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SOCIETY INC.**

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# NEWSLETTER

No. 141

DECEMBER 2022



## PLANNING AND DISASTERS

This year has seen the inundation of many residential areas of cities and towns in Australia as the effects of La Niña, a negative Indian Ocean Dipole and a positive Southern Annular Mode combined to bring flooding rains to the east coast of Australia.

Historically, before the completion of the Upper Yarra Dam in 1957, Kew experienced frequent flooding when the Yarra burst its banks and spread across the river flats. Fortunately, these areas were often farmland and golf courses, with the exception of the Studley Park Estate. Notably not located in the Studley Park area of Kew, this proposed subdivision extended from the Outer Circle Railway reserve between Princess Street and Willsmere Road to the banks of the Yarra. In March 1911, Frank Hegelman, the vendor of the estate, appealed the decision of the Kew Council to refuse to approve the levels of certain streets within the estate in proceedings at the Kew Court of Petty Sessions before police magistrate, Dr Cole.

The substance of the appeal was that Council was erroneous in its interpretation of the Local Government Act because its certification condition was based on an abnormal state of affairs. It was asserted that flooding of the river was an abnormal event and had nothing to do with the drainage of the land under normal conditions.

Council's declaration on the plan had been as follows: *'The mayor, councillors, and burgesses of the borough of Kew hereby certify that, in their opinion, the streets and lands south of the line shown on this plan of subdivision as the 1891 flood level can be sufficiently drained, but in their opinion the streets and lands shown on the plan north of such line cannot be sufficiently drained in the event of the flooding of the River Yarra.'* As a result, the Titles Office had refused to register titles within the subdivision.

Expert witness for the appellant, civil engineers Harry Vine Champion and William P Steane, testified that the land in question could be drained under ordinary circumstances. Champion advised he would not be surprised if a portion of the land in the estate was submerged ten or twelve times a year and Steane admitted that there were places where surface water could not be taken away with the river flow, but slowly evaporated.

[Front page]

## FLOODED BOATSHED, 1923

Made digital copy, Gift of Jan Coutts, 2019  
KHS Collection

### PLANNING AND DISASTERS (from page 1)

Appearing for the Council, Board of Works surveyor William Snowden produced plans showing the height to which flood waters had reached, advising that the land could be sufficiently drained in summer, but not in winter, and suggesting he would not erect a dwelling in parts of the northern area. Board of Works engineer, Carlo Catani, confirmed that straightening and widening of the Yarra as far as the Cremorne Bridge had improved flow in the Yarra but that this would not affect the height to which water rose beyond half a mile upstream. Kew surveyor, August Tuxen, testified that some of the land was covered when the river rose seven feet although that could hardly be called a flood. However, during the 1901 flood the rise of the water was 20 feet and in an ordinary flood 14 feet. A number of other Kew residents testified that there had been up to thirty floods across some of the subdivided area in the past 19 years. William Ellison recalled that on one occasion he had put a cable around the Rifle Club's pavilion to prevent it being floated off its blocks.

Dr Cole considered the evidence and decided in the favour of Frank Hegelman. Subsequently, Council obtained an order to review his decision. Mr Justice Hodges and Mr Justice Hood in the State Full Court decided that what might be called the accidental intrusion of flooding could be got rid of by proper drainage. The Court held that the magistrate's decision was correct, and Council's appeal was dismissed with costs. Subsequently the land was flooded on a number of occasions. In December 1934, *The Age* reported that River Avenue and Kellett Grove lay beneath 20 feet of water with only the roofs and chimney pots of a number of houses visible above the water. Chipperfield's two storey house was almost completely under water, and it was estimated that the Yarra had risen 40 feet above its summer level.

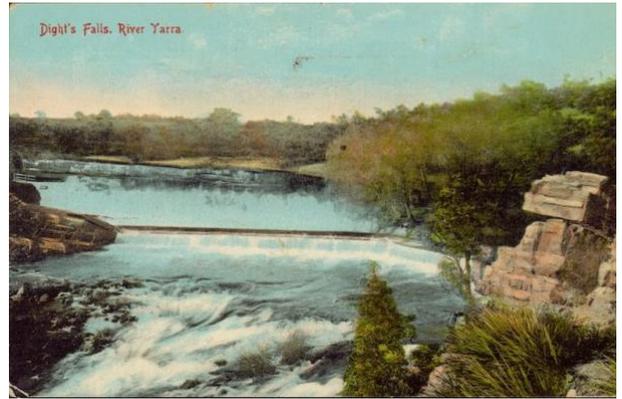
From a contemporary perspective, it would seem that, despite the narrow interpretation of the Local Government Act's drainage requirements, Council's assessment that the riverside portion of the Studley Park Estate should not be built on was correct. This reflects their concern for the interests of purchasers of land, anticipating the concept of consumer protection.

**DAVID WHITE**

### GRANTS & SPONSORS

KHS is supported by a Triennial Operational Grant from the City of Boroondara, and funding for specific projects by the City of Boroondara and Rotary Club of Balwyn. Kay & Burton (Hawthorn) is a corporate sponsor.

**KAY & BURTON**



[above] **DIGHT'S FALLS, RIVER YARRA** [circa 1911]  
KHS Collection

## KEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

### PATRON

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**Curator:** Judith Scurfield

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Julie King | Debbie McColl-Davis | Margaret Robinson

### MONTHLY MEETINGS

Public meetings of the Kew Historical Society are held in the Phyllis Hore Room at the Kew Library on the second Wednesday of each month (excluding the months of January, March, October and December). There is usually a guest speaker. Visitors are welcome to attend.

### KEW COURT HOUSE

Members of the Society played a key role in the preservation of the Kew Court House. General enquiries can be made, and viewing of our current exhibition, on Fridays (excluding public holidays) between 11am and 1pm. Our room is on the first floor of the former Kew Police Station at 188 High Street, Kew.

### KEW HERITAGE CENTRE

The Kew Heritage Centre, at the rear of the ground floor of the Kew Library, is generally staffed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays between 10am and 4pm. Entry is by appointment.

### NEWSLETTER

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

### WEBSITES

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

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

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### DISCLAIMER

The views expressed, and information provided, by the authors of articles in this newsletter do not necessarily mirror the views and values of the Kew Historical Society. We also rely on authors checking the accuracy of their data and apologise if errors of fact have been made.

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# HISTORY NEWS

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## NEW WALKING TOURS

In February, Kew Historical Society (KHS) was awarded a Stronger Communities Grant by the Federal Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources. Since then, members of the Research team have been preparing five walking tours to historic places of interest in Kew. The tours, which can be completed in about an hour are focused on Sackville Street, Pakington Street, Studley Park, Kew East and Churches Plus.

The tours will be launched by the end of the year and a link will be available on the Society's website. It will be possible to print the tours at home or follow the tours using your smart phone via a QR code. All tours include a map, with the route marked and the text supported by images.

We are excited about this production and thank Felicity Renowden, Julie King, Desley Reid, Robert Baker, Margaret Robinson, David White and Brad Miles for their dedication and commitment to preserving the history and heritage of Kew.

We encourage all members to look for the link on our website in January 2023. We hope you enjoy the walks we have created for you and would be delighted to hear all feedback.

DESLEY REID

## APPLICATION FOR GRANTS FUNDING

In November, KHS applied for another triennial operational grant from the City of Boroondara. Judith Voce, KHS President, wrote to members about the importance of this funding to support our delivery of core community services. The full text of her letter is included on page 11 of this newsletter.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

KHS also publishes stories, photographs and events on Facebook. We are seeking to grow our audience and reach, so appreciate it when you 'like' an item or post, or subscribe to our page, so that you can find out about any new events we post or items we feature. Our Facebook page is linked from the front of our website.

## MEMBERSHIPS

For new membership applications and renewals, please use the printed form on page 12 of this newsletter, or the online form on our website, making your subscription payment to our bank account 633 000 171300288. Please send any queries to [secretary@kewhistoricalsociety.org.au](mailto:secretary@kewhistoricalsociety.org.au)

## THE COLLECTION

KHS has received, and wishes to acknowledge the following additions to the collection since September 2022:

- Book – *Aliens: the first 200 years* – which includes information about notable Kew resident Henry Hedderwick. The book includes his mayoral photo, from our collection. Gift of Jillian Maxwell.
- Artwork – *Kew's Creative Cuisine* – a large, framed watercolour and gouache, originally hung in Kew's in High Street [the forerunner of *Estivo*]. Gift of Heather Oliver.
- Collection – a large number of items including artworks, textiles, press clippings, documents, photographs and artefacts relating to Vida May Wing, her husband Hubert McDonald, and their friend Jean Hornby. Gift of Anna French.
- Book – *Our Schools and the War*. Gift of Rosalie Triolo.
- Accessories – three hats by local milliner Anne Harrison of Kew. Gift of Alison Vickers.
- Award - Kew District Wolf Cubs Jubilee Sports Trophy (Swimming). Gift of Brad Miles. [see p. 6]

ROBERT BAKER



**MEERSHAUM PIPE IN LEATHER CASE**

Owned by Joseph or John Wing, Nineteenth Century  
Gift of Anna French, 2022

## NEW MEMBER

KHS is pleased to welcome Anna French as a new member.

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# ONWARD AND UPWARD

## A HISTORY OF KEW EAST PRIMARY SCHOOL

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A .3-hectare (3 roods) site in the Glass Creek Pound, granted by the Kew Borough Council, near the corner of Kilby Road and High Street, was the original location of the Kew East State School No. 3161. The school building, described as a portable weatherboard building, previously housed the Koonung Koonung State School No. 2603, which records show had closed in 1891.

The Kew East school, then called East Kew State School opened on 25 April 1892. At first, enrolments were small, and the Education Department of Victoria advised Kew Borough Council and residents of its intention to close the school. Following the intervention of the Kew Town Clerk, Mr H Harrison and the Kew Board of Advice, the Education Department agreed to allow the school to remain open. However, the first 10 years saw several more attempts to close the school due to low student numbers. During 1896, the school was divided into two separate schools. Grades 1 to 3 remained at Kew East, while the students in Grades 4 to 6 amalgamated with Kew State School. By 1902, the population of Kew had grown to 8,119. With school enrolments increasing, Grades 4 to 6 were reintroduced to Kew East and the arrangement with Kew State School was discontinued.

A new site was found for the school in Strathalbyn Street in 1905. Located behind the current position of the East Kew Baby Health Centre, it is believed that the Koonung Koonung school building was moved to this location. In 1906, the Education Department designated Kew East school as a training centre for rural teachers. In 1911, land subdivisions created new housing blocks and the local population increased. As school accommodation was insufficient, a larger building was needed. The new weatherboard building incorporated interior walls of jarrah, a roof of corrugated iron and a main teaching room able to accommodate 120 students. The room measured 65 feet (20m) by 27 feet (8m) and could be divided into three equal sections using accordion partitions. Designed as a Model School, the ventilation and fittings were of the highest standard.

Kew had become a popular residential choice for families due to the progressive education offered by local schools. The building in Strathalbyn Street was built to accommodate 120 students but by 1917 housed 278 students. Mr H Lawson, State Minister of Education, announced in July 1917 that larger premises were required and that a larger site would be sought. By September 1917, 18 housing blocks had been purchased in the Belford Heights Estate by the Public Works Department. The land, about 3 acres (1.21 hectares), between Kitchener Street and Beresford Street was purchased for 35/- per square foot. An additional five blocks fronting Balfour Road, now called Windella Avenue, were added later.



**KEW EAST CENTRAL SCHOOL, GRADE V 1911**  
Gift of Elizabeth Angel, 1992  
*KHS Collection*

The Education Department accepted a quote in May 1922 for £11,870 to build the new school in Kitchener Street. The three-storey red brick building was built in the Public Works Department inter-war school style. Built to accommodate 500 students, the new building was opened in October 1923 with an enrolment of more than 400 students.

There is some disagreement over the destination of the 1911 weatherboard school building. Some say that it was moved to the Melbourne Teacher's College to be used as a training school for student teachers in rural school practices. Others believe that it was moved to the site in Kitchener Street to be used for country teachers to receive their final training. In 1979, a wooden building still stood on the current site of the administration block. It was used for band practice but was called the Rural School. This building was used for teacher training until 1967, but it was not the 1911 school building. During the 1920s, Kew East became a Central School incorporating Years 7 and 8. Kew and Balwyn High Schools were both established at Kew East Central School, before being moved in 1964 to their current sites, when the Central School section of Kew East school closed.

Community Service has been an aspect of school life for decades. In March 1926, the students donated £73 to the Noojee State School, which had been devastated by a bush fire. The money had been raised to spend on a school picnic, but the students chose to donate it to the Noojee State School Equipment Fund instead. The generosity of the students of Kew East was repeated in 1930 when the plight of children attending a Collingwood school became known.

> page 5

## ONWARD AND UPWARD (from page 4)



**KEW EAST STATE SCHOOL NO.3161**  
**35 KITCHENER STREET** [circa 1927]  
*KHS Collection*

The effects of The Depression in the industrial areas of inner Melbourne were being felt by children. Hungry, insufficiently dressed and sometimes without shoes to wear to school, many Collingwood children suffered from skin disorders and malnutrition. The Kew East Headmaster, appealed to parents for donations to assist the children of Collingwood. The parents responded by donating fresh food and outgrown clothing. The school staff sorted the clothing and delivered the donations to the Collingwood school. The success of this initiative led to the establishment of the State Schools Relief Committee which still works to support disadvantaged students and their families. Additionally, the students raised over £200 for children in Collingwood and Richmond. The Kew Council minutes record this contribution and other eastern suburbs schools followed the Kew East example.

A contract for £7,979 was let in November 1928 for the erection of an infant school building. Designed by the Public Works Department, the plan was for a brick building with a terracotta tiled roof, cement stucco entrance porch and an open, rear veranda. An assembly hall would be large enough for organised games. Offices, staff room, cloakrooms and five classrooms were in the plan. Unroofed toilets were to be accessed externally. Central heating was to be installed throughout the building. The single-storey infant school opened in 1929.

The school was a magnet for families who had moved to the area for the educational facilities available. When some parents discovered that their homes were zoned by the Education Department for Deepdene State School, they complained to the Department and requested a zoning change. During the 1940s, parents complained that zoning forced them to move their children to Kew State School. They said their children were unhappy there and wanted to return to Kew East school. By 1946, 155 children travelled daily from North Balwyn to attend Kew East school until a state primary school was built in North Balwyn in 1950.

A brass band was formed in 1930, following an application to the Gillies Bequest. Over many years the band has had great success but in 1950 was involved in a controversy when a protest was upheld following its first prize award at a Schools Band Competition.

The runners-up were awarded the trophy when it was revealed that Kew East had some band members who were ineligible to play in a school's competition. By 1932, a Band Committee was formed to support the band, but it was not until 1938 that band uniforms were provided.

By the end of World War II, the main building had been outgrown and two prefabricated buildings were installed in the grounds. However, when the Central School pupils moved to their high schools in 1964, Kew East school had an excess of classrooms which the Education Department appropriated for offices and a teaching Demonstration Unit. These remained until the 1980s when the regional education office moved to *Ardoch*, in St Kilda. The rooms were then returned to classroom use.



**KEW EAST 3161, 5TH GRADE 1926**  
Gift of Elizabeth Angel, 1992  
*KHS Collection*

The current staff room was built in 1973 as the school library and the Community Music Centre was built in 1978. The administration block is a portable building which was bricked-in in 1983. Subsequently, additional major works have seen the original Kitchener Street entry removed, the former Principal's office incorporated into the library/Information Technology Studio, the Music Centre extended to add a sports complex, and the oval and playgrounds covered with shock absorbing surfaces.

Kew East Primary School has a proud history of serving the children of the area and retains its excellent reputation as an innovative and progressive school.

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# KEW SCOUT DISTRICT SWIMMING SPORTS

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The Kew Scout District held annual swimming sports in the old Kew Pool for many years. They were a highlight of the local Scouting calendar. All of the cub packs and scout troops, as well as older senior scouts/venturers units and rover crews, in Kew gathered together one night in Term 1 for the big event.

As the event was necessarily held after school in the early evening, and held in an outdoor pool, it was often quite cold, but this didn't seem to deter the keen participants. There were novelty events for the younger age groups, with more serious events for the older children. For many years, the members of each Scout Group would wear swimming caps in the colours of their Group scarves. Coloured ribbons were awarded for first, second and third place.

The swimming sports have been held since at least 1943, and they continued every year up until 1995 when the Kew Scout District was absorbed into the Boroondara Scout District. In 1948, there was a record attendance of 750. By the 1990s, the event was being held in the heated pools of some of the Kew private schools. Were the cubs and scouts less tough - or just smarter?!

There were separate trophies for the Wolf Cub section (the 8 to 11-year-olds) and the Scout section (11 to 15-year-olds). The Wolf Cub section trophy was donated by the Willsmere Lodge, and first presented in 1959. The current location of the Scout section trophy is not known.

The swimming sports were run by a dedicated group of volunteers, most notably a former Scout Master of the 1st Kew Scouts, Mr Bob Varley. A trophy was donated in his honour in 1984 and was awarded to the Scout Group with the highest aggregate score.

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KEW DISTRICT WOLF CUBS SWIMMING SPORTS TROPHY  
KHS Collection



THE BOB VARLEY SWIMMING TROPHY  
Collection of the 1st Kew Scouts

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## AS IT HAPPENED ...

### 100 Years Ago

- After tomorrow no more steam trains will be run on the Box Hill and Kew line. A full electric service will come into operation, but the new faster timetable will not be put into operation until Sunday December 17. (*The Herald*, 7 Dec 1922, p. 3).
- A garden party was given on Saturday afternoon, when all those interested were enabled to inspect the new Carey Baptist Grammar School at Kew. (*The Age*, 11 Dec 1922, p. 7).
- Polling booths for the Federal Election today are located at the Kew Drill Hall in High Street, the Recreation Hall in Wellington Street or St Hilary's Hall in John Street, Kew East. (*The Argus*, 16 Dec 1922, p.31)
- Yesterday the State enjoyed its finest day of uninterrupted sunshine of the holidays. Macaulay's boat sheds and swimming pool reported a busy day. Canoes had been in demand all day and right into the evening. (*The Age*, 29 Dec 1922, p. 1).

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# LEOPOLDINE MIMOVICH

## SCULPTOR, ETCHER AND PAINTER

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Visitors to the peaceful Alexandra Gardens in Kew will inevitably notice some charming little sculptures, 11 in fact, dotted around the gardens and sometimes hidden in the bushes.... an old man with a long beard, a girl holding a rabbit, a woman or two and many images of children... These were gifted to the citizens of Kew 'for their enjoyment' by sculptor Mrs Leopoldine Mimovich OAM, a Kew resident, in gratitude to the friends and the new life she found as a refugee from Europe after World War II, and were officially accepted by the Mayor of Kew, Cr Michael Montalto, on 11 February 1990. Nearby, in the Kew Library, are two striking works in the distinctive, tactile, flowing style of later years: *Four Seasons*, a gift from the artist in 1988 celebrating the reopening of the library in its current location and *The 4 Seasons* celebrating the life of Jocelyn Terry-Evans (1929–2007). Another delightful little bronze figure, a child holding a bunch of flowers, stands outside the Belford Oaks Child Care Centre, in Belford Road, Kew.

Leopoldine Mimovich's religious and secular works, sculptures, painting and etchings, grace the walls of homes, private collections, convents, monasteries, libraries, gardens and public buildings all over Australia and in schools, churches - mostly Catholic, but also Anglican and Orthodox - in many suburbs of Melbourne and in country Victoria. Her art can be seen world-wide, in Timor-Leste, England, USA, Germany, Japan, Korea, New Guinea, in the United Nations Building in New York and even in Antarctica, in the Interdenominational Chapel at Mawson.

Xavier College, Kew, has in its art collection 32 of her statues in wood and bronze: Madonnas, Madonna with Child, a life-size St Francis Xavier, crucifixes and images of various saints. At Genazzano FCJ College there are two etchings and eight sculptures. At the Carmelite Monastery is a beautiful statue of the Madonna and Child. A large wooden wall carving hangs at St Anne's Catholic Primary School in East Kew. Inside the entrance high on the northern wall at Sacred Heart Church in Cotham Road, Kew is a very large wooden religious relief. Close by at the Missionary Sisters of St Peter Claver in Cotham Road, are 14 small, square, beautiful wooden carvings depicting the Stations of the Cross as well as *Day of the Cross* hanging on the walls in the Chapel.

At Caritas Christi Hospice and in the chapel at St Vincent's Aged Care facility in Studley Park Road, Kew, all recently redesigned and rebuilt, are many inspiring works by Mimovich, part of the significant art collection of St Vincent's Hospital. In the chapel is a modernist bronze depiction of the living Christ with his Cross and with his disciples, including the traitor Judas. In the Hospice are 12 small exquisitely carved bronze depictions of the Stations of the Cross, arranged on outside walls under cover in a simple garden setting.

Leopoldine Mimovich was also commissioned to design and craft a simple crucifix for each room in the Hospice; about 30 in all.



**MIMOVICH FAMILY IN HER STUDIO**  
Collection of Gabriele Mimovich

A bit more sleuthing, would no doubt, uncover many more of her works in public settings and private homes in Kew. One cannot help but wonder about the physical and artistic skills needed to create such works, as well as the creative energy and life-long commitment involved. In addition, Leopoldine Mimovich was also an etcher and a painter.

She was born 25 June 1920 in Neumarkt in what was then, the Italian Tyrol but spent the rest of her childhood and youth on a small farm near the picturesque little Austrian town of St Johann. The second of five children, she enjoyed school and did well academically. Her artistic talent was recognised and encouraged by her school teacher, Ernst Buhlmann, and by her father, an interior decorator who taught her gilding, stencil work, signwriting, friezes and borders. He also taught her how to restore valuable art in homes, churches and shrines. Leopoldine (Poldi) was also an accomplished violinist and like her siblings, was encouraged to play a musical instrument. Her mother taught her to be a home maker. Poldi wanted to be more than a housewife.

After finishing school at aged 14, Poldi was apprenticed to her father before going to Vienna to study painting for three years.

## LEOPOLDINE MIMOVICH (from page 7)

At that time, her professor noted the sculptural qualities in her work and encouraged her to further her studies at a school for sculpture in Hallstadt. It was a four-year course, interrupted for two years by the war. Transitioning from working with a paintbrush to managing a chisel was a challenge. She became a sculptor in a country which highly valued art and artists.

In 1936, aged 16, she met her first husband, Ottmar Vockner. She was 19 when they married in October 1939, following the *Anschluss* when Austria became part of Nazi Germany. They lived in Vienna where she was studying. He was sent, as a German soldier, aged 21, to the front and died in February 1942. She never recovered from this loss. He was her soulmate. Her brother, Karl, also now a German soldier, aged 16, died tragically fighting in Russia in 1942.

In 1948 she married Ljubisa Mimovich (Lou), a dashing, former captain in the Yugoslav Army, who had served in the British army and was imprisoned by the Germans. He spent time in a Russian concentration camp. Poldi began to learn Serbian. In marrying a Serb, she 'lost' her Austrian citizenship because her husband could not stay in Austria, nor could he now return to his homeland struggling at a time of serious political unrest.

This led to their decision to leave war-torn Europe. America was their choice, where they both had relatives, however Australia granted the necessary visas more quickly and they departed on the vessel *SS Skaugum* for Melbourne in 1949, full of excitement and hope as well as facing the challenges of homesickness, language, and adjustment to life in a foreign, young, English-speaking country. 'Poldi brought with her to Australia not only memories of a country scarred by war but also an inherited artistic ability born out of a culture that has always had a deep love for art.'

Fifty kilos was the luggage limit for émigrés and she carried in her suitcase, a piece of the familiar linden wood and a chisel, not the usual cutlery and domestic items. She wanted to be able to sculpt as soon as she arrived in Australia before becoming familiar with Australian timbers. Also in her luggage was a beautiful nativity scene, *Gloria in Excelsis Deo*, carved in Austria.

Life began in winter in a miserably cold, muddy army camp at Bonegilla in Northern Victoria. Assisted migrants were required to work for two years, as part of their contract, women identified as 'Occupation Domestic' and men as 'Labourer'. Poldi was impatient to begin her new life and bribed the officer in the camp with a carved mask she had brought from Austria in the hope of being sent to Melbourne to work. From a camp in Royal Park, Melbourne, which was warm and comfortable, she and Lou began work, she in a shirt factory, sewing collars for eight hours a day, Lou in a brick factory. At home after work, she began carving the piece of Austrian linden.

[right] **TWO GIRLS**  
Private collection

Poldi and Leo initially moved to a house in Yarraville. She worked for Myer at Flemington. She was astonished to learn that in Australia, women earned less than men! Lou ran a delicatessen but became increasingly mentally ill, with post-traumatic stress disorder and paranoid schizophrenia. In 1977, the family moved to 31 Miller Grove, Kew. Interestingly, this had been the home of Marie Dalley, another prominent Kew woman, and Mayor of Kew in 1954-5.



**CHRIST AND HIS DISCIPLES**  
Chapel, Caritas Christi Aged Care

Poldi worked unceasingly, preparing meals but was dependent on Lou to do the business side of her work, and the shopping and housework, at a time when men generally were not expected to be domestically occupied. Her works were varied and included a life sized bust of Gabi, their daughter, in 1975, and a bronze carving of Lou in 1976. She received a great many commissions from within Australia and from the wider world. Over time she learned from experience about Australian timbers and came to prefer Huon Pine from Tasmania for her sculptures.

Life as a sculptor was an isolated existence, working alone and without company, however she was absolutely dedicated to her work; her soul was in each sculpted piece. Lou died in 1989 when Poldi was 69.

She established herself as an accomplished sculptor, and over time her pieces, whilst reflecting her Austrian origins, twentieth century European traditions, and Catholic background, evolved into a distinctive, impressionistic and modern style that was characterized by a free-flowing form, strong facial features, and an extraordinary tenderness of expression.



## LEOPOLDINE MIMOVICH (from page 8)

Many exhibitions of her religious and secular works were held in this country and overseas. She believed strongly that the heritage and environment of childhood are reflected later in life, in one's actions, as in a mirror. This belief becomes apparent as one studies her works. In 1985 she was awarded an OAM for services to sculpture and in 1986 the Certificate of Merit for Distinguished Achievement from The World's Who's Who of Women.

In later years when she was no longer physically able to sculpt, she turned back to painting, often incorporating her skills in gilding. Many of her charming paintings of religious icons with Australian native animals and flora surrounding the Holy Family revealed her adaptation to Australia. Yet, she admitted not feeling at home in this land for 25 years.

In 2013 a fire destroyed much of her Miller St home. She struggled with health issues and died in 2019 in her daughter's arms, after years of physical challenges, leaving a beautiful artistic legacy, a reflection of her humble, gentle, warm, loving nature. Half of her ashes were sent to Austria to be interred in the family communal plot. In 2020, the year after her death, Australia Post issued two stamps, \$2.20 and 65c, iconographs based on paintings of Mary and Baby Jesus and the Holy Family, in an Australiana setting of native flora and fauna.

Her daughter Gabi continues the legacy of her mother's work, preparing and selling bronze sculptures.

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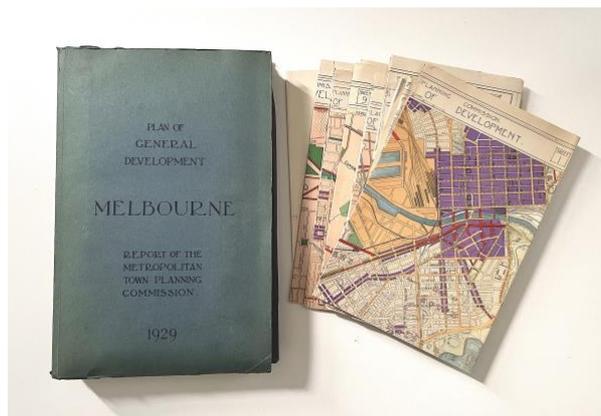
# KEW AS IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

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In *KHS Newsletter No.140, September 2022*, Judith Scurfield introduced the *Plan of General Development, Melbourne: Report of the Metropolitan Town Planning Commission (MTPC), 1929*. This article outlines some of the planning measures proposed for Kew included in the Report and introduces a former Kew resident, surveyor and town planner, Saxil Tuxen, who was a member of the MTPC.

Town planning as a professional discipline emerged in the nineteenth century. Examples of nineteenth century planning include the repetitive grid of the 1811 Commissioners' Plan for Manhattan Island; the wide boulevards, new parks and squares of Baron Hausmann's renovation of medieval Paris between 1854 and 1870; and Ildefons Cerda's design for the extension of medieval Barcelona, *L'Eixample* constructed between 1859 and 1897. In the United Kingdom, Ebenezer Howard founded the Garden City movement, publishing *Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform* in 1898 and in 1903 establishing a company named First Garden City Limited to develop the Letchworth Garden City in Hertfordshire, England.

The Garden City Movement was influential in the introduction of modern town planning ideas in Australia. In 1913, WA Watt, Premier of Victoria, and WL Baillieu MLC were among a group of Australians entertained at Letchworth Garden City. In 1914–15, CC Reade, a representative of the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association of Great Britain, visited Australia for twelve months. He lectured extensively on modern town planning and submitted proposals to the 1915 Victorian Royal Commission on Housing for the improvement and proper development of Melbourne and its suburbs.



**PLAN OF GENERAL DEVELOPMENT, MELBOURNE**  
Metropolitan Town Planning Commission, 1929  
KHS Collection

The Metropolitan Town Planning Commissioners were appointed in 1922: 'to inquire into and report upon the present conditions and tendencies of urban development in the Metropolitan area', and 'to set out general plans and recommendations with respect to the better guidance and control of such development'. The nine commissioners were appointed on an honorary basis and included one member nominated by the City of Melbourne, four members representing the remaining Metropolitan councils and four members with business, technical or professional qualifications.

Kew was represented by Hawthorn councillor Edward C Rigby, a solicitor who was appointed on the nomination of the cities of Collingwood, Fitzroy, Hawthorn, Kew, Richmond, and the Shire of Heidelberg.

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## KEW AS IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN (from page 9)

One of the professional members, surveyor and engineer Saxil Tuxen, was born and grew up in Kew. He was the son of Danish-born surveyor August Michael and Elizabeth Julia Tuxen. Following the death of Julia in 1889, August married her sister Birgitte Anthea in 1891 who, when August became bankrupt after the collapse of the Land Boom, opened Baldur Girls Grammar in the family home at 36 Carson Street, Kew.

The findings of the research, carried out by the MTPC between 1923 and 1927, and included in the 1929 report provide a glimpse of Melbourne and its suburbs at a time of great change. The population of Melbourne had reached over one million people by 1928 and was increasing at a rate not seen since the Land Boom of the 1880s. Electric trams were replacing and extending the cable tram network and electric trains were replacing steam trains on the suburban railway lines. In 1928-9 the tramways carried over 200 million passengers and suburban railways carried over 152 million passengers. Horse drawn traffic decreased by 28 per cent, while motor vehicles increased by 60 per cent.

In August 1923, the widening of High Street, Kew, became the subject of the first, albeit unpublished, report by the MTPC. A Bill for an Act of Parliament to allow Kew Council to purchase and take land for the purpose of widening High Street was under consideration by the Government and the Commission was requested to report to the Minister for Public Works on the proposed council scheme. The report was submitted to the minister on 27 August 1923 with copies also provided to the Kew Council and the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board.

The Commission's report supported the Council proposal to widen High Street and resume dilapidated shopping properties and the vacant land behind, totalling approximately seven acres, with the recommendation that rather than being widened to 87 feet, the street be made 100 feet wide.

At the time Kew Council considered the *Glenarbor Estate* as a possible location for a new Kew Town Hall. The following sketch from 1923 of a proposal for a Town Hall and War Memorial was published in *The Argus* in January 1928.



This is a sketch made in 1923 of the Town Hall as it would appear at the site described in the article. The war memorial has since been erected elsewhere.

In the First Report of the MTPC, published in March 1925, the widening of High Street in Kew was incorporated into a proposal to develop an improved arterial road serving the city from the east by increasing the width of High Street south of Kew junction and widening Barkers Road from the Kew Tram Depot to a new wider Victoria Bridge. It was then proposed to widen Victoria Street on the Richmond side to Hoddle Street with the same configuration as already existed for Victoria Parade. Three tramlines were proposed to allow for express trams between the city and Kew Depot.

It was proposed to widen Barkers Road east from High Street to meet a new road across Hawthorn near Rossfield Avenue linked to Canterbury Road. The widening of Barkers Road was proposed on the north side of the road and the proposition that much of this could easily be achieved because it was occupied by Xavier and Methodist Ladies College seems somewhat optimistic.

At Kew Junction, it proposed to construct a 'gyratory' traffic intersection. This would have involved setting back all the corners and construction of a central island. It was envisaged that the construction could be staged with the corners of High and Denmark Streets and Studley Park Road and High Street completed as part of the High Street widening project, with the other corners completed as the opportunity arose. A similar junction, believed to be the first roundabout in the United Kingdom, was constructed at Letchworth Garden City in 1909.



Extract of Plan 3 showing Kew  
[from] **PLAN OF GENERAL DEVELOPMENT, MELBOURNE**  
Metropolitan Town Planning Commission, 1929  
KHS Collection

A new arterial road was proposed from Fairfield to Doncaster Road crossing the Yarra over the unused Outer Circle Railway Bridge and running along the former railway alignment to link up with Kilby Road via a widened Barnard Grove and White Avenue, to provide a vehicle link to those future outer suburbs that did not coincide with a tram route.

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## KEW AS IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN *(from page 10)*

A feature of the MTPC General Plan was the proposed development of parkways following Melbourne's waterways. In Kew, two new bridges, one connecting Burnley Street and Walmer Street, and the other across the Yarra near the Studley Park Boathouse, linked with a boulevard through Studley Park and Yarra Bend Park to Clifton Hill, were proposed. During the Great Depression the Boulevard was constructed by sustenance labourers. but did not include the proposed bridges across the Yarra or the link across Yarra Bend to Clifton Hill.

The MTPC considered trams to be the most efficient means of road transport. Additional lines were proposed in Kew including extensions along Barkers Road from High Street to Burke Road, an extension of the Burke Road tram line from Cotham Road to High Street, an extension of the Johnston Street tramline along Studley Park Road to Kew Junction and a tramline from Kew Junction along Princess Street and Willsmere Road to Kilby Road.

An extension of the Kew branch line from Kew Station to Doncaster was proposed via a tunnel under central Kew, passing 18 feet below the Kew Town Hall in Walpole Street to emerge at a station northeast of the corner of Malmsbury and Pakington Streets. The line would then join the former Outer Circle Railway line alignment with stations at Belford and Normanby Roads before curving through East Kew to run parallel to Doncaster Road.

Most of the recommendations of the MTPC Report and General Plan for Melbourne were not put into effect. In 1934 the Kew Council proceeded to widen a 240 feet long section of High Street by fifteen feet to a width of 81 feet, leaving narrow sections at the east and west ends, which were finally removed by the Board of Works in January 1960.

The words of John Lennon, '*Life is what happens to you while you are busy making other plans*' seem somehow appropriate.

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**MEMBERS OF THE WURUNDJERI WOI WURRUNG PEOPLE AT STUDLEY PARK**  
Gift of Anna French, 2022  
KHS Collection

## APPLICATION FOR GRANTS FUNDING

KHS has applied to Boroondara Council for another triennial operational grant for the years 2023-2026. The title of our proposal is *Advocating for history and heritage in Kew* in response to the Creative Community – diverse community-based art and cultural programs – section. Our proposal outlines how the funding will support programs that promote community well-being and engagement through advocacy for history and heritage.

We are seeking financial support to enable us to maintain and extend a broad range of programs to meet our mission and objectives. Triennial funding will contribute towards our core community-focussed budget areas such as administration, advertising and marketing, exhibitions and events, collections, research, publications, IT maintenance, licences, training, venue hire, catering, and insurance. Financial support over the next three years will be particularly important during the proposed Kew Library upgrade which will have a profound effect on our financial resources with the inability to hold our quarterly book sales for an extended period.

KHS has within its collection items of local, statewide, and national significance, and these assets form the basis of our exhibition programming. Managing this collection in anticipation of the future move to the Heritage Centre at Glenferrie Oval has required significant investment in infrastructure to manage and present the collection at community venues such as the Kew Court House, Kew Library and Villa Alba Museum. The success of our programs is dependent on targeted print and online marketing and promotions using our quarterly newsletters, social media, and community networks. Original research about aspects of our history and heritage is published in our quarterly newsletters as well as in print publications, the quality of which has been recognised at a local, state, and national level. Delivery of complex community programs requires extensive administrative support including insurance to ensure the well-being of volunteers and members of the community who attend our meetings, lectures, and exhibitions. These have evolved to cater for hybrid delivery to meet the diverse needs of our immediate and wider community. Furthermore, planning, delivering, partnering and advocacy requires capacity-building through training of volunteers in a number of service areas.

KHS is a highly respected community organisation within Boroondara and further afield. We hope that our proposal will be well received by Council and recognised for its contribution to community life in Boroondara, by providing the funding requested in the grant application.

**JUDITH VOCE**  
KHS President

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

## MEMBERSHIP & DONATIONS

### KEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY – KEEPING ALIVE KEW HISTORY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

The Society has operated continuously for over 60 years holding monthly meetings, conserving historical records and items, undertaking historical research, arranging public exhibitions and lectures, and giving guided tours. You can become involved and support the Society’s work by becoming a member or renewing your membership and/or making a donation.

[Tick relevant boxes]

- I/we wish to join the Society
- I/we wish to renew my/our membership *Note: Renewals are due on 1 July each year*
- Individual membership (2022-23 annual fee \$25)
- Household membership (2022-23 annual fee \$35)
- Student membership (2022-23 annual fee \$10)
- I/we agree to be bound by the rules of the society.
- I/we prefer to receive the Society’s quarterly newsletter by email.
- I/we would like to volunteer – on a committee, on the courthouse or supper rosters, or with research.
- I/we would like to make a donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ *Note: All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.*

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Please mail form and cheque, made out to Kew Historical Society Inc., to KHS, PO Box 175, Kew, 3101.  
 OR Pay by direct bank deposit to Kew Historical Society Inc, account 633-000 171300288 with your surname as the subject or reference and email payment details and/or scanned form to secretary@kewhistoricalsociety.org.au.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Privacy note: The KHS will not pass your details to a third party without obtaining your permission.*

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