

**HISTORICAL  
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other researchers*

# NEWSLETTER

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MARCH 2020



## HISTORIC SPORTING CLUBS

FGA Barnard in his *Jubilee History of Kew* (1910) singled out four sporting clubs in Kew for detailed description: the Cricket Club, the Bowling Club, the Golf Club and the Lacrosse Club. Of these original clubs, only the Kew Golf Club remains. During the twentieth century, each was to experience challenges resulting from forced relocation, financial vicissitudes or declining memberships. The Kew Bowling Club survived as a separate entity for 108 years, before merging with the Auburn Heights Bowling Club and subsequently as the MCC Kew Club.

In 1980, the Kew Bowling Club celebrated its centenary with the publication of its history by N.V. Nixon. The 'new' history was supplemented by a visual archive compiled by David Pitt that included documents, photographs, and club ephemera. The album teasingly included photographs of the large holdings of the Club including trophies, paintings, uniforms and commemorative photographs.

The decision by the Bowling Club to amalgamate with Auburn Heights, and the later sale of the amalgamated club to the Melbourne Cricket Club did not prevent its history and important collections from being dispersed. MCC Kew closed in 2017 and the site was later sold to Carey Baptist Grammar School.

The collections of local clubs frequently exist in parlous circumstances, including in car boots and member's garages. Such collections are of particular risk if the club ceases to operate. Fortunately, life members of the Bowling Club, Jan Mosely and Graeme Spry, approached the Kew Historical Society (KHS) in January 2020, seeking a safe and secure home for their archives and collections. KHS indicated that it was prepared to accept these, providing it had the capacity to adequately store the items. This may prove a challenge with the honour boards that were commissioned by the Bowling Club over 108 years.

During February, Jan and Graeme conducted the equivalent of an archaeological exercise, sorting, identifying and listing important assets of their club.

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## KEW BOWLING CLUB & COMMITTEE CHAMPION RINK 1929/30

Donated 2020

KHS

### HISTORIC SPORTING CLUBS *(from page 1)*

Many of these items have already been transferred to the KHS. The task of the Collection's Group of KHS is to photograph, catalogue and assess each item, making a conservation analysis of its condition. After this, appropriate storage locations will be identified.

The handwritten first Minutes Book of the Kew Bowling Club records the concerns and actions of the original committee members from 1881 to 1888. Its conservation will require the item to be frozen in an airtight bag for three days to kill the eggs of any insect pests such as silverfish, before it can be added to our Manuscripts collection. A longer-term task will be to digitise the pages of the book and to make them publicly accessible on the *Victorian Collections* website. These interventions are more urgent when assessing and storing the five huge R.V.B.A. linen pennants, won by the Club during the period 1957 to 1983.

Honour boards always present particular storage problems. KHS already has one huge board from the former M.U.I.O.O.F Yarra Yarra District Lodge on the wall outside its archive at the Kew Library. Both the Kew and Auburn Heights Bowling Clubs commissioned a number of large honour boards to commemorate former office bearers and champions. While the Society will never have the space to store and conserve each of these, it has committed to housing the historic boards of the Clubs that were commissioned and inscribed before 1945.

Most of the framed and glazed photographs of former teams and office bearers are in excellent condition; very few have suffered from sun and water damage. In the case of the latter, new glass and backing papers will be purchased over time based on a conservation priority list, which will be developed over the coming months.

While the Bowling Club collection includes a framed tie and hatband that belonged to Doug Taylor, probably dating from the 1930s, and later uniforms from the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, there are no extant striped club blazers from before the Second World War that we can keep and display beside photographs of former players. Finding these will be an ongoing challenge for KHS members and friends, as well as former members of the Club.

Included in the gift, in addition to the pennants, are a number of trophies in the style of shields while others include silver-plated ewers and cups. These will join other bowling club trophies previously donated.

KHS intends to hold an exhibition of items from the Kew Bowling Club collection in the near future, so members are requested to hunt out additional items for display. We also hope to interview and record past members of the Club to preserve their recollections in perpetuity. This will be undertaken by our Research Group.

### EDITOR



#### Inscribed Henselite Bowling Ball

Presented to Mrs W. Wynne at the official opening  
[of] Kew Bowling Club, 6.9.69, Season 1969-70

Donated 2020

KHS

## KEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

### PATRON

Sir Gustav Nossal AC, CBE

### MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

**President:** Judith Voce

**Vice President:** David White

**Secretary:** Desley Reid

**Treasurer:** Jerome de Almeida

**Archivist/Newsletter editor:** Robert Baker

**Curator:** Judith Scurfield

**Members:** Richard Bowen | Mary Kelleher | Julie King |  
Debbie McColl-Davis | Felicity Renowden

### 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. Refreshments are provided.

### KEW COURT HOUSE

Members of the Society played a key role in the preservation of the historic Kew Court House. Volunteers staff the Kew History Centre on Level 1 every Friday & 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 is published quarterly and distributed to all members. Additional copies are made available to the community. Past newsletters can be downloaded from the website.

### WEBSITES

[www.kewhistoricalsociety.org.au](http://www.kewhistoricalsociety.org.au)

[victoriancollections.net.au/organisations/kew-historical-](http://victoriancollections.net.au/organisations/kew-historical-society)

[society.org.au](http://society.org.au)

#### Kew Historical Society Inc.

Inc. No. A0010789W | ABN 97 824 890 237

PO Box 175 Kew VIC 3101

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# SOCIETY NEWS

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## MONTHLY MEETINGS

A schedule of speakers for monthly meetings and biannual lectures has been organised by members of our events committee. On 12 February, Julie Scott of Essendon Historical Society will give a talk on 'Horses, water and very kind people' - an investigation of Bills' horse troughs across Victoria. On 8 April, Lucy Bracey of Way Back When Consulting Historians will describe 'Annie's War' - the story of a Boroondara family's wartime experience based on real life letters between Annie Slade and her father. On 13 May, Nigel Davies, of Lonergan & Raven Funerals will talk about 'The slightly less great but no less good' - the families who ran Melbourne's funeral parlours for the first 50 years.

## 2020 KEW FESTIVAL

The Kew Historical Society (KHS) will hold two events during the Kew Festival (10 - 15 March): a new exhibition and the annual McIntyre Lecture.

### EXHIBITION

#### On Parade: 46 Years of the Kew Festival

Parades were traditionally designed to allow community groups to participate in local festivals. The Kew Festival, initiated in 1974, encouraged community groups to engage with and value local heritage. During the 2020 Kew Festival, KHS is mounting an exhibition of photographs of previous festival parades that will enable visitors to view and perhaps identify members of those groups. Supporting artefacts from previous festivals will also be displayed.

7 March – 27 June, Fridays/Saturdays 11am to 1pm  
Kew Court House, 188 High Street, Kew, 3101



## 2020 MCINTYRE LECTURE

### Nigel Lewis: Conserving Modernism in Kew

Nigel Lewis is a heritage architect who entered private practice in 1976. Early projects included the first urban conservation projects for many parts of inner Melbourne and rural historic site surveys. As a resident of Kew for a large part of his life, his knowledge and interest in contemporary architecture is long-standing.

His 2020 McIntyre Lecture will explore how modern buildings slip through the net due to the formulaic application of planning controls.

11 March

Just Theatre, Kew Court House, 188 High Street, Kew, 3101

Cost \$20. Box Office 9278 4700 | or book online at

[www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/events](http://www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/events)



## AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE FESTIVAL

The 2020 Australian Heritage Festival (18 April - 19 May) provides communities with an opportunity to engage with, celebrate, reflect and look forward to how historic and natural heritage can be protected and promoted. During the festival our feature event at the Villa Alba Museum will include a large number of items from the KHS fashion & design collection. The exhibition is being curated by Nicole Jenkins.

### The Feminine Aesthetic – Fashion in Melbourne 1860-1950 Villa Alba Museum / Kew Historical Society

Enter a glamorous world exploring the feminine aesthetic in fashion and design at the historic Villa Alba Museum. The exhibition showcases almost one hundred years of Australian fashion and design, drawn from the collections of the Kew Historical Society in one of the great remaining Victorian-era interiors. In addition to the general days of opening, a special day of lectures by experts will explore the work of Melbourne designers and home dressmakers on Wednesday 29 April, 10am to 3pm.

Villa Alba Museum, 44 Walmer Street, Kew

Saturday & Sundays from 25 April to 17 May, 1pm-4pm

General Entry - \$12, \$10 concession. Lectures \$20





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# KEW'S GOLDEN TRIANGLE

## CROWN LAND PORTION 86

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At the Kew land sales held on 16 October 1851, Crown Portion 86 comprising thirty-two acres was purchased by Samuel Watts. Portion 86 is the triangular piece of land stretching along both High Street and Cotham Roads from where they join to align with the east edge of the road easement for Glenferrie Road. Watts paid 125/- per acre for the land. He did not own it for long.

Earlier in the same year, on 31 March, James Venn Morgan, with his wife Anna and two children, arrived from England after a journey of 101 days, and settled in Richmond. Morgan had learnt the trade of boot-making and opened a shop in Melbourne on the south-western corner of Bourke and Swanston Streets. Good boots and shoes were essential for Melbourne's unpaved streets. By late August, Morgan had built up a flourishing business when, halfway through making a pair of boots for Mr J B Were, news came of the discovery of the rich alluvial goldfields at Ballarat. He was so excited that he downed his tools and set off to Ballarat in the clothes he was wearing, including his top hat. He was to return after several weeks with ten ounces of gold. Morgan finished the boots for Mr Were, then realising that prospecting for gold could be more lucrative than boot-making, enlisted three friends to try their luck at the freshly discovered goldfields at Chewton, near Castlemaine. The friends were John Quick, and William and Samuel Derrick.

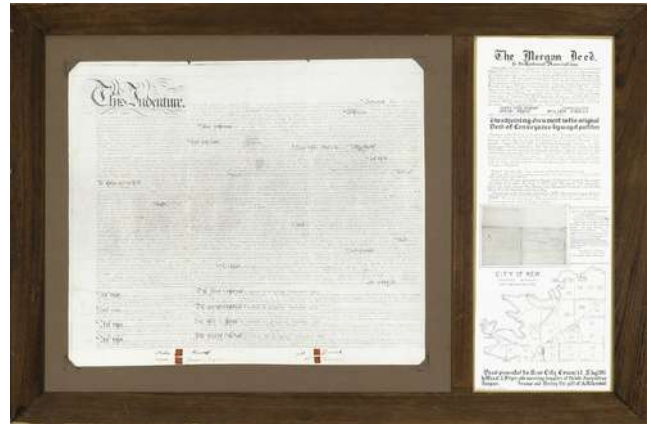
John Quick and his wife Ellen had arrived in Melbourne mid-January 1849 as assisted migrants. He was a stonemason and bricklayer who, having served his contract, was free to look for other employment. William and Samuel Derrick had arrived in Melbourne on 20 August 1851 as a labourer and agricultural labourer respectively. Both looked to find employment.

Taking all their tools and provisions with them, they set off for Chewton, and on their arrival tried their luck on an eight foot square plot that had been abandoned. It had a short existing shaft in which they dug down to find ridges of slate interspersed with clay containing grains of gold. They washed the gold in a cradle by the creek. The claim ran out in ten days, however they still ended up with thirty-five pounds of gold.

On their return to Melbourne, with their gold safely stowed in their belongings, they decided to purchase land. Hearing that Samuel Watts of Collingwood had some land for sale in Kew, they inspected the land with him and purchased Portion 86 for £15 per acre; a total of £480. The day after they acquired the land early in 1852, they took a tent and went to live on it.

The partners had a legal document drawn up, a Deed of Conveyance by way of partition, which spelled out in legal terms the purchase of the land, its division into four equal sections and who received which portion. This document is dated the thirtieth of July 1853.

The large framed Deed of Conveyance is part of the KHS collection. An accompanying note states that this is a 'Deed presented to the Kew City Council by Mrs C.J. Fryer, sole surviving daughter of the late James Venn Morgan'.

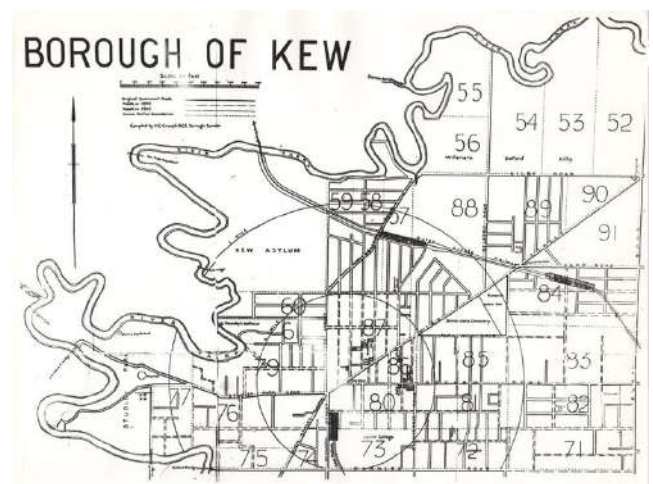


**The Indenture, Crown Portion 86,  
otherwise known as 'The Morgan Deed', 1852**  
KHS

Portion 86 was divided into four sections, each of eight acres. William Derrick's eight acres included the land on which the Post Office, Court House and Police Station were built in 1888. His land was later to be bisected by Derrick and Union Streets. The boundary of William Derrick's section is currently the rear fence line of the houses on the eastern side of Union Street

James Venn Morgan received a section which extended from Cotham Road to High Street. His land is now bisected by Charles Street. Its western boundary is the rear fence line of the houses on the west side of Charles Street. The eastern boundary is the rear fence line of the houses on the east side of Charles Street.

Samuel Derrick became the owner of the north-west section facing High Street. Its eastern boundary is the rear fence line of the houses in Mary Street. The western boundary is the rear fence line of the houses on the western side of Highbury Grove, while its southern boundary is where Mary Street narrows.



## KEW'S GOLDEN TRIANGLE (from page 4)

John Quick obtained the western section facing Cotham Road. The eastern and western boundaries are the same as in the section purchased by Samuel Derrick, while his northern boundary abuts Samuel's southern boundary.

By the end of 1853, Morgan had built his house, created a market garden, planted an orchard and started a dairy, a forerunner to establishing The Model Dairy in 1863. He subdivided his land in 1884 and built eight more brick houses in Charles Street. In the Federation Referendum Roll of 1899, he is described as a gardener with freehold house and land in Kew. He died on 28 July 1923, having celebrated his 100th birthday the previous February.

William Derrick was active in local government. He was a Kew Councillor from 1861 to 1865 and Mayor in 1864-65. He started subdividing his land in the late 1850s. In 1867 he moved to Lancefield to go farming while retaining property in Kew. His wife, Hannah Derrick, sold the land on which the former Post Office, Court House and Police Station is located to the Crown in June 1882. The family later moved to Queensland where William died in 1882.

Samuel Derrick subdivided his land quite early, naming Mary Street after his wife, and set up a carting business. In 1875 he followed his brother to Lancefield and bought a farm. He later sold the farm to his brother and by 1903 was living at 27 Cotham Road. He died in Brighton in 1910.

In 1854, John Quick sold the eastern half of his land. The purchaser subdivided it to provide building blocks on each side of Mary Street. This is the narrower section of Mary Street near Cotham Road. John was evidently much wealthier than the others, as in 1856 he was eligible to vote in the elections for the Victorian Legislative Council. He built and lived in two houses in Highbury Grove; the last one still stands at 5 Highbury Grove. John Quick died in Kew in 1899.

All of these men still have relatives living in or near Kew. James Venn Morgan, Samuel Derrick and John Quick are buried in the Boroondara General Cemetery.

**MARGARET ROBINSON, 2020**

## KEW'S GOLDEN TRIANGLE IN 1904



In 1904, as part of the scheme to sewer Melbourne, the Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works surveyed the suburbs of Melbourne in order to plan for future sewerage and water reticulation works. This hand-tinted MMBW Detail Plan No 1588 once formed part of the collection held in the Engineer's Department of the City of Kew. It was donated to the Kew Historical Society in 1989.

The plan represents all built structures in the area surveyed, with public buildings indicated by grey, and brick and wooden structures coloured pink and yellow

respectively. By 1904, the public, commercial and private buildings on the previous subdivisions of Crown Portion 86 are clearly indicated. Interspersed among the buildings, and marked on the plan, are numerous vegetable gardens. The Post Office and Police Station on the western section of the block are coloured grey as is the Salvation Army Barracks on the corner of High and Charles Streets.

The outline of James Venn Morgan's house and land, entered from Charles Street and marked 22 on the plan, can be seen to the south-west of the Barracks.





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# WOODBURY LADIES COLLEGE

## 1903 – 1920

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The City of Boroondara is noted for the large concentration of private schools within its borders. These are the great survivors of what were once numerous small schools spread across the district. Some of the early schools in Kew morphed into others; the private Kew High School became Trinity Grammar School. Others, like Baldur Girls' Grammar School in Denmark Street simply disappeared. Woodbury Ladies College closed in 1920 after twenty-two years when it amalgamated with St Andrew's School of the Pathfinder in Punt Road, South Yarra to form St Andrew's College in Mont Victor Road. In some ways, its legacy continued beyond St Andrew's to The Preshil School.

Contemporary newspapers confirm that the school was founded c. 1898 in Cotham Road by a Miss Harcourt, former principal of Sydenham College, Moonee Ponds. The first school was located in a house, *Woodbury*, on the south side of Cotham Road. It is still located at 180 Cotham Road, two doors up from Belmont Avenue. A real estate advertisement from 2000, described it as originally being a Cobb & Co coach house.

Miss Harcourt maintained the school until the 'good-will' was purchased in 1908 by Miss L.J. Macey, who had previously operated Lillsden Ladies' College in Edgevale Road between c. 1891 and c. 1903. The Woodbury College records, presumed to be accurate, claim that Lillsden began with four students, one of whom was Percy Grainger.

The 'Macey Years' at Woodbury College (1908-20) witnessed a steady expansion in student numbers and accommodation, which is most vividly recounted in handwritten annual reports, prepared to be presented at annual speech nights by Miss Macey. The reports include those for the years 1908-10, 1912-14, and 1916-20. These fascinating manuscripts form part of a large collection donated to Kew Historical Society (KHS), in the 1980s, which also includes original school magazines, an exercise book containing the names and addresses of teachers and students, and a handwritten history of the school.

Miss Macey's first report to parents was presented in the [Kew] Recreation Hall in Wellington Street. Many of its themes were also to be articulated in future years – the welfare of students, their achievements, reports on staff, as well as challenges that the school had overcome.

The 'Report of Woodbury College for Year ending Xmas 1908' acknowledges the 'difficulties' of amalgamating the students and teachers of Woodbury and Lillsden Ladies' Colleges. However, the Principal acknowledges with a degree of satisfaction that the potential for friction between the girls of the two schools did not eventuate. On a more pressing level, it was noted that since she and her sister had taken over the school, there had been necessary alterations to the building to accommodate the combined student cohort.

A feature of each of her reports, which she was later to assert that she had never been comfortable with, was prize giving; a common activity in schools of the period. In a hierarchical society, resisting the pressure by parents and students to award prizes would have been fraught. In 1909, she was to state that:

*... [while] we encourage a healthy rivalry, we must emphatically state that we prefer to have the steady worker, who studies because she loves her work rather than the one who works well because there is something to be gained.*

For later researchers, the awarding of prizes by schools is useful in that, in the absence of school records, the names of the students and the subjects in which they excelled is recorded.

The 1910 'Annual Concert' and distribution of prizes, as recorded in the *Box Hill Reporter*, confirms that boys attended the Ladies' College. Allan Crow in the kindergarten is recorded as winning a prize for brushwork, spelling, number and writing; Jack Cole in 1st class for reading and spelling; Jack Paton in 2nd class for reading, scripture, drawing and grammar; and George Paton in 3rd class for history, scripture, geography, spelling, arithmetic and grammar. In a later school photograph from 1919 (overleaf), of the approximately eighty-five students pictured, about thirteen appear to be boys.

Later, during the First World War, while prizes continued to be awarded, the students are frequently recorded as gifting the monetary equivalent of their prizes to support the war effort.

## WOODBURY LADIES COLLEGE (from page 6)

The Principal's annual reports also record the varying competitions and public examinations for which students entered. In addition to the public and university entrance examinations, students also sat for church missionary competitions and business scholarships. In 1917, in the 'church missionary examination, which is open to all schools other than those of the state, one student carried off the first prize in the senior division of the metropolitan schools, and another came fourth on the list'.

While the level of accomplishment had to be high for a private school of the period to survive, students clearly achieved a high level of distinction in the fine and performing arts. The 'Annual Break-up and distribution of prizes' in the Recreation Hall at the end of 1908 lists pianoforte solos and duets and a cantata for children – *Rose of Joy* – featuring a queen, pages, a magician, a jester, knights, a dragon and sunbeams. Also noting in passing, were dumbbell exercises by junior pupils. By 1910, the program began with 'drill', senior students performed the trial scene from the *Merchant of Venice*, and the cantata was *A Holiday Concert*.

As a small school, some events gained greater significance at Woodbury College. In 1908, the school faced an outbreak of whooping cough with many students and their families unable to attend the final break-up. In 1910 it was an outbreak of mumps in June followed by that of measles in December.

To those of us who live in an affluent society, some features of the reports inevitably appear odd or quaint, such as the Principal's announcement in 1910 that the College now had a library of twenty-five books 'of varied character, all of an educational value such as *Ivanhoe*, *Hereward the Wake*, *Tale of Two Cities*, a Bible and *Grecian Myths etc*'. The number is not surprising given the comparatively small number of books held by the Municipal Library. The titles reveal a steady diet of the culture of the United Kingdom and a continuing interest in Classical Studies, although it would appear at a fairly basic level.

There are conflicting dates for when the school moved to a new building on the corner of Uvadale Grove. The 'Woodbury College Report [of] 1912' confirms that the building program began in 1911 and by 1912 the students had '... been at work in it during a whole school year'. After noting that it was an 'ideal building', Miss Macey linked improved facilities to 'better work' by students and teachers.

Improved learning outcomes were also to be seen in new subject offerings, which in 1912 included new classes in Physical Culture which is '... so necessary a subject for growing girls, grace of motion adding charm to any girl'. Students were also offered evening classes in dressmaking by Miss Barnard, while ambulance classes were open to current and former students.

Inevitably, 1914 was to be noted by Miss Macey in her report to parents as '... an eventful one in the course of our nation'. Perhaps predictably, given the national patriotic fervour '... the girls have felt the thrill & have been deeply stirred', noting that the absence of prizes was due to the monetary equivalent being donated [by the prize-winners] to the Kew Motor Ambulance Fund. Patriotism was not just engendered by the outbreak of war. As early as 1907, students from Woodbury College had joined in Empire Day celebrations outside the Kew Town Hall, together with students from other schools including Trinity Grammar School, the Kew and East Kew state schools, Baldur Girls School, Clarence Ladies College, Lillsden College and Mrs C.F. Smith's and Miss Fergusson's preparatory schools. Regrettably the students at Xavier College had an engagement elsewhere. Those present listened to 'inspiring addresses' by local politicians, cheered the hoisting of the Union Jack and sang the National Anthem 'as a fitting conclusion to a brief but very impressive ceremony'.

Fundraising for patriotic causes continued throughout the war years. It included an 'American tea' at the college and a Patriotic Concert in the Recreation Hall in 1915, in aid of Servian [Serbian] and Kew Red Cross Funds; and performances and a musical program given at St Hilary's in 1917. By 1918, Miss Macey could report to parents that it had been '... A Year of excitement of alternating hopes and fears...' as well as '...knowing that all we hoped for has been accomplished and now we look forward hopefully to the future'.

At the end of 1918, Woodbury College planned for additions including a new school room, to accommodate growing numbers of students. However, by the end of 1920, the school decided to amalgamate with the newly formed St Andrew's College in Mont Victor Road under the leadership of Rev JT Lawton. Miss Macey was for a period the Headmistress of the amalgamated school. Another teacher at the new school was Miss Margaret JR Lyttle, who in 1930 left St Andrew's to form the Preshil School.

**ROBERT BAKER, 2020**



WOODBURY COLLEGE, 1919



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# JOHN PERCY JONES

## A SOCIALIST IN KEW

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*While I was on duty at the Kew Court House last year, a visitor to the exhibition mentioned that his grandfather, John Percy Jones, had been the founding president of the Victorian Socialist Party, and also a long-time resident of Princess Street. Through research, I discovered his extraordinary life story.*

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John Percy Jones (1872-1955) was born on 22 October 1872 in Hobart Town, the son of Thomas John Jones, coachman, and his wife Bridget (née Costello), both Irish Catholics. Jones' mother and two siblings died before he was three and he was brought up by his father and elder brother while friends took care of his two sisters. From the age of eight, before and after school, he worked at the Waverley racing stables, while also delivering chemists' prescriptions. At eleven he left school and became a roustabout and boundary rider on R.Q. Kermode's sheep-station, *Mona Vale*, near Ross.

In 1888, following the death of his father, sixteen-year-old Jones sold a pony and saddle given to him by Kermode and left for Melbourne. In Melbourne he worked for leading butcher T.K. Bennet Ltd, attending classes at the Working Men's College before droving cattle in the country beyond Bendigo. Returning to Melbourne after a winter in a wet saddle, he became a salesman for his own brand of brass polish before establishing a pay-as-you-wear tailoring business in 1893. *The Age* of 12 April 1893 carried, possibly his first advertisement, 'A BOON, - Suits, 40s, for 2s 6d week, good cutter. Jones, tailor, third floor, Temperance Life-buildings, Swanston-st.'

Despite having launched his business during the banking crisis and economic depression of the early 1890s, Jones prospered and by 1897 had moved to new premises at 8 Royal Arcade, opposite the G.P.O. in Bourke Street, advertising for tailoresses to work as trouser and vest hands. On 22 December 1897, he married Mary Ann 'Minnie' Worrall at Charles Strong's Australian Church.

Jones had taken up cycling both for exercise and as advertising for his business. In 1899 and 1900 he was a competitor in the Austral Wheel Race.

He became a member of the Butchers' Union while employed at T.K. Bennet's and continued to be involved in the labour movement while he established his tailoring business as an early member of the Progressive Political League [which evolved into the Labor Party in Victoria]. In 1897, Jones was founding secretary of the *Tocsin*, Victoria's first official Labor newspaper. The *Tocsin* helped to sponsor the 1897 visit to Australia of Ben Tillett, one of the leaders of the successful 1889 London Dock Strike, along with Tom Mann and John Burns.

Tillett was one of England's leading socialists, a member of the Fabian Society and had been one of the founders with Tom Mann in 1893 of the Independent Labour Party in Britain.

On his first trip to England in 1901, Jones arranged to bypass the Flinders Lane cloth merchants by negotiating a direct supply of cloth from the English manufacturers for his tailoring business. On this and subsequent visits, Tillett introduced him to leading Labour and Socialist figures.



**JPJ and political associates**  
Left to right :- ?, ?, ?, Ben Tillett?, Tom Mann?,  
John Percy Jones, George Bernard Shaw.  
*Courtesy Malcolm Halliday*

In 1905, Jones formed the Social Questions Committee with Tom Mann to advocate socialism and collect information on the social conditions of the people. In 1907 they formed the Victorian Socialist Party, with J.P. Jones the founding president. Among the active members of the V.S.P were John Cain, a future premier of Victoria, and John Curtin, Prime Minister of Australia for much of the Second World War. Writer Vance Palmer, later a Kew resident, became a member of the V.S.P. in 1909.

In 1910, Jones stood as the Labor candidate for the Legislative Council seat of Melbourne East, defeating the sitting member, architect William Pitt. He later became the leader of Labor in the Legislative Council. In December 1913 he became an honorary minister in the thirteen-day Elmslie Labor Government. He was also Minister for Public Works, Health and Immigration in the 1924 Prendergast Labor Government. In the 1927-28 Hogan Labor Government, he exchanged Health for Mines, and held the same offices in the 1929-32 Hogan Ministry; also becoming Acting Treasurer in 1931-32. Jones was the Legislative Council's representative on the Council of Melbourne University from 1923. He was also a Justice of the Peace and a Director of both the Eagle Star Insurance Company and the Great Ocean Road Trust.

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## A SOCIALIST IN KEW (from page 8)

The direct connection of J.P. Jones with Kew began in 1921 when he purchased *Dalkeith*, a two-storey mansion at 81 Princess Street, from the estate of Thomas C. Jack. The land had a total frontage of 287ft to Princess Street by a depth of 190ft along Molesworth Street, back to a 10ft right-of-way.

Jones re-named the house *Ruskin Hall* and a Labor Fete in support of the Labor Women's Committee Bazaar was held there on Saturday 10 December 1921. Festivities in the spacious grounds included picnic sports, a promenade concert, maypole and carnival attractions, with dancing in the 'Hall' and the crowning of the most popular girl. This was the first of many similar fundraising fetes held at the house throughout the 1920s. During the 1923 Fete, the Richmond City Band played in the afternoon while the Northcote Jazz Band performed in the evening.

In November 1927, while Jones was Minister for Public Works, Kew Council resolved to compulsorily acquire *South Esk*, at the corner of Cotham Road and Charles Street, as the site for a new town hall, municipal offices and pleasure ground, offering David Carnegie, the owner, £8,000. Carnegie rejected the offer, undertaking to fight the acquisition to the end. Under the *Local Government Act*, approval of the acquisition by the Minister for Public Works was required. John Percy Jones' refusal of Council's proposal on the basis that 'an Englishman's home was his castle' was resented by Council with the Mayor, Cr McConchie stating that it was a serious block to the municipal development of Kew.

The Wall Street Crash on 24 October 1929 plunged the world into the economic crisis now remembered as the Great Depression. John Percy Jones M.L.C., Acting Treasurer in the Victorian Labor Government chaired the Loans Council Committee which developed the 1931 Premiers Plan to save the Australian economy from liquidation. The Labor faction, led by New South Wales Premier Jack Lang, rejected the plan. This led to Jones resignation from the Hogan ministry, and ultimately his expulsion from the Labor Party, when he supported United Australia Party candidates, including rising young Kew politician Robert Menzies, who was campaigning for re-election in the 1932 Victorian Election.

Following the election, Jones, still a member of the Legislative Council, was offered a place in Stanley Argyle's United Australia Party ministry and continued to act as Minister for Public Works. This led to another ministerial clash with Kew Council in November 1933, when Jones rejected their application to compulsorily acquire thirteen properties for a town hall in Cotham Road, between Derrick and Union Streets. Again, the properties were the homes of long time Kew residents, including the formidable Miss Carrie C. Jamieson of *Nirvana*. It was not until after the death of David Carnegie's widow, Alice Maude Carnegie, on 30 October 1946 that Kew Council was able to purchase *South Esk* from his estate and finally acquire a Cotham Road site for their town hall and municipal offices.

In 1934 Jones was elected to the Legislative Council with the support of the United Australia Party as member for the South-Western Province. He resigned from the Argyle Government in March 1935, and retired from the Legislative Council in 1940 to rule over a family empire of real estate and grazing properties.



East (Princess Street) Elevation - Ruskin Hall,  
81 Princess Street  
Courtesy Malcolm Halliday

His J.P. Jones tailoring business was sold in 1946 and became Roger David Ready Tailored Clothes Ltd, a name which has also passed into history.

He lived on at *Ruskin Hall* until his death on 12 October 1955; an event which passed unnoticed in the Victorian Parliament. Survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter, he was buried at Box Hill Cemetery, leaving an estate valued for probate at £160,541.

The life of John Percy Jones is an extraordinary story of success against the odds. There is no built heritage to remind us of his association with Kew. *Ruskin Hall* was demolished following the death of his wife Mary Anne, and the property subdivided. The house, *Ruskin Place* at 75 Princess Street, built in 1956 on the southern end of the property by his daughter Eileen and son-in-law Keith Halliday, father of my Courthouse visitor, has also since been demolished and replaced with an apartment building.

Jones' political opinions came to be seen by many as confused. His own explanation that 'whilst a Socialist on the outside he was a Capitalist on the inside' is explained in a more nuanced form in a J.P. Jones Tailor advertisement in the form of an open letter included in a Tom Mann pamphlet 'Socialism' published by Tocsin Office Printers:

*'I believe in the principles enunciated in this Pamphlet. The sooner the people are ready to adopt a Collective form of Ownership, in place of the present system of Capitalistic control, the better for mankind. But, meanwhile, we have to carry on Business under the present methods, and the Consumer must seek the best value obtainable.'*

**DAVID WHITE, 2020**

The author would like to thank Malcolm Halliday for his assistance with images for this article despite serious health problems confining him in hospital, while his wife Jenny was forced to evacuate from their home during the recent bushfires.

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# THE HUMES OF STUDLEY PARK

## 5 STUDLEY AVENUE & THE HUME PIPE GARDEN

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The house at 5 Studley Avenue stood where St Vincent's Private Hospital Kew now stands (formerly Vimy House). It was located on the western corner of Studley Avenue and Studley Park Road. It was built in 1912.

Only three families lived there during its existence. It was originally and briefly owned by a solicitor, Mr. P.B. Stuart and the property called *Fosbury*. It was then rented to the Hume family, which had eight children. At first Stuart would not sell the property to Hume because he very much wanted his wife to return from Sydney and live there. However, this did not happen, and the property was subsequently purchased by Walter Reginald Hume in 1923 and re-named *Merriwa*. Walter Hume was an inventor and entrepreneur, and the founder of the Hume Pipe Company (Australia) Ltd, now known as 'Humes'. The property was then acquired by Dr Henry Boyd Penfold a consultant physician and pathologist in 1946. He lived there until 1971, when the land was purchased by the Tramways Board and the house demolished to build Vimy House Private Hospital.

In her private journal, written just before her death in 1981, Bernie Kelly (née Hume), the eldest daughter of Walter Hume described the property:

*... the land was highest on Studley Park Road and sloped down so that the house was set down off the road, surrounded by a high cypress hedge. This made for a lovely, extensive private garden and childhood playground, beautifully kept by the stalwart gardener, Mr Laing who reigned supreme.*

The children never picked Mr Laing's flowers, but they only had to ask him, and he would pick a bunch carefully tied with the yellow raffia he always carried with him. There were two double gates in the hedge, one on Studley Avenue and the other at the far end of the property on Studley Park Road, there being a long, curved driveway that made its way between the two gates via the portico of the house. So, for convenience, cars were usually driven in at Studley Avenue and out at Studley Park Road. Since both ends sloped upward it was a frequent track for billycarts and trikes! Bernie describes the garden further:

*On each gate was a copper plate marked 'Merriwa' and these were kept polished with 'Brasso' by Mr. Laing. The garden was laid out with many flower beds and borders and lines of standard roses. Every Saturday morning Mr. Laing would put on the laundry bench a baby's bath full of cut flowers, all tied with raffia, for Mrs. Hume to arrange. There were trees, shrubs, fruit trees, a large dahlia bed, palm trees and formally planted flowers in banks also a vegetable garden with rows of mint, parsley, thyme, gooseberries. Dominating the garden was a magnificent English Elm tree and this was the tree always used as 'home' in the endless games of 'hidey' and other games.*



**5 Studley Avenue, Kew**  
Courtesy of Annie Young (née Hume)

Opposite the Hume family home at 5 Studley Avenue, was a vacant corner block of land on Studley Park Road and the south-eastern corner of Howard Street. This land was purchased by Walter Hume in the early 1920s when his pipe company business was expanding. The garden was constructed to advertise the use of concrete pipes in garden architecture and was named the *Hume Experimental Garden Plot*. This garden was carefully tended by the gardener of the family home, Charles Laing, and as already mentioned, he held absolute power over the entire garden and this block that also housed a greenhouse.

Bernie recounts in her journal that:

*For about fifteen years the family had a dog named Paddy whom they all loved and so did Mr Laing. It said something for the dog's intelligence that he crossed and re-crossed Studley Park Road for all those years without ever getting hurt by a car!*



**Hume Experimental Garden Plot 1920s**  
Courtesy of Annie Young (née Hume)



## THE HUMES OF STUDLEY PARK (from page 10)

Now, returning to Mr Laing. He came from Aberdeen, Scotland and had been trained as a formal gardener on a large estate and did further training at Kew Gardens in London. Sometimes Bernie would ask him why he didn't take a holiday and she recalls his cross reply: 'and who will take care of these gardens while I'm away?'

An article in the Melbourne *Australasian* for the 1926 Garden Week includes a description of the Hume Pipe Co exhibition:

*... permanent and ornamental garden furnishings made of reinforced concrete. Pergolas standing upon cylindrical pillars with the overhead tie pieces, either in concrete or angle-iron, plant containers about 4 ft 6 in[ches] in diameter supported by three cylindrical legs, filled with bedding plants, and paving blocks for permanent floors for plant houses or garden pathways to be effectively laid.*

Some ten years later, in 1936 a gardening article in the Perth *Sunday Times* described the Hume Pipe Company's Products:

*The Hume Pipe Company Limited can supply, in addition to the pipes for which it is well known, all manner of building columns and garden improvements, such as path slabs, bird baths, outdoor tables, benches, garden borders, fishponds etc. In fact, the company can make anything the householder may require.*

However in a 1938, it was reported in an article in *The Age* that Cr A.E. Pratt gave the following description of the Hume Experimental Garden plot at a Kew Council meeting:

*It is an eyesore and a haunt for footpads. What legal power does the council possess to compel the owner to effect improvements? It is one of the reasons why residents are unable to keep servants. Girls object to going home at night past that badly lighted area. In Studley Park-road the lighting is more meagre than elsewhere'.*

Cr McPhillaro added that: 'the land mars the appearance of one of the finest residential areas in Kew'. The matter was referred to the Town Clerk, Mr Birrell to investigate.

The garden appears to have been long gone by the time that flats were constructed on this corner block in 1962. There is anecdotal evidence from family and friends that the gardens may have remained in place until the mid to late 1940s.

Bernie recalled her last visit to the gardener Mr. Laing took place after her father died in July 1943. He was making a wreath of pink flowers for Mr. Hume in his gardening shed. She recounts in her journal: 'He sadly remarked, "Well Bernie, I've worked for him for 22 years and we've never had a bad word between us". Mr. Laing died in 1944.

**JULIE KING, 2020**



**Bernie Hume posing in the Hume Pipe Garden, late 1920s**  
Courtesy of Annie Young (née Hume)

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The Kew Historical Society has one of the most diverse and significant heritage collections in the City of Boroondara. Collection areas include: manuscripts, documents, audio-visual materials, articles of fashion & design, maps, artworks and ephemera.

Recent donations to the collection which the Society gratefully acknowledges include:

- Books and ephemera, from Thea Sartori.
- Manuscripts, documents, photographs, plans and trophies of the former Kew Bowling Club (see pages 1 & 2).
- Bowling Club uniforms and assorted items - from Jan Mosley and Graeme Spry.
- An evening gown worn by Mrs Wishart, Mayoress of Kew to the 1907 Kew Mayoral Ball - from Christine Sargood.
- Photographs and manuscripts relating to *Hallatrow*, 6 Holroyd Street, Kew - from Gregor Evans.
- A collection of items owned by Gerard Petrie - from Christopher Petrie.
- Volume 1 of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Second Edition 1773, formerly part of the Fairy Land collection.

**Kew Historical Society Inc.**  
**PO Box 175**  
**Kew VIC 3101**

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