken a liking to our area, as in June 1840 "she was located living with two shepherds in a hut on a pastoral lease at Point Nepean ...[and], "this pattern of behaviour would be repeated several times." ³

Now for the second link to our area. Amanda Scardamaglia's book *'Printed on Stone: the Lithographs of Charles Troedel* ⁴, has just won the Victorian Premier's Literary prize in the 2020 Victorian Community History Awards. Inspired by a huge archive at the State Library, this is described as "a stunning book ... in part a history of advertising in lithograph... commercial, social and cultural". [See photo front cover]

I first heard of the Troedel family when I found in our archives an interesting document, the Indenture (or Apprenticeship) Agreement between the printing firm and David Macfarlan, aged about 14. After some years with the printers, and running a hotel at 20, Macfarlan came to Sorrento in the early 1900s, married Mary Thorpe, bought his brother-in-law's grocery store, and with Walter Stringer doubled its size. He then ran the town cinema 1923-48, helped compile the 1917 local guide, was JP 1911-50, Flinders Shire Councillor 1914-43, (President four times), had a recreation reserve named for him, helped found the local ANA, and was Life Governor of the Alfred Hospital and

² Ibid., p.1 95

³ Ibid., p.197

⁴ Scardamaglia, Amanda, *Printed on Stone: the Lithographs of Charles Troedel*, Melbourne Books, 2020

the Royal Institute for the Blind. A remarkable man, still remembered by retired Troedel staff when I contacted the firm years ago to offer them a copy of the Indenture Agreement. I like to think that the qualities imbued in him by his first employer stood him in good stead. Our district certainly gained from his stalwart efforts and community spirit over a long period of time.

Janet South, Archivist

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome to the following new members to the Society and we look forward to meeting them when we are able to hold meetings and functions:

Penelope Doery

Suzi Zutic

Kristen Barry and Bernard McNamara

Thanks to those who have paid their annual subscriptions.

A special thanks to members who have made an additional donation to the society. These donations are very much appreciated and are of great assistance at this time when we cannot open the museum to the public or raise funds through our street stalls and tours.

Many thanks to all, Stay well

Val Stieglbauer
Membership Secretary

Nepean Historical Society acknowledges and pays respect to the Boon Wurrung/Bunurong people, the traditional custodians of these lands and waters.

DISPLAYS AND COLLECTION REPORT

The Last Donation of a Sorrento object before the 2020 lockdown



In March Fred Dijkgraaf rang about a street lamp cover he wanted to donate to the museum, and arrived with a rather large 108 x 103 cm white, heavily textured glass lamp cover, in perfect condition. The story is that Fred's father-in-law found this in Port Phillip Bay in the 1960s or 1970s. Fred believes it was one of a few used along Ocean Beach Road Sorrento in the 1950s /60s.. He understands many were broken and thus replaced with the less beautiful but more stone resistant metal ones.

This may be the only one remaining in one piece.

Does any one remember these lamps?

Joy Kitch

Display & Collection Coordinator



A lamp in place outside the Oriental Guest House. Photo: NHS Collection.

Vale David Dallas



Nepean Historical Society members have been sad to learn of the death of David Dallas. He lent his services as assistant treasurer, was a museum duty roster volunteer for many years, and played a valuable part in assisting in hosting group visits, especially those of school children. He also gave us the benefit of his legal background with useful advice from time to time.

David was a friend to many members and will be missed by all. We send our sympathy to Bergliot and to all the family in their loss.

Vale Elsie Barras

Elsie and her husband Jim joined the Nepean Historical Society in 1996. As she had worked for years as an archivist at Victoria College in Burwood, later Deakin University, we asked if she would help us by cataloguing the many artefacts left at the Quarantine Station, a massive task in which she enlisted Jim's help too.

Their workplace, the boiler house, where most objects were stored, was in poor repair, freezing in winter, and rat-infested! Nevertheless, Elsie and Jim patiently worked for several years classifying and preserving anything of possible historical significance, and became involved with the new Friends of the Quarantine Museum, a sub-group of NHS, who helped them, and reinstated guided tours of the Station with John Alexander, Alison Jones, Con Mullen and others.

2002 saw the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the worst fever ship, Ticonderoga, and the subsequent establishment of the Quarantine Station. This big event, which would probably not have taken place or been such a success without Elsie's tireless efforts, especially in contacting descendants of the ship's passengers, culminated in the installation of a green granite stone engraved with the names of those who died after arrival. She was also involved with maintenance of the Point Nepean cemetery. Elsie then continued to work with the Friends under a Melbourne Uni special team on the artefacts, which were put into safe storage as building works began under the Master Plan, until Parks Victoria took over management of the whole site in 2009.

Elsie then turned her energy and passion to the Point Nepean based Croquet Club, acting as treasurer and teaching members new to the game, and giving them and visitors tours of the Station as well. As her

health deteriorated, she became less mobile but helped organise the book section at Jack and Andy's Op. Shop.

She inspired others with her love of Point Nepean history and, always outspoken and at times a tad gruff, she had a heart of gold. She died aged 86 in Mornington at the end of February this year. Our sympathy goes to Jim and the family, with apologies for the delay, due to the pandemic.

Natasha Wicks



Museum Volunteers: Janet South, Bergliot Dallas & Joy Kitch.

NHS members are invited to contribute to The Nepean articles of preferably under 500 words. The editor reserves the right to alter, abridge or reject material in consultation with the contributor.

COMING EVENTS

Our regular monthly meetings have been suspended, and the museum closed to the public, due to the pandemic. When restrictions are further loosened, members will be notified of future plans. We hope you all keep safe and well in the meantime.

Street Stalls

Saturday 5th December
Saturday 19th December

Blairgowrie
Sorrento

Look out for our Street Stalls which are held every month in Blairgowrie (outside the IGA) and Sorrento (just down from the newsagent). A book on local history makes a great gift. If you are thinking of doing some rewarding voluntary work, please ring Jan Weston [0413 040 057](tel:0413040057) to enquire about joining our stall team.



NEPEAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

Committee 2019-2020

PRESIDENT: Clive Smith VICE-PRESIDENT: Joy Kitch

SECRETARY: Val Stieglbauer TREASURER: Clive Smith

OTHER MEMBERS: Annette Buckland, Marie Clark,
Jenny Nixon, Mark Peasley, Janet South, Cathy Stirling

Other NHS volunteer positions:

Archivist & Research Officer: Janet South

Collection & Displays: Joy Kitch

Cataloguer & Indexer: Bergliot Dallas

Digital Archivist and Map Curator: Mark Peasley

Librarian: Sally Payne

Photograph Curator: Maggie Broadhead

Volunteers Co-ordinator: Annette Buckland

Street Stalls & Bookshop: Suzanne Edginton & Jan Weston

Tours: Natasha Wicks

The Nepean Editor: Janet South

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.

