

**HISTORICAL
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NEWSLETTER

No. 121
DECEMBER 2017



AWARD WINNING COLLECTION

In an article in earlier edition of our newsletter (No.119, p4), we invited members and friends to consider factors that might determine whether parts or all of our collection might be nationally significant. 'Significance' is judged on a formal assessment of the historical, artistic or aesthetic, scientific or research, or socially and spiritually significant value of an item or a collection. In the article, in exploring why parts of our collection might be considered nationally significant, we explained that we were applying for a national grant to conduct a 'Significance Assessment'.

In September the Kew Historical Society was advised that it been awarded a Federal Community Heritage Grant (CHG) to fund a Significance Assessment. The Grant was announced at an awards ceremony at the National Library of Australia (NLA) in Canberra on 24 October 2017. Grants worth \$355,560 were distributed to 56 community groups and organisations from around Australia to assist in the identification and preservation of community owned but nationally significant heritage collections. Kew was one of two historical societies who received the grant in this round.

The CHG is managed by the NLA, and is funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Communications and the Arts. In addition to the NLA, the consortium of national cultural organisations involved includes the National Archives of Australia (NAA), the National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA), and the National Museum of Australia (NMA).

At the awards ceremony, Director-General of the NLA, Dr. Marie-Louise Ayres, stated that the program showed the commitment by the NLA, along with its partner institutions and the Federal Government, to encourage communities to care for the nation's heritage, be it in small country towns or capital cities. The awards ceremony concluded the first of three days of training provided by these four national cultural organisations.

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Invitation to Mr & Mrs J. M. Campbell to attend the Royal Review at Flemington on 10th May 1901. Kew Historical Society collection

Right

CHG Award Recipients with the directors of the NLA, NMA and NFSA, Canberra, 24 October 2017



AWARD WINNING COLLECTION (from page 1)

Robert Baker, the Society's archivist, who attended the training, explained that the grant was important in supporting the effort to preserve the collections held by the Society at the grassroots level. "While the grant provides the funds, the workshop offers the expertise to help us protect our collection and make it accessible while it remains in the local context", he said.

During visits to each of the cultural organisations, attendees were able to view how they organised managed and preserved their diverse collections. "The management practices of extremely diverse parts of these national collections and the kinds of preservation activities undertaken can be employed at our local level to assist us in preparing for the assessment."

The preparation for the Significance Assessment in 2018 will involve members of the Society working intensively to select, photograph, and describe those parts of its collections that the Society contends are of national significance. While these will certainly include the Costume, Maps and Pictures collections, other parts of the collection must also be carefully evaluated, as an item must be identified in the initial Significance Assessment to qualify for a subsequent grant stage in the national grants program such as a Preservation Needs Assessment.

While the Society's volunteers will carry out the bulk of the work, the Society is seeking additional volunteers with specialised skills to assist in evaluating specific sub-collections. A range of skill sets will be required, but they might include librarian, archival, art history, digitisation, and or conservation skills and experience.

We are sure that the City of Boroondara includes individuals with the requisite commitment, skills, knowledge and experience who can participate in this exciting project. If you are able to be involved, please contact the Robert Baker, the Society's archivist (archivist@kewhistoricalsociety.org.au / 0438-370-967) or Judith Scurfield, our curator (curator@kewhistoricalsociety.org.au / 0416-237-464).

EDITOR

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KEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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Secretary: Brad Miles

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Curator: Judith Scurfield

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MONTHLY MEETINGS

The Kew Historical Society holds monthly meetings in the Phyllis Hore Room at the rear of the Kew Library. Meetings are held at 8.00pm on the second Wednesday of the month, unless otherwise announced. Refreshments are provided. Meetings are open to members and visitors.

KEW COURT HOUSE

Members of the Society played a key role in the preservation and restoration of the historic Kew Court House. Volunteers staff the Kew History Centre on Level 1 every Friday and Saturday (11.00am-1.00pm). At the Centre, you can ask questions about Kew's history and view displays from the Society's collection.

NEWSLETTER

This newsletter is published quarterly and is distributed to all members. Some additional copies are made available to the community. Past newsletters can be downloaded from our website.

WEBSITE

www.kewhistoricalsociety.org.au

MEMBERSHIP INQUIRIES

See page 12 of the newsletter or contact the Secretary, Brad Miles. Phone 9489 7815

Email: secretary@kewhistoricalsociety.org.au

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

08 November - Monthly meeting
26 November - Quarterly Book Sale
13 December - Annual Dinner
16 December - Kew Court House closes
19 January - Kew Court House reopens
14 February - Monthly Meeting
18 February - Quarterly Book Sale

IN THE NEWS

EXHIBITIONS

Following two immensely successful exhibitions in 2017 - *Asylums on the Yarra* and *Kew Scouts and Guides* - the Kew Historical Society opened its most recent exhibition - *Theatre & Music in Kew: 1950s & 1960s* on Saturday 14 October. The following day, the Boroondara Historical Association, of which Kew is a member, opened a new exhibition - *Mapping Boroondara's History* - at Camberwell Library, to which we contributed three historic maps.

The exhibition on *Theatre & Music* will be open to the public at the Kew Court House until the end of February 2018, when a new exhibition opens to coincide with the 2018 Kew Festival. The exhibition is complemented by a separate display in the glass display window at the south end of the Kew Library.



Cast photographs from the Q Theatre Guild's production of *Gay Rosalinda* in the Kew Civic Hall, 1960, and costumes of the period.

EVENTS

MEETINGS

NOVEMBER MONTHLY MEETING

Alfred Fuller: Brewer and organ builder
John Maidment OAM

At the final monthly meeting for 2016, John Maidment OAM, who retired last year as the inaugural Chairman of the Organ Historical Trust of Australia (founded 1977) will examine Alfred Fuller's career and show images of many of the organs built at his premises in Main Road (High Street South), Kew. Alfred Fuller was born in Kelvedon, Essex in 1845, the son of a brewer. Fuller initially ran the Kew Brewery close to Kew Junction until 1880 when he moved into organ building, exhibiting at the Melbourne Exhibition of that year. He built around 25 new organs for clients in three Australian states, all characterised by the adoption of beautiful carved casework, decorated façade pipes and a superlative level of finish. His grave is in the Boroondara General (Kew) Cemetery.

Wednesday 8 November at 8.00pm
Phyllis Hore Room, Kew Library

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The Society's Events Committee has been working hard on next year's programme, with the first meeting for 2018 being on Wednesday, 14th February with Helen Page speaking about returning the Boroondara (Kew) Cemetery to a garden cemetery. As usual, there is no monthly meeting in January. The first book sale is scheduled for 18 February.

BRAD MILES
SECRETARY

ANNUAL DINNER

QPO Restaurant, 186 High Street, Kew
Wednesday 13 December 6.30 for 7.00pm

Our final event for 2017 is our annual end-of-year dinner. It is always an enjoyable night and we hope everyone can come. This year it is at a different venue, which has stairs at the front, and a ramp at the rear of the building accessible from Cotham Road. (Please note that toilets can only be accessed by stair.) The dinner replaces our normal December meeting on Wednesday, 13 December.

The cost is \$46 per person and includes two courses (a main and dessert) and tea and coffee. Drinks are at bar prices, although the Committee will cover the cost of soft drinks and a bottle of wine at each table. By popular demand, the after dinner entertainment will be a trivia quiz on all things Kew. It should be fun.

Bookings are essential - to (preferably) secretary@kewhistoricalsociety.org.au or by phone to 9489 7815 - by Wednesday, 29 November. Guests of members are also most welcome.

COMMITTEE NEWS

Andrew McIntosh has recently resigned as our President. Andrew has served with distinction and we are grateful for his contribution to the Society. He intends to remain an active member of the Society. The Committee invited Judith Voce to serve as President and we can announce that she has accepted. Judith is a long-term resident of Kew East and is currently a member of the Boroondara General (Kew) Cemetery Trust.

HERITAGE GAP STUDY

CITY OF BOROONDARA

In July 2016, the Boroondara City Council appointed heritage consultants Context Pty Ltd to prepare a Municipal Wide Heritage Gap Study. This is an attempt to identify properties and precincts which are judged to have heritage significance, but have not been identified in previous studies or nominations and are therefore not covered by a Heritage Overlay.

The consultants have been working their way through Boroondara, region by region. In fact, we are informed that the principal consultant has been riding her bicycle around the streets as she slowly and methodically examines every property.

Once outstanding properties and precincts are identified, and a report is made to Council, there will be an opportunity for community consultation before a decision is made whether to establish heritage controls. Owners and occupiers whose property is recommended for inclusion will be notified, and offered the opportunity to make a formal submission to an independent Planning Panel, and to attend a hearing. It will also be possible to address the Council about any objections.

The Heritage Overlay is the mechanism, which allows Council to protect heritage places of local significance. Inclusion of properties and precincts in the Heritage Overlay triggers planning permit requirements for demolition, alterations and additions, and new buildings.

Proposed new Heritage Overlays coming from the Gap Study, that are adopted by Council, will be submitted to the Minister for Planning for final approval, after which the declaration of a Heritage Overlay will endeavour to ensure that heritage values are protected far into the future.

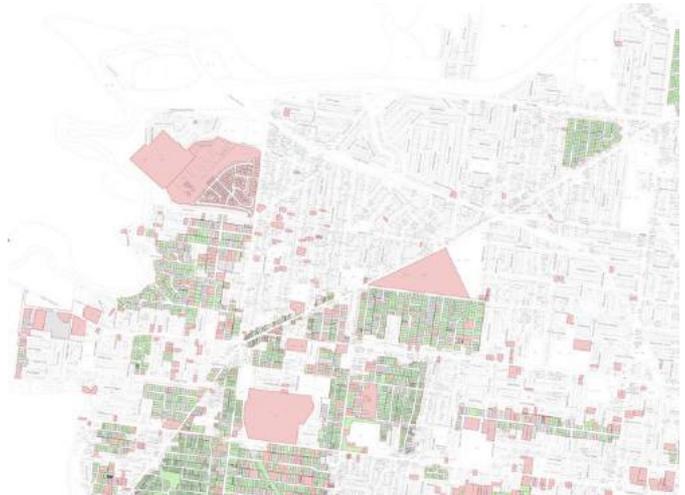
The Gap Study has been working through Canterbury, Camberwell, Kew and Hawthorn and has now moved on to Kew East, Hawthorn East, Glen Iris, Ashburton and Mont Albert, to be completed in 2018.

The Kew preliminary report is expected to be released by the middle of November 2017.

The Kew Historical Society has been taking an interest in the process, and the Heritage Committee has called upon its members and other residents to inform us of any properties that they believe should be awarded heritage recognition and protection. We have been dividing Kew into a number of zones, which have been allocated to volunteers who are examining the properties in their area and drawing up a list of those considered worthy of further examination.

Everyone can help with this. You can find a link to the *Schedule of Gradings Map* of the current heritage overlays (above right) on the Heritage section of the City of Boroondara website:

www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/planning-building/heritage/find-your-heritage-grading



Kew, Schedule of Gradings Map, 2017

You should watch out for the report of the Kew Gap Study – we plan to notify everyone via the eBulletin when it is released. It will then be possible to undertake a comparison between the current overlays and those recommended under the Gap Study, to see if you think that there are places that have been missed.

You can then submit your suggestions or observations direct to the Council, or contact the Kew Historical Society to see if we can provide further information about the property.

DON GARDEN

The concept of 'Significance' in relation to the collections held by cultural organisations derives from the traditional usage of the term to describe architectural or heritage significance. The Heritage section of the City of Boroondara website defines how built structures are assessed. They can be described as:

1. **Significant heritage places:** places of state, municipal or local cultural heritage significance that are individually important, and may also contribute to the heritage significance of their precinct.
2. **Contributory heritage places:** places that contribute to the significance of a precinct. They are not considered individually important; however, combined with other significant and/or contributory heritage places, they demonstrate the heritage significance of a precinct.
3. **Non-contributory places:** places within a heritage precinct that have no heritage significance but are included because development may affect the precinct or adjacent 'significant' or 'contributory' heritage places.

31 MILLER GROVE

Evaluating its heritage significance

31 Miller Grove and its environs are a useful way of ascertaining how significant buildings are identified, appraised and designated by heritage consultants past and present and by the council officers and elected representatives of the City of Boroondara.

In the section of Studley Ward, bordered by Barkers Road, Findon Crescent, Stevenson Street, High Street South and specifically including buildings facing Miller Grove, Bowen Street and the west side of High Street South, many of the houses are included in an existing heritage overlay. This extended overlay is one of three in that part of the Ward, south of Studley Park Road - the others are parts of Walmer Street and Howard Street. Because the street already falls within a heritage overlay, a reassessment is not planned in the current Heritage Gap Study.

Within Miller Grove, which runs west off High Street South, all 44 houses are identified as 'Significant', 'Contributory' or 'Non-Contributory'. Number 31, a double fronted brick bungalow on a large block is designated as Contributory, but not Significant. Only numbers 24, 26 and 28 Miller Grove have been designated as Significant.

The overlay was largely based on architectural assessments in previous heritage studies, dating back to, and including the *Kew Conservation Study* (Sanderson, 1988). Typically, in heritage studies, when a house or houses as a group is/are considered as being of architectural merit by a consultant, or through a nomination process, a more detailed historic evaluation can be undertaken. This may include the identification of architects, renovations over time and changes of ownership. Historically, visual assessments are conducted from the footpath, from old photographs when extant, or from maps and plans.

Heritage consultants have sometimes requested the Kew Historical Society whether we have existing documentation that can support or contribute to a heritage evaluation and citation. Increasingly, the information sought relates to factors that might support a building's historic, particularly social and cultural significance. In the case of the 44 houses in Miller Grove, fulfilling such requests would necessarily involve considerable research, if the information were not already on file.



31 Miller Grove, Kew. Photographed 2017

But, returning to 31 Miller Grove, what might the consultants have seen when they viewed it from the street. As the contemporary photo shows, it is a double-fronted brick bungalow, with an intact roofline, a porch altered by the addition of concrete columns, and over-painted walls. The wide driveway would have allowed the consultant to hypothesise that the added rear wooden extension at the rear of the house was probably, at least on its exterior, an original feature.

There are a number of resources that consultants typically use for research. These include Council ratebooks, the Kew entries in the Sands & McDougall Directories (1862-1974), previous conservation studies and citations, and published histories. The *Kew Conservation Study* assessed most of the houses in Miller Grove to be constructed in the 'Edwardian Era' and during the interwar period. Number 31 falls into this category. This is confirmed by the Sands & McDougall directories, which do not list the house until 1924 when it was owned or occupied by Thomas J. Shields, who sold the house in 1927 to John Tully, who only occupied it for one year.

Thereafter, from 1928-56, it was owned by Mrs. Marie Dalley (1880-1965). The entry on Marie (Ma) Dalley in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* by Deirdre Morris (M.U.P., 1993) records her election to the Kew City Council in 1948, and her election as the first woman Mayor of Kew in 1954. In addition to her political activities, she was a highly successful businesswoman, with interests in scrap-metal merchandising and later the export of frozen meat to Britain. Her philanthropic activities included guaranteeing loans to ex-servicemen, food distribution to sailors, and local clubs. In Kew, she took a particular interest in raising funds for St George's Hospital. She was awarded an O.B.E. in 1949.

The second notable woman to occupy the house was the sculptor, Leopoldine (Poldi) Mimovich who was born and studied in Austria, migrating to Australia in 1949. Primarily sculpting in wood, the majority of her works to be seen in Kew, especially in the Kew Library and the Alexandra Gardens, are cast in bronze. Mimovich is known for her religious sculpture for which she received numerous commissions in Australia and internationally. She was awarded an O.A.M. for services to the arts in 1985. The Mimovich family sold the house in 2016.

A house's significance is due to a number of factors. One of these is that the building has a special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria's history. We would contend that given the buildings association with these two significant women in Victoria's history, that 31 Miller Grove is a Significant building rather than just Contributory, and that its status should be upgraded.

ROBERT BAKER

KEW FIRE BRIGADE

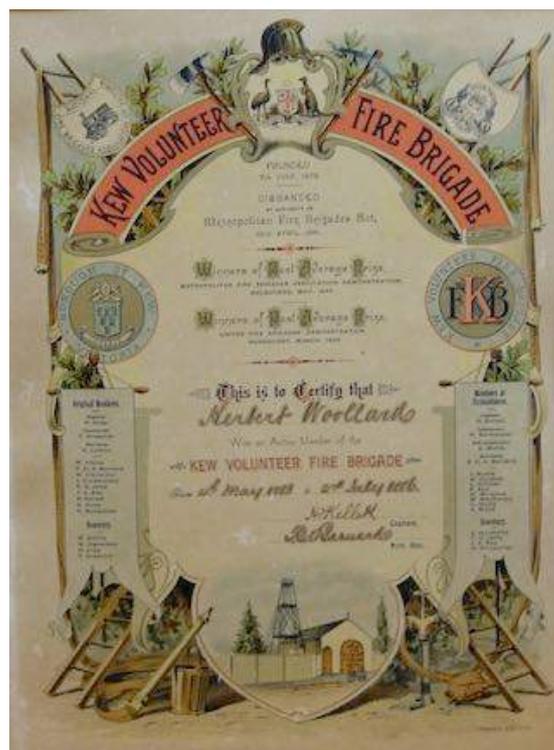
There have been two fire brigades and three fire stations in Kew. A Kew Volunteer Fire Brigade was established in 1879, and shortly afterwards Kew's first fire station was built in Little Walpole Street (now Brougham Street). The disbanding of the Volunteer Fire Brigade followed the formation of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade in 1891, and a second fire station was built in Walton Street in 1893. The third fire station, located in Belford Road, was built by the Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB) in 1941 and operated as a fire station until closing in 1993. It has since been converted for use as residential apartments.

...

At a Kew Borough Council meeting on 17 June 1879, on the motion of Cr. Henry Gray, it was decided to call for volunteers to form a local fire brigade. A public meeting attended by about 40 people was held at the Town Hall on 7 July where twelve men were elected as the first members of the Brigade with Cr. Grey as Captain, Mr. T. Greenhill as Lieutenant and Mr. H. Loxton as Secretary. The Brigade then decided to apply to the Council for uniforms and a bell, and after adopting rules for their guidance, the meeting adjourned. *The Age* of Wednesday 9 July 1879 reported "The brigade now possesses a reel of 500 feet of hose, and a shed is being erected in Little Walpole Street for a station. Six additional fire plugs are being put in on the main road, so that the brigade may now be considered fairly established and the borough as safe from a fire as any of its neighbours." Little Walpole Street was later renamed Brougham Street and the Sands & McDougall directory for 1892 lists the Fire Brigade Station at No. 20 on the eastern side of the street.

When the Kew Volunteer Fire Brigade was formally disbanded in 1891, it was proposed at a meeting of the Borough Council that the trophies won by the volunteers be placed in the Kew Town Hall as mementoes of the Brigade. The secretary of the Brigade, F.G.A. Barnard, also advised that the Brigade had a credit balance, which would be used for making presentations of certificates to the old members of the brigade. One of these certificates (above right) is in the Kew Historical Society collection and lists the names of the original members of the Brigade and those at disbandment, the prizes won in inter-fire brigade competitions and the name of the recipient of the certificate. A drawing of the fire station building and its adjacent tower is also included on the certificate.

In an 'Airsy' aerial photograph of Kew in the State Library of Victoria collection, a small gabled building can be seen on the Brougham Street frontage of the council yard behind the old Town Hall in Walpole Street, which may well have originally been the Volunteer Fire Brigade Station. The Woolworths supermarket now occupies this area. In the years following the disbandment of the Brigade, it is variously listed as vacant, a Kew Council store room and the Kew Club. It was also used as the band room for the Kew Brass Band and by the 1st Kew Scouts as their first scout hall.



The Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board was established in 1891 under the provisions of the *Fire Brigades Act 1890*, to make better provision for the protection of life and property from fire in Melbourne and its suburbs. It replaced the uncoordinated system of insurance brigades and volunteer fire brigades, which had evolved in Melbourne since the Melbourne Fire Prevention Society was formed in 1845 to organise the first fire brigade for the settlement of Melbourne. The new system was highly organised with representation on the Board by Victorian and local government and the insurance companies. The Kew Borough Council was well represented on the new Board with Cr. Henry Kellett, the former Captain of the Kew Volunteer Fire Brigade, as the representative of councils south of the Yarra, and Cr. Anderson one of the two insurance company representatives.

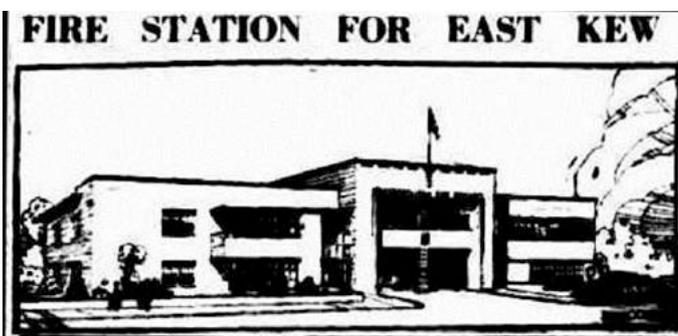
In 1893, the Metropolitan Fire Brigade purchased a site at the corner of Walton and Peel Streets and built Kew's second fire station. Opened as Station No.14, but later renumbered as No.19, the new fire station was built at the rear of an existing house at 3 Peel Street. Harold Burmeister, the former Lieutenant of the Kew Volunteer Brigade, is listed as the resident of 3 Peel Street in both the 1894 Sands & McDougall directory and the 1896 Kew Rate Book, which also lists the Fire Brigades Board as the owner of the property. No other properties in Peel Street are listed in the 1896 Rate Book as owned by the Fire Brigades Board. Coincidentally, our family history research has revealed that my wife Janet's great grandfather, Albert Geoffrey, was a fireman with the MFB at Kew Fire Station in Walton Street for a period of over 20 years from 1912.



KEW FIRE BRIGADE (cont. from p.6)

When it opened, the new Kew fire station was equipped with a horse-drawn hose cart, but in 1919 this was replaced with one of the new Hotchkiss fire engines, which had been recently introduced by the MFB. In this photograph (above), from the Fire Services Museum collection, the Kew firemen, one of whom may be Albert Geoffrey, proudly display the latest in fire-fighting technology for the photographer, watched by a passer-by in Walton Street and the fire station cockatoo in its cage in the fire station garden.

In March 1936, *The Argus* reported complaints by Cr. Morgan at a Kew City Council meeting that "the Kew Fire Brigade building was like a small stable in a back street and the facilities were not modern." The meeting decided that the Council's representative on the Fire Brigades Board be asked to give consideration to better fire-fighting facilities. Cr. Morgan's negative view of the public buildings of Kew extended to the Kew Courthouse and Post Office, but fortunately, to less effect. In 1941 the Walton Street fire station was closed after 48 years of use. It has since been demolished, but the house at 3 Peel Street, which had been purchased by the MFB in 1893 as accommodation for firemen remains, together with a small remnant of the western end of the bluestone crossover which led to the fire station doorway on Walton Street.



This drawing (above), and the following description of the replacement for the Walton Street fire station appeared in *The Argus* on 13 March 1941.

The article asserted that:

"A modern two-storey fire station and residential building is being erected for the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board on the corner of Belford Road and Sutherland Avenue East Kew. Gardens and lawns will set off the main building façade which fronts Belford Road and to which easy egress from the spacious appliance-room is provided. The ground floor will also contain the watchroom, a room for housing storage batteries for supplying emergency current, a small boiler room, storeroom, a large recreation-room for firemen off duty, quarters for single men, and the station officer's flat. The upper storey is divided into three self-contained flats for the families of married men attached to the station. A sound-resisting concrete floor overlaid with wood insulates the engine-room from the upper floor. The exterior finish is generally of red brick with white joints contrasted with bands of dark brown bricks between certain windows. Necessary relief is afforded by white cement bands and areas judiciously placed. The window trims and other trim will be off-white. The architect is Mr. Harry Winbush, 30 Queen Street, and the builder is Mr. R.A. Watson, Brighton."

The Belford Road Fire Station, also known as MFB Station No. 19, was closed in 1993, after fifty-two years of use. MFB firemen were no longer required to reside on the station premises and updated equipment and methods of operation required different facilities. A new MFB Station No. 19 was built at 312 Doncaster Road, North Balwyn. This brought to an end the 113 years presence of an active fire brigade in Kew. The first 12 years by the Kew Volunteer Fire Brigade and the subsequent 101 years by the Metropolitan Fire Brigade.

The Belford Road Fire Station building was listed in the first *Kew Conservation Study* (Sanderson, 1988) as a Grade B Building of the Inter War Period with significant elements being Walls - including flagpole, Joinery - including main doors to garage, Verandah - the porch with concrete awning and Fence and privet hedge.

On 26 February 1996 Council approved an application to refurbish and alter the building to provide 11 one-bedroom units and two bed-sitter units. Alterations to the building appear to have respected the heritage features of the building with the significant elements having been retained, including the appliance room doors.

Unlike the two fire station buildings, which preceded it, the former Belford Road fire station has been retained as part of the built heritage of Kew together with the associated memories of fire brigades and fire stations in Kew.

DAVID WHITE, 2017

FOOTNOTE

The trophies, won by the Volunteer Fire Brigade, that were once housed in the Kew Town Hall, may be the two certificates, one framed, which are now part of the Kew Historical Society's collection.

EDITOR

HOUSES HITTING THE DUST

THE CHANGING STRETSCAPE AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF GLADSTONE STREET

The history of Kew is a history of speculative land subdivision. It is also a history of colonists who showcased their financial success through elaborate houses on vast properties called 'paddocks'. A less documented history of Kew is the underbelly service industry that was required to meet the needs of the upper crust. Gladstone Street, Kew, is a case in point. The first subdivision to include Gladstone Street between Bulleen Road [now High Street] and Eglinton Street occurred on 20 October 1883 and the second subdivision between Eglinton and Childers Street was auctioned 'on the ground', as opposed to auction rooms in Melbourne, on 20 November 1886. The drawcard was the proposed 'railway terminus'.

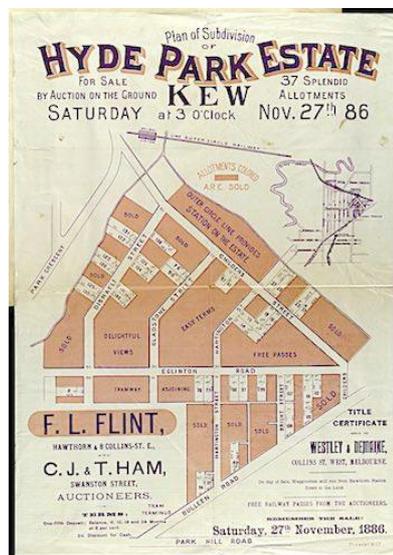
Hyde Park Estate, Kew, 1883,
Batten & Percy Collection, State Library of Victoria.

The street was named after William Ewart Gladstone (1809–1898), four times a British Prime Minister, a man revered by the working class but not so reverently by Queen Victoria who considered him somewhat mad. At one time there were two Gladstone Streets in Kew, the other became Campbell Street in a further Hyde Park subdivision in east Kew. In 1878 Kew Council resolved that 'the portion of the Bulleen Road passing through the Borough should be named Gladstone Street'. This never eventuated but Prime Minister Gladstone seemed popular in the colonies.

Gladstone Street is at odds with the typical grid system of the streets, as it was required to 'bend' to accommodate Connor's Creek, which is no longer in existence, as it was subsequently drained and infilled. Evidence remains in the number of willow trees in many backyards on the north side of the street that abut the creek that wound its way to the Yarra. Gladstone Street was initially a rough and ready dusty, dirty, mud-ridden rural side street to the main thoroughfare, consisting of a little cluster of wooden cottages close to Bulleen Road. Single-fronted, they were composed of five or six rooms.

One of the oldest families to inhabit the Street was milkman Jack [John] Connors (c.1874-1951), 'a lantern-jawed, red haired Irishman' of 39 Gladstone Street. He failed to adequately fence his rented paddock and lived in terror of 'Jocky' Martin, a failed Kew prospector who attained a job as a Council Inspector including dairies. 'Jocky' ruthlessly impounded wandering stock and terrorised owners in Gladstone Street. While Jack was at the Harp of Erin having a pint or two, his 'frail' sister Bidy [Bridget] (c.1873-1952), who lived to 79, looked after the dairy. His wife Margaret (c.1855–1900), less frail, cared for the children, but died aged 55. Jack's unmarked grave at Boroondara General Cemetery is a riotous mass of tangled deadwood, perhaps the remnants of a memorial tree.

Transient resident, Percy J D Stevens of 3 Gladstone Street, a substantial building in the street, was a political activist who entered the debate on the Sweating System



[cheap labour to produce affordable ready made clothes by women]. He argued for the democratic rights of widows and wives to remain in the domestic sphere as opposed to employment in factories. Two years later, his mother, Adelaide (c.1823-92) died in the house, after long domestic servitude. On Sunday 26 June, her body left

the house, as was the tradition, and was escorted to St. Kilda Cemetery.

In 1897, the Mills family lived at 33 Gladstone Street. They are famed for their 15-year old son's pea rifle adventure. Miles and a friend went to shoot birds. Holding the rifle, it accidentally went off; Miles received a pellet in the palm of his left hand, which finally embedded in his friend's wrist. In 1912, carpenter Alfred Lilbun of 78 Gladstone Street was badly shot in his legs when his friend missed a rabbit that catapulted between Alfred's legs. Recreational and food gathering methods have changed dramatically over the years.

The rest of the street, going down to Childers Street, also named after a British Prime Minister, was a bane for the Kew Inspector of Nuisances. He constantly dealt with stray cows and horses. He also spent a lot of time in the Kew Court dealing with aberrant animal owners, such as the aforementioned dairyman Jack Connors, who consistently had no regard for local laws, including registering on the electoral roll. Engineer, David Ernest Ballingall, of 69 Gladstone Street complained of roaming cattle as late as 1915. This suggests the street was still semi-rural, but it was always considered a 'health-giving' locale with a hill that allowed for superlative views of the distant ranges and a refreshing dale.

The working class people of the street made a living from jobs such as market gardening, horse grooming, horse carriage driving, grave digging, brickmaking, wood carting, dairying, washing, dressmaking, attendants employed by the Kew Asylum, domestic service and menial work in the several local hotels. Later, additional small cottages were erected in the street to provide housing for the work force required for the construction of the Outer Circle Railway, and subsequently to service its operational needs in transporting important working people from east and north Kew to central Melbourne.

HOUSES HITTING THE DUST (from page 8)

Unfortunately, the railway was short lived, due to the recession and resulted in few passengers. It was closed in 1893. Many people had to relocate to find other work. So there was a waxing and waning of residents for a number of years.

In 1908, council was considering the 'construction' of Gladstone Street. The following year, the Kew Borough Council's annual inspection of the streets deemed Gladstone Street was in need of being 'replenished with metal [crushed rock]'. In 1910, Kew Council agreed to install a night lamp at the corner of Gladstone and Childers Street. This was a definite upgrade to the street. So too was the installation of a 'fire appliance [possibly a type of fire hydrant]' that was fixed to the corner of Eglinton and Gladstone Streets in 1917. Housewife, Mrs. Madge Tallis of 99 Eglinton Street, constantly hounded Council to install sewerage mains to improve the unsatisfactory sanitary conditions of Gladstone Street between Eglinton and Childers Street. Council was not prepared to sanitise the lower part of the street due to the number of vacant blocks. Two years later Council again decided to 'metal' the road. In 1915 the street was finally upgraded by being tar macadamised [crushed stone overlaid with bitumen].

In 1914, old Henry Fisher, a colonist of sixty years and a man of independent means, died. He owned two cottages in Gladstone Street, in one of which he resided until his decline. He died at his son's house in nearby Hartington Street. The posthumous sale of his two cottages, noted in the local newspaper, revealed he had made a good investment.

In 1914, the dairyman, Jack Connors, built a new stable at his premises at 51 Gladstone Street, contrary to building regulations. Eighteen months after he completed the project, he was ordered to dismantle it by the Kew Court. In 1916, the local residents were shocked to see a huge hoarding being erected on the corner of Gladstone and High Street by the A A Company. The hoarding was about 220 feet [67 metres] long and from 10 to 15 feet [3-4.5 metres] high. What was intended to be behind the hoarding has not been established. Local investor, A. A. Holmes, represented the Gladstone Street residents at Council, declared Gladstone Street property values were being jeopardised and that it was indecent to the sanctity of the Cemetery. Council was sympathetic to residents and the dead in the Cemetery, but had no power to prevent the ongoing erection of the hoarding, which was possibly a major billboard.

Number 77 [originally 73] is currently designated as the only 'Significant', 'Contributory' or 'Non-Contributory' building in Gladstone Street. It was built c.1891 and over the years has had many owners. A double fronted Victorian cottage of initially six rooms, the house was architecturally modernised in the early 1980s. The design contemporised the kitchen and bathroom facilities. The horse stable is now a 'man cave'. The garden is superlative and representative of an early 20th Century local tradition of landscaping to express respectability and give pleasure to the passing ambulatory population. An ex-principal of Kew Primary School has owned the property for many years.

Josiah Earl Barnes (c.1858-1921) and his wife, [Ada Emile] Josephine, nee Boullion, were to farewell two sons to the seat of war. Luckily both sons returned. Josiah, a commercial traveller, became bankrupt in 1908. In 1914, he moved from 16 Cotham Road to 28 Gladstone Street, and set up *The Studio*. He continued work as a press and outdoor photographer as well as an official school photographer. His son Norman Clarence (1897-1966) was shot in the foot during the war and returned to Gladstone Street. Norman also commenced work as a photographer, making his mark independently of his father. Josiah Barnes has been acclaimed as Kew's greatest photographer and dubbed the 'Embarkation Photographer', due to his photographs of the drama of families, farewelling jubilant sons at Station Pier in Port Melbourne, sailing off to the seat of war.

Ardent Scotsman, clerk and councillor, Alan James McConchie (c.1885-1945) was living at 41 Gladstone Street in 1914. At the time, he was president of the famed private McConchie Family Cricket Team, founded c.1908. Relatives in Scotland avidly followed the team's sporting prowess. McConchie was an esteemed member of the East Kew Bowling Club. Eventually he relocated to Windella Avenue, Kew.

Most houses in Gladstone Street sported a liquidambar, *Liquidambar styraciflua*, as a dominant aesthetic feature in their front garden. They were planted in the 1920s, but over the last 40 years, most have been removed due to physical decline from lack of watering. Few people today have horticultural knowledge, unlike Mr Richardson and Mr Marginson. The 'lungs' of the street have been replaced with air conditioners. The annual crop of spectacular red, white-spotted mushrooms, *Amarita muscari*, (below) which popped up every Anzac Day, or thereabouts have also gone, as has the quaint worker's cottage where they erupted in the front garden. Having distinct hallucinogenic properties, one has to wonder why they were located on the one property.



In 1918, A. A. Holmes again objected to council's decision to permit the erection of a house next to his, currently unidentified house. He argued that the proposed brick wall would interfere with sunlight to his home and believed the proposed house represented residential 'overcrowding', as was the case in working class Richmond. It is not known what the outcome of Council's deliberations were but it seems Mr. Holmes moved on to broader pastures and didn't live to see the increase in density resulting from the erection of 'step-up' brick flats in the 1960s and the present perchance for large speculative buildings built up to the boundary of existing properties.

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Many new gardens are designed for low maintenance and screened by hard security metal fencing; the soft traditional wooden picket fence is progressively losing visual prevalence with the erection of these new houses. The days of walking the street, taking in the beauty of gardens and talking to neighbours is rapidly diminishing.

After the First World War a number of houses were jerry built, due to the Depression and became, overtime, uninhabitable but still tenanted. Not so Arthur Edward Marginson (c.1897-1977), a confectioner and later a tram driver, who built a modern Californian Bungalow c.1920, for his bride, Beatrice May Purves. It was located opposite Mr. Richardson's. He named the house Maricourt in honour of his nephew, 24-year old George Melbourne Marginson, who died during the push for Windmill Hill, in the battle for the Somme. Like Mr. Richardson, Mr. Marginson was an avid gardener, specialising in cacti and succulents that he nurtured in a giant greenhouse in his backyard. Remnants of his magnificent backyard garden remain intact today. His two sons were to become very prominent in the academic life of the University of Melbourne.

In 1924 railway employee James McDougall of 38 Gladstone Street, returned home from work to his wife Henrietta (c.1881-1971), nee Bateson, who was in great distress. His only two daughters, during the summer holidays, had skipped down to *The Moorings* on the Yarra. Taking a swim in the water proved fatal. Pearl Emily, aged 16, fully dressed, jumped into the water to save her younger sister Eileen Effie, aged 10, who had removed only her stockings and shoes. Both drowned. They were quietly buried in the Boroondara General Cemetery.

In 1936, 17 year-old Marjory Higgins (c.1919-?) also of 38 Gladstone Street, wore a blue overcoat trimmed with a grey fur collar and carried a white handbag when she 'disappeared' on the afternoon of 24 May 1936. By 1943, the year after her father's death, after long suffering, she was again at home living with her mother, Carrie [Mary].

The refugee infusion from Europe after the Second World War resulted in a number of Greeks and Italians settling into 1950s and 60s brick veneer houses of various sizes, built on further subdivisions in the street. Their gardens reflected their ethnic origins. For example, one front garden



77 Gladstone Street, 2017, photo by the author

a magnificent, giant prickly pear bush, which recently perished from old age, edible 'weeds' and vegetables; while others planted olive trees. Nature strips eventually lost their lawn and were planted out, with hardy agapanthus to avoid Sunday lawn mowing before the family luncheon festivities, following devotions to God in the morning. Even in their nineties these naturalised immigrants never owned a car but walked, daily, usually with a little terrier dog, wheeling a trolley, to the main shopping centre for meat, fruit and vegetables, as well as a beer for lunch. On Sunday mornings, dressed in their best, they trotted up the Gladstone Street hill to their churches for absolution.

Gladstone Street was transformed into an eclectic street where people lived in harmony despite language, age, occupational and religious differences. In the 1980s, the cops lived at one end of the street while the robbers lived at the other. They professionally knew each other, for obvious reasons. Both parties ultimately moved on to other locales, perhaps chasing and evading each other. One morning the street was to be decorated, like snow, with bird feathers. In revenge, a woman wrenched the throat of her ex-lover's prized chook and plucked it in the street. The body of the bird was never found. On another occasion, two human bodies, catapulted out of a car that accidentally failed to make the bend of the street, and were eventually found, in the deep dark of night, by neighbours. Afterwards, there was street signage installed to be aware of the dog-leg corner.

In the past, many people checked the timing of their clock by running out into the middle of the street to view the Boroondara General Cemetery clock in its high tower, until the clock ceased to function. Today, due to tall mature trees and high housing, it is not possible to take the time, despite the clock having been recently renovated.

For a large number of years, there was a house that concealed a 'secret sect'. A morbidly obese man, who constantly smoked cigarettes, seemingly policed the entry to the drive-way of the property. Always a street curiosity, no-one knew what went on in the building behind the main house. But the occupants minded their own business and never interfered with any-one else's affairs. It was harmony in difference. Today the sect building at the rear of the house has been demolished and rebuilt. Not so, a couple of young, single male adults, who resided in a 'walk-up' flat and complained to the police about damage to their obviously pre-battered car after a riotous teenage night party further down the street. Despite the police advising them to mind their own business, they took business into their own hands, probably hoping to cash in on something. They aggressively accosted a neighbour demanding compensation. The emergency street network congregated in the street. The verbal fight was unholy. They had met their match and moved on shortly thereafter.

Some residents were opportunistic scavengers, roaming the nature strips in surrounding streets for discarded 'treasures'. Others kept their eye out for discarded plants and wounded or stray animals. One mystery house, very large and indescribable architecturally, had transvestites emerge into the street in the 1980s. Garishly dressed, with plenty of red lipstick and eyes boldly made up, they trotted assertively up the street in their high heels in the middle of the day.

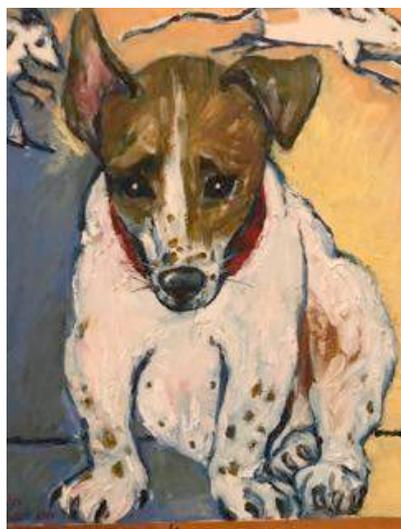
HOUSES HITTING THE DUST (from page 10)

Their false eyelashes, due to their length and density, were definitely artificial sunshades. Unlike the transvestites, Joe Toscano, of the famed Toscano family couldn't keep his feet away from Gladstone Street as he wowed the beautiful Ann who left Gladstone Street in the arms of her husband.

People in need of help, due to sickness or other reasons would knock on a neighbour's door and get immediate assistance, night or day. Pyjamas and bare feet were the usual late night fashion on such occasions. There was also a local landline telephone system in place for such emergencies. Shopping and the delivery of a hot cooked meal were central to local community support as was basic carpentry and other labour related activities.

Dogs became the primary choice as domestic animals, in the mid 20th Century. The police advised a dog to deter thieves. They were a form of doorbell before the electric doorbell. They yapped at each other through backyard fences. Two dogs, after many years of living next door to each other regularly barked communicatively through the back fence. Finally they met in the street and had an immediate dogfight. It is far from clear what their problem was but they were separated and returned to their backyards to continue their argument via the fence. Local fowls have now largely disappeared, after local foxes ravished prized decorative bantams for a late night dinner. The remaining cocks and fowls were relocated to a country farm and eggs sourced from the local supermarket.

A famed Jack Russell dog roamed the street, evading the council dog collector except on one occasion, and befriended everyone. On one occasion, her liberty was violated when she was locked in a neighbouring backyard. The reclusive neighbour refused to return the dog. It was an exercise of Cop Capers. A ladder and a tall adolescent were required to jump the rear side fence into the backyard to retrieve the dog who was living in very humble circumstances on dirty sacks compared to the luxury of her home. On one 45-degree day, the Jack Russell found an air-conditioned house to keep cool. The astonished housewife sent the dog home, quick smart, to her owner and its overheated home.



Jack Russell by Raffaella Torreson, Oil on canvas, 2006

Lucky Corner 88, Photo of a real estate sign in front of 88 Gladstone Street, Kew.
Photo by and in the collection of the author.



Hurtle the turtle was also a good roamer, running well on his three legs. It is not known what happened to his fourth leg, where he came from and where he went. He was well known, but only a four-year transient visitor to the street. Possums found habitation in many roofs and created mayhem in the mating season, waking people far too early in the morning. Not so the mopokes and owls, which continue to sit quietly on tree branches watching the night time antics of the street. Snakes, from the Yarra Flats have been found inside houses to the horror of a number of residents. The little native mice seem to have abandoned the vicinity but not a couple of magpie families who seem to be more resilient to loss of habitat due to tree removal and rebuilding. Colourful parrots arrive annually, as do the flying foxes that were relocated from the Royal Botanical Gardens to the Yarra in Studley Park.

Children riding bikes, kicking balls, playing in bilycarts and skateboarding in the street are not to be seen today. The annual street party for the children of the 1990s has not been taken up by a newer generation of families. Similarly, the free spirit of children has been curtailed. They are rarely seen in the street today. Occupations of residents have also changed dramatically over the years. There are now architects, chemists, university lecturers, nurses, a VFL footballer, a librarian, a school principal, banker, radio transmission operator, a lawyer, psychiatrist, doctor, world-class ceramic potter, plumber, long-term widows and retirees, and virtually no housewives.

The cut and colour of Gladstone Street continues to evolve, architecturally, in its streetscape and socially. As with the 'lucky corner' of 88 Gladstone Street, recently sold, properties are now marketed as potential subdivisions and investment properties.

SUZANNE MCWHA, 2017

FOOTNOTE

Suzanne was requested to contribute an article on her street, following the publication of the June Newsletter. Clearly, a huge quantity of detailed research, including interviews, have contributed to the range of material provided in the article, some of which had to be excised due to constraints of space. With Suzanne's permission, the complete article with footnotes has been posted on the 'History' section of our website, under 'Streets'. It is anticipated that articles on other streets will continue in subsequent editions.

Editor

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