



# KEW

## HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

ESTABLISHED 1958

*Serving the  
community,  
families, schools,  
students,  
historians and  
other researchers*

# NEWSLETTER

No. 143  
JUNE 2023



## BEHIND THE SCENES

In 1987, following the renovation of the Kew Civic Hall, Kew Historical Society joined Kew Library in establishing its new headquarters in the building. Before the move, the Society's collection had been stored in the basement of the Civic Offices or distributed between the homes of members.

Since then, our historic collection has grown exponentially through donations. Previous attempts to accommodate this growing collection resulted in a number of built structures within what was then designated as our archive on the former southern stage of the former hall. Limitations in shelf space also resulted from storing fashion and design items in large acid-free archival boxes.

In January 2023, the Society accepted into its collection a donation by the descendants of Francis Henty of a number of nationally significant costumes, which were already stored by the donors in large textile boxes. Unfortunately, we had already filled available shelving with existing textile boxes so had to consider how we could provide appropriate housing for these new outfits as well as improving storage capacity for the existing collection.

In February 2023, we were invited by the office of The Hon. Monique Ryan, M.P., to apply for a Commonwealth Stronger Communities Grant, which provided an opportunity to rectify our storage problems. After an analysis of our needs by our Collections Group, we approached a representative of Commando Storage Systems (CSS) to assist in defining what new storage units were possible within the existing space, to accommodate our framed picture collection, which includes a number of rare artworks, as well as the boxes storing our costumes and textiles.

A requirement of any new storage systems was that they had to be relocatable to new premises during the future redevelopment of the Kew Library and following that to a new heritage centre in the Michael Tuck Grandstand at Glenferrie Oval. CSS came back with a number of alternative solutions and quotes which we were able to use in our submission for funding.

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A donation allows us to explore education and sport in early Kew

[Front page]

## COLLECTION STORE

Kew Historical Society, 2023

KHS

## BEHIND THE SCENES *(from page 1)*

Following the shortlisting of our project at a local electoral level, final approval for funding was required from the Department of Industry, Science and Resources. This was gained in May. Funding will allow for the construction of a TILL Pictures Storage Unit for our framed artworks as well as longspan and moduline steel shelving to house our textile boxes and provide hanging storage space for more robust twentieth century costumes. The changes will also improve occupational health and safety for volunteers who often need to climb ladders to access items or manoeuvre large boxes in cramped spaces.

A number of alterations to the collection store are required before the installation of any new shelving units. These include the removal of a built in sink unit, old wooden book shelves, and two IKEA wardrobes that are currently too cramped to hold the hanging costumes.

The planned redevelopment of the collection store has forced us to face a number of realities. In the past, we have stored collection items, as well as items of exhibition infrastructure including props and furniture. A *Preservation Needs Assessment* (Grimwade Conservation Services, 2021) recommended the deaccessioning of redundant items, which we are now able to progress.

The procedure for deaccessioning collection items, as opposed to redundant exhibition infrastructure, will include contacting known donors to discuss the return of items, offering unwanted items to other groups, such as members of the Boroondara Historical Societies network, offering items to local opportunity shops, or advertising items for sale.

Examples of items to be deaccessioned and sold include a full size galvanised bathtub, an old green wicker garden setting, as well as kitchen and laundry equipment.

We are seeking assistance from members who have experience in selling items through online advertising or by contacting local auction houses. If you are interested in assisting, please contact the Society.

**ROBERT BAKER**



[above] **SECOND JOHNSTON STREET BRIDGE IN FLOOD**  
Unknown photographer, 1934  
KHS

## KEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

### PATRON

Sir Gustav Nossal AC, CBE

### MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

**President:** Judith Voce

**Vice President / Newsletter editor:** David White

**Secretary:** Desley Reid

**Treasurer:** Byron Smith

**Archivist:** Robert Baker

**Curator:** Judith Scurfield

**Members:** Anne Josefsberg | Mary Kelleher |  
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)

## GRANTS & SPONSORS

KHS is supported by a Triennial Operational Grant from the City of Boroondara, and a Stronger Communities Grant from the Australian Government.

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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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## OPEN HOUSE MELBOURNE

For the third year, the Society is planning to provide an exhibition and scheduled tours of the Kew Court House during Open House Melbourne 2023, on the weekend of Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 July from 11.00 am to 4.00 pm. Guided tours are scheduled for 11.30 am and 2.00 pm. Each tour will last 45 minutes and cater for 25 people.

In our room on level 1 of the old Police Station, we will be mounting an exhibition on the history of the Kew Court House, the campaign to keep it in public hands and its restoration. The exhibition will be open on both days between 11.00 am and 4.00 pm.



**KEW POLICE STATION AND COURT HOUSE**  
City of Boroondara photographer, 2012

In addition to these activities, we are negotiating with Norm Jackson, who oversaw the restoration of the complex for the City of Boroondara, to participate in an interview about his role in the project and the challenges faced during its restoration. We will keep you advised through the eBulletin and website of the exact date and time of the interview, which will take place in the Just Theatre.

## AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE FESTIVAL

During the 2023 Australian Heritage Festival, the Society mounted its third exhibition of costumes and textiles at the Villa Alba Museum. The exhibition of nineteenth century costumes allowed us to showcase our recently acquired Henty collection of gowns owned by Mary Ann Henty, nee Lawrence (1821-81), and her daughter Alice Frances Hindson, nee Henty, (1852-1932). In addition to nine complete outfits, we also exhibited three bodices belonging to Alice Hindson.

### MEMBERSHIPS

These are due on 1 July 2023. 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)



**COSTUMES OF MARY ANN HENTY**  
Dining Room of Villa Alba Museum, May 2023  
KHS

Invited guests on the opening night of 21 May included leaders from the National Gallery of Victoria, Museums Victoria, and the Royal Historical Society of Victoria. In addition to the three weekends when the exhibition was open to the public, Dr Liz Rushen gave a midweek lecture on female migration to Australia in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The Society thanks the curators, the volunteers who supervised displays, and Heidelberg Historical Society for the loan of six of the nineteen display mannequins.

## THE COLLECTION

KHS has received, and wishes to acknowledge the following additions to the collection since March 2023:

- Books – 2 copies of *History of Ruyton 1878-1956*, by Hilda Daniell. Separate donations by Ruyton Girls' School and Felicity Renowden.
- Photograph – William John Leith, Station Master of Kew East Railway Station. Donated by Sam di Clemente.
- Photographs – Exhibition: *Fashion in the Age of Elegance 1840-1900*. Donated by Noel Kelly and Robert Baker.
- Medal – Bicentennial Memento for School Students, 1988. Donated by Felicity Renowden.
- Trophy – Silver plated trophy presented to N.C. Vance by Anne Bon; Kew High School Athletics Sports, 1880. Donated by Joanne Houssenloge. [see pages 10-11]
- Book – *Torchbearers: A Centenary History of Carey Baptist Grammar School*, by Helen Penrose. Gift of the author.

**ROBERT BAKER**

## NEW MEMBERS

KHS is pleased to welcome Angie and Kad Wallis, Elizabeth Golding, Sandra Smyth, Cathy Dodson, Amanda Welsh, Jess Wilson and Cathy Xu as new members.

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# THE EARLY HISTORY OF INTERSCHOOL ROWING IN KEW

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Inter-school rowing has a long history in Victoria. The Associated Public Schools (APS) Head of the River Regatta had its origin in a race between Scotch College and Melbourne Grammar on the Yarra in 1868. This competition has been held every year since 1868, except in 2020 when it was cancelled due to the COVID pandemic. Kew schools Xavier College and Carey Grammar have participated in the Head of the River since 1906 and 1962 respectively. In 1981 a Girls' Head of the River event was added to the APS Regatta calendar with a crew from Carey Grammar joining the event in 1983.

However, an earlier Kew school rowing team raced on the Yarra. This article will recall the annual rowing competition between crews from the first Kew High School and the long defunct Hawthorn Grammar School, which took place on the Yarra between 1879 and 1885.

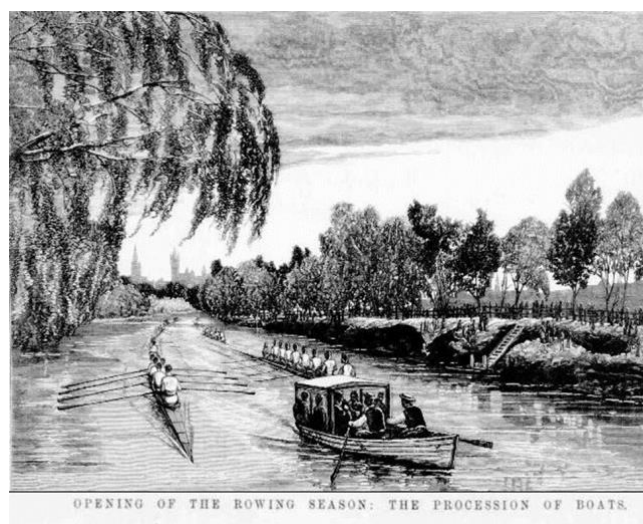
In 1876 the new headmasters of Kew High School and Hawthorn Grammar School were both rowing enthusiasts and it seems that rowing soon became part of the sporting program at both schools. The rowers from the two schools appear to have practised on the Yarra from the Boroondara Rowing Club at Hawthorn. This club was founded on 26 September 1877, and re-named the Hawthorn Rowing Club in 1895.

John Henning Thompson (1844–1936), headmaster at Kew High School in Charles Street, Kew, had taken up the sport of rowing while a student at Melbourne University. As a member of staff at Melbourne Grammar School between 1864 and 1875, he was one of the instigators of the first race on the Yarra between Scotch College and Melbourne Grammar School on 18 June 1868, which was to lead to the APS Head of the River event. In 1875, Melbourne Grammar School appointed an Oxford graduate, Edward Ellis Morris, its new headmaster rather than Thompson. Following the death from typhoid fever of the founding headmaster of Kew High School, Ernest Ingle, J.H. Thomson resigned from Melbourne Grammar School to purchase the school and become its second headmaster.

Professor Martin Howy Irving (1831–1912), headmaster of Hawthorn Grammar School in Power Street, Hawthorn, had been a champion rower while at Oxford University. Appointed Professor of Greek and Latin Classics with Ancient History at Melbourne University in 1856 he founded the Melbourne University Boat Club in 1859. From 1871 till 1875 he was headmaster in charge of secular studies at Wesley College, also training the Wesley College rowing crew. In a move suggested to have been inspired by 'a desire to govern a school untrammelled by a counselling body' he purchased Hawthorn Grammar School and become its headmaster in 1876.

The first of the seven annual races between Kew High School and Hawthorn Grammar School took place on the Upper Yarra on 17 May 1879 and was won by Kew High School. The boats raced were four oared string test racing gigs. Forty two feet (12.8 metres) long, without the outriggers and sliding seats of the more modern rowing shells being introduced at the time, as it was thought that they encouraged a more correct rowing style in young crews.

Later in the same year, Kew High School and Hawthorn Grammar School rowing clubs took part in the opening of the Boroondara Rowing Club 1879-80 rowing season at Hawthorn on 18 October. On 25 October, they joined a procession of eight and four oared boats on the Yarra to mark the opening of the Victorian Rowing Association season.



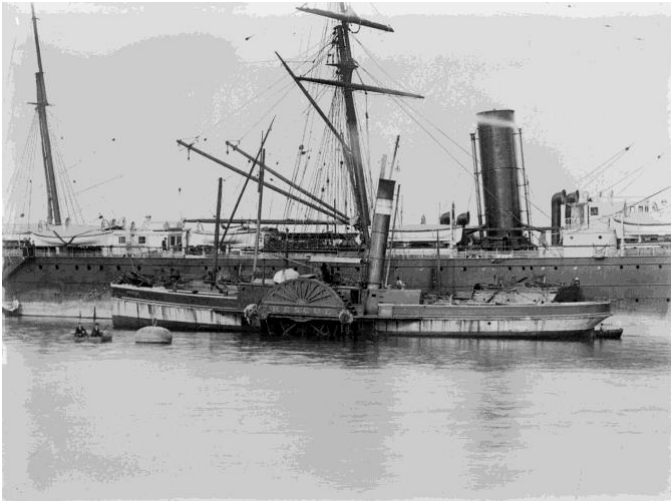
**OPENING OF THE ROWING SEASON: THE PROCESSION OF BOATS**  
Wood engraving by Alfred May and Alfred Martin Ebworth  
*The Australasian Sketcher*, 4 December 1880  
Courtesy State Library of Victoria

The Upper Yarra rowing course followed the winding path of the Yarra from James Edwards' boathouse immediately upstream of the single arch Princes Bridge to the old Botanical Bridge at Anderson Street. As can be seen in the image of the procession of boats, the river was less than half its current width, with overhanging willow trees on the banks, and the Scots Church spire and the Independent Church tower dominating the distant city skyline.

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## INTERSCHOOL ROWING (from page 4)

The second race was held on the Melbourne Regatta course on the Saltwater River on 27 June 1880. Starting near the mouth of the Yarra and finishing on the Saltwater River, now the Maribyrnong, at Footscray, this course was wider and straighter than the Upper Yarra course but less accessible for spectators and subject to interruption by shipping. *The Australasian* reported that a very large crowd assembled at Footscray to witness the race. The paddle-steamer *Rescue* departed from Queens Wharf with upwards of two hundred supporters of the Hawthorn Grammar crew, while the Kew High School crew and their supporters were driven to Footscray by four-in-hands, the horse-drawn equivalent of modern limousines. The Kew High School crew were the winners in their recently delivered string test gig built for them by James Edwards which was described as 'a beautiful specimen of the builder's handicraft'.



**PADDESTEAMER RESCUE** [in front of a steamship]  
Allan C. Green (1878-1954) photographer  
Allan C. Green collection of glass negatives  
Courtesy State Library of Victoria

The remaining five races were held on the Upper Yarra course with Hawthorn Grammar School winning in 1881, 1882 and 1883 and Kew High School winning in 1884 and 1885, after which the competition lapsed.

A letter to the editor, published in *The Australasian* [Saturday 22 November 1879], from H.P. Henty, Hon. Sec. Kew High School Boating Club, expressed great disappointment that the Schools Race had been scratched from the programme of the Albert Park Regatta on the following Saturday.

Announced as the Public Schools Challenge Cup, in string test gigs, it was to be the first time a public schools' race had been included in a regatta in the colony. H.P. Henty is most likely to have been Harry (Henry) Percy Henty (1860-1924), the eldest son of Henry and Marion Henty of *Tarring*, a pupil at Kew High School from its foundation in 1872.

The public schools, identified by Harry as 'the Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Wesleyans', decided not to participate in the Albert Park regatta leaving crews from Kew High School and Hawthorn Grammar School the only prospective entrants, and so the race was withdrawn from the Regatta programme.

Before the series of races against Kew High School, Hawthorn Grammar School had won a race on the Barwon River against Geelong College in 1877 and drawn a race against a Wesley College crew on the Yarra in 1878. It seems possible the older public schools did not welcome the additional competition from the Kew and Hawthorn schools.

The rowing competition between Kew High School and Hawthorn Grammar School seems to have been brought to an end by the departure of Professor Irving from Hawthorn Grammar School. In 1884 he had accepted a seat on the board for the Public Service Commissioners in Victoria leaving his eldest son, Edward Hamilton Irving, in charge of the school. E.H. Irving gave up the schoolmaster's life for journalism at the end of 1885 and the new owners did not continue with rowing as a school sport.

On 4 August 1886 the Aquatics correspondent for *The Sportsman* commented: 'We regret to see by an advertisement in another column that the Kew High School boys wish to sell their racing-boat. It seems that the denominational schools decline to allow the Kewites to compete in aquatics, and as, since the retirement of Professor Irving, their old Hawthorn opponents are no longer to the fore, they have no longer any need for other than their practice boats'.

**FOR SALE—In First-rate Order,  
A STRING-TEST RACING GIG. C. J.  
Alsop, Kew High School.**

[Advertisement]  
*The Sportsman* [4 August 1886, p.4]

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# SIR WILLIAM STAWELL (1815–89)

## MEMBER OF THE VICTORIAN PARLIAMENT

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*This is the second in a series of biographical articles by John Torpey about members of parliament, who represented or lived in Kew. The first instalment appeared in the March 2023 newsletter.*

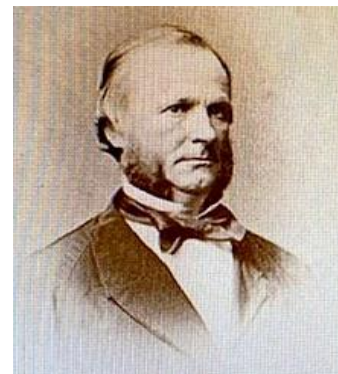
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Although Sir William Stawell did not represent Kew in the Victorian Parliament, he is included because of his long residence in Kew and his contributions to its civic affairs.

He was born in June 1815 in Old Court, Mallow Parish, County Cork, the second son of Jonas Stawell, barrister and classical scholar, and Anna Foster the second daughter of William Foster D.D., Bishop of Cork, Kildare and Clogher; both were from well-established Anglo Irish families. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin and graduated BA (classics) in 1837.

Stawell was called to the bar in 1839 and practised on the Dublin and Munster circuits. He decided to migrate to Melbourne in 1842 because there were 'forty hats on the Circuit and not enough work for twenty'. The Stawell entourage sailed for Port Phillip in the *Sarah* in December 1842. The party included Stawell, his future wife, 12-year-old Mary Greene, her father, William Pomeroy Greene RN, her mother, Mary's six brothers, and a number of staff – a party of more than twenty-three! Also two bulls, a Durham cow and two thoroughbred horses; and his library, which included most of the standard works including the first edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

After Stawell's arrival in early 1843, he was admitted to the Port Phillip Bar. Initially, he was a squatter at Rathscar in partnership with his cousin, John F.L.V. Foster who had arrived in the Port Phillip District via Sydney in 1841.



**BATCHELDER & O'NEILL**  
**WILLIAM STAWELL**

*Courtesy State Library of Victoria, H6061*

The partnership lasted until 1853. Foster was also a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, and an official nominee as Colonial Secretary from 1853 to 1854.

Stawell became a member of the Legislative Council in 1855 and later MLA for Melbourne, briefly, when the bi-cameral system of government was introduced. Stawell was one of La Trobe's nominees as Attorney General to the Executive Council following Victoria's separation from New South Wales in 1851. While his parliamentary salary was £500 per annum, his private practice ceased at great personal cost.

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## AS IT HAPPENED ...

### 100-years-ago

- With the object of raising £15,000 to build a new hospital on the grounds of St George's Intermediate Hospital, Kew, a 'Brick Week' will be held in Kew commencing on Friday, when miniature bricks will be on sale at a price of one shilling each. (*The Argus*, 19 June 1923, p6)
- Messrs. Gawler and Drummond were the architects for this new Baptist Church, Highbury Grove, Kew, which was opened last Saturday. The building is in brick, of Gothic design, and cost £4,000. >

The floors slope to the pulpit, and there are no pillars to obstruct the view of worshippers. (*The Argus*, 16 June 1923, p.19)

- At Kew court yesterday, W.H. Bradshaw, grocer and wine and spirit merchant Cotham Road, was charged with having sold "food in an unsuitable receptacle." The food in question was port wine. Dr R.H. Cole, Police Magistrate, who presided upheld a procedural objection by the defence and the case was struck out. (*The Age*, 28 June 1923, p.13)

## SIR WILLIAM STAWELL (continued from page 6)

Stawell was to set up the administration, the public service and the government machinery of the new Colony. On a'Beckett's retirement as Chief Justice in 1857, Stawell became Chief Justice for Victoria, a position he held for 29 years. He retired in 1886 due to ill-health. In an obituary published in the *Leader* [newspaper] in 1889, he was described as: '... the strongman of La Trobe's administration and an outstanding churchman.'

Gold had been discovered at Anderson Creek [Warrandyte] in 1851 just after the separation from New South Wales. Subsequently gold was found in other areas, principally Ballarat and Bendigo. In August 1851, La Trobe (following New South Wales) as a temporary measure introduced a monthly fee, quite high, of 30 shillings per month for a small claim 2.4m square [later 3.6m square] The high cost was considered by many to be inappropriate and unjust because it applied whether the miner was successful or not. The monthly fee was intended to be temporary, but changes were resisted by the Legislative Council and commercial interests in Melbourne. In January, the licence fee was doubled to £3. This precipitated the Eureka Incident led by Peter Lalor. Stawell and Governor Hotham were blamed for the Eureka troubles. The subsequent Commission into Conditions on the Goldfields recommended that the despised licence fee be abolished and be replaced by an export duty on gold; a Miner's Right of £1 per annum; and the right to vote for eight representatives of the Legislative Council. Peter Lalor, the leader of the Eureka uprising, was one of the representatives elected, and became Speaker of the House.

In the obituary of 1889, [Lalor died the month before Stawell] *The Leader* asserted that: 'If Stawell had his way the hangman ... would have precluded the chance of Peter Lalor ever becoming Speaker, but Fate had another web to weave and in due course the two opponents met in the same legislative chamber and became good friends. [Lalor was a fellow Trinity College, Dublin graduate and a civil engineer].

*The Melbourne Punch* in its obituary for Stawell claimed he was: 'wedded, benched and knighted' in 1856. This was not quite accurate, as he did marry in 1856, but was appointed Chief Justice and a Knight Bachelor in 1857, [& a KCMG in 1886].

In 1856, Stawell had purchased part of Lot 19, Kew, bounded on the north side by Thomas Wills' property, on the west by the Yarra River, on the south by Stawell Street and the east by Princess Street. *D'Estaville*, his two-storey bluestone home was completed in 1859 in the Classic Revival style. It was designed by Knight & Kerr, who also designed Parliament House, Melbourne, and resembles the Stawell family home in County Cork, Ireland.

In the same year, Stawell married Mary Greene at *Woodlands*, Craigieburn. He was 41 and she 26. William and Mary had 10 children, six sons and four daughters. Little is known of the children except that the fifth son born in 1864, Richard Rawdon Stawell, was a student at Irving's Hawthorn Grammar School.

He graduated from Melbourne University as an M.D. On his return from overseas studies in 1893, he specialised in children's diseases and was an honorary doctor at the Children's Hospital. He died in 1935. The Stawells' youngest daughter, Florence Melian, born in 1869 graduated from Melbourne University and became a classical don at Newnham College, University of Cambridge. She died in 1936.

After Stawell's retirement in 1886, Stawell evidently intended to travel abroad for a couple of years because he sold *d'Estaville* in 1888. Stawell, his wife, their eldest daughter and her fiancé [the 'Silver King' Sylvester Brown], and their youngest daughter, Florence Melian, left Melbourne on the *SS Oceana* on 15 February 1889. Sir William Stawell died in Naples, Italy on 12 March 1889, aged 74.



**D'ESTAVILLE, 7 BARRY STREET, KEW**  
John Torpey, 2023 [photographer]

The purchaser of *d'Estaville* sub-divided the rear of the property and named the streets after former judges: a'Beckett, Barry, Molesworth, etc. William Stawell is remembered in the naming of both Stawell and Sir William Streets, Kew. The town of Stawell, previously Pleasant Creek, north-west of Melbourne in the Grampians, was named after him in 1858.

Stawell was active in local affairs. He was a founding member in 1862 of Holy Trinity Church, Kew, and of the Kew Recreation Association in 1878. The latter built a hall, bowling green, tennis courts and a cricket ground on eight acres near the corner of Denmark and Wellington streets. Stawell also presided over the first Annual Speech Day of the Methodist Ladies' College, in the Athenaeum Hall, Collins Street.

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# ANNIE STEWART

## THE BEGINNING OF BOB STEWART MENSWEAR

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This history is dedicated to the memory of Annie Stewart, wife of Bob Stewart Senior and mother of Bob Stewart Junior. Without her entrepreneurial spirit and drive, the iconic business that is Bob Stewart in High Street, Kew, would not be enduring as it continues to do so today.

In a fateful meeting at Stephenson & Co, Bob Stewart Senior met Annie when she attended a job interview for employment as a secretary in a clothing factory. In 1925, Bob Stewart Senior began a business of his own, in menswear. It was located where the Dan Murphy Store currently is. Annie had a particularly sharp eye, and the couple decided to relocate to the shop closer to Kew Junction.



**THE OLD SHOP**  
Courtesy Stewart family

Annie now found herself a young widow and a single mother of a 13 month baby boy, Bob Stewart Junior. In this time of grief, she was supported by her brother-in-law, Jack Stewart. As an accountant, he could act as her financial adviser and bookkeeper in the menswear business.

It is now January 1932 and Annie has buried her husband. She expressed the view that she would not be able to carry on, but in came Frank Stewart, her nephew by marriage, who worked at Bob Stewart Menswear until he was conscripted.

Frank undertook almost everything, from selling suits to doing small repairs in the shop; anything to keep the business afloat. But the writing was on the wall, and the message was loud and clear: '... we can't help you anymore, and if you fail to pay, all your stock will be taken from you in lieu of what you owe'. At that point, Annie did not believe that the business would survive. Using his list of suppliers, Jack sought assistance in this hour of need. He selected Pelaco, in the hope that this company would help the business. Fortunately for him, the Manager of Pelaco came through. This gave the business breathing space, and for Annie, Jack and Frank, a way to trade out of financial difficulty. Thus, Bob Stewart Menswear continued to carry on.

Consider the factors which Annie, Jack and Frank had to deal with in those difficult times. No dole. No Centrelink. Rent was £2 while the basic wage was £2/19 per week. The Kew Town Hall provided essential food items for those who were experiencing extreme hardship in their daily lives.

Annie's sisters lived in Brunswick. Mary had a job and used her wages to buy food for Annie and Bob Junior. Kate, her other sister, remained at home, caring for Bob Junior, thus freeing up time for Annie to work in the business.



**KEW FOOTBALL CLUB'S TRIP  
DAYLESFORD & BALLARAT, SEPT 1926**  
Courtesy Stewart Family

On the 27 December 1930, two days after Christmas, Annie gave birth to Bob Stewart Junior.

Just when this young couple, with a very young child, had begun their business journey in a positive trajectory, the Great Depression descended upon them, causing a general disaster for jobs in general as well as for trading in business.

Furthermore, Bob Stewart Senior became seriously sick with cellulitis, defined in the *Webster Merriam Dictionary* as a subcutaneous inflammation of connective tissue (more commonly presenting itself as gout, rheumatoid arthritis, or even Lyme Disease). His health deteriorated, and, at that time, it was untreatable. He went to hospital in traumatic circumstances and died three days later.



## ANNIE STEWART (from page 8)

During the Great Depression, individuals only purchased what was necessary and so any item that someone bought gave the business a financial boost. The residents of Kew were loyal and supported Bob Stewart Menswear. In the family history, privately published for family members, one customer recalls being unable to locate a shirt and ultimately buying six of them from the shop. Imagine how thrilling this would have been for Annie and the family team supporting her.

Francis, grandson of Annie Stewart, still possesses a certificate which demonstrates how detail and attention was a mainstay for the shop. This was exemplified in 1936, when the business earned a Father's Day Prize, First Place, for the best display window. It acknowledged the skills recognised by the tie companies. Annie was to state that: 'I picked out various ties and told Frank to do all the ticket writing and help with some of the displays. I won the competition and that gave me a terrific boost.'

In a global conflict, there are food and material shortages. There is also a shortage of manpower. As Australia became focused on directly supplying the items needed for war, it was inevitable that business would be affected. All civilian industries were reduced to war-related production of goods. Rationing was applied to direct Australian money to the war effort. Even the remote possibility of the shortage of an item could result in hysteria on a far greater scale that we observed during COVID-19.

On 14 May 1942, rationing regulations for food and clothing were gazetted by the Rationing Commission. Coupons were surrendered before ration goods could be supplied. Rationing was Australia's contribution to the war effort through communal sacrifice.

While Australians were never as short of food as in the United Kingdom, rationing coupons were applied to clothing, tea, sugar, butter, meat, eggs and milk (prioritised for vulnerable groups during periods of shortage). If one breached rationing regulation, one could either pay fines of up to £100 or face six months in prison. The government passed the *Black Marketing Act* at the end of 1942, which applied a minimum penalty of £1,000 for serious breaches of the law.

For clothing businesses, such as Bob Stewart Menswear, clothing was gazetted on the 12 June 1942 and ended on the 24 June 1948. Shoppers were given one hundred and twelve coupons per year.

Annie went to Flinders Lane one day per week. Production of clothing for non-essential items stopped completely. When customers were in real hardship, and had no coupons to use, Annie would give items such as pyjamas, dressing gowns and underwear without coupons. She received all the coupons she needed to replace the ones she had distributed to those in need.

Individuals planned their yearly expenses to ensure that they did not spend all the coupons before the end of the year. Once the coupon booklets were used entirely, they were exchanged for new ones. Women and families generally found this to be far more difficult than men. Annie went to the Rationing Commission every six months to ask for more coupons, which she generally obtained.

People on the home front were expected to make economic and social sacrifices for the war effort. In August 1942, the Curtin Government launched a campaign of Austerity. People were expected to work harder and avoid luxuries and waste. Following World War Two, Australians returned to normal spending habits and business life could return to normal supply chain processes.

The shops in High Street Kew have changed over time, but the overwhelming impression you gain of the period is one of a neighbourhood or community of people who not only worked together, but truly and genuinely respected each other. These were a diverse range of people, from different races, religions and backgrounds. They bonded together as a community to make life as good as it could possibly be.

Annie Stewart and her wonderful family have left an indelible impression in the heart of the Kew shopping strip. Annie's spirit of endurance and perseverance lives on through her grandson and the tightly bonded team working in the shop now. Her power and strength to carry on when she thought she could not is a demonstration of her strength of character.

In an era of feminism and the empowerment of women, Annie Stewart is the real thing. She kept the business going based on three principles – good service, the ability to sacrifice when required, and the ultimate goal of being successful in her business. She did this with grace and dignity. She deserves to be remembered.

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SHOPPING IN KEW FOR A SCHOOL BLAZER  
Kew Living 1988  
Julie Millowick [photographer]  
KHS

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# VANCE, BON AND THE FIRST KEW HIGH SCHOOL

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In 2022, the Society was contacted regarding a trophy found long ago on a rubbish tip in New South Wales. The historic item was awarded in 1880 by the first Kew High School. Early this year, the Society took delivery of the trophy which had been awarded to a pupil eight years after the school's establishment in 1872.

The trophy is a two-handled cup on a pedestal with each handle topped with a pinecone. This style of trophy is often called a 'loving cup' and is usually of silver or silver plate. Its heavily decorated convex surfaces were created by repoussé (hammering), with definition and detail engraved from the front. There is scrolling below the rim of the cup and floral sprays on the front and rear. The metal used in the cup section of the trophy is thicker and heavier than that used in the stem and base. There are no compositional or maker marks on the trophy. The engraved inscription identifies the school, the event, the winner, the year and the name of the person who presented the trophy.

The inscription reads:

*KEW HIGH SCHOOL / OLD BOYS CUP / PRESENTED  
BY / MRS JOHN BON / WON BY / N VANCE 1880*

N. Vance was Noel Crawford Atterbury Vance who was born in 1861 in South Yarra. Noel was one of 15 children born to Reverend Canon George Oakley Vance D.D. and his wife Harriet, nee Cresswell. Dr Vance arrived in Victoria from England in 1852 intent on starting a grammar school. In 1855, he co-founded Geelong Grammar School and became the school's first Headmaster, a position he held until 1860. Dr Vance next held incumbencies in regional Victoria before being appointed Vicar of Holy Trinity Church, Kew, in 1870. He remained in that position until 1894 when he was elected as second Dean of Melbourne by the Chapter of St. Paul's Cathedral, succeeding the late Dean Hussey Burgh Macartney.

Noel and his seven surviving brothers had both academic and athletic prowess. The newspapers of the day often recorded the names of the Vance sons in the Kew High School sports results and the end-of-year prize giving; an event presided over by Dr G.O. Vance. The school magazine, *Kewite* recorded N.C. Vance as having won the 'Old Scholar's Cup', a 440-yard (402 metres) race, for which he was awarded a trophy in 1880. Perhaps 'Old Scholar's Cup', as an inscription was too long for the trophy, so the name of the event was shortened to 'Old Boys Cup' to fit the space available.

Noel attended Church of England Grammar School (CEGS), now called Melbourne Grammar School during 1869-70. Between 1872 and 1874 he attended Kew High School. He returned to CEGS in 1874, having won the Foundation or Exhibition scholarship to the school.



**KEW HIGH SCHOOL TROPHY**  
Unknown maker, 1880  
KHS

He finally left CEGS in 1878, having Matriculated. During his time at CEGS, he won several academic prizes, was a Prefect, School Captain and served on various student committees. In 1878, he won the Exhibitioner Scholarship to University. However, he didn't take this up immediately, returning to Kew High School until 1880. At that time, it was possible to add Matriculation subjects to those already completed, and to do additional subjects. Some students took advantage of an additional two years of tuition as part of a scholarship.

The *Kewite* magazine of 1881 announced the achievements of former pupils and noted that Noel Vance had passed his 1st year medical examinations at the University of Melbourne, with Honours.

Noel was involved in fund raising for the Kew Asylum, was a member of the Kew Cricket Club and performed in evening entertainments for the Club. In 1878, he played the part of Maud, in a Club entertainment called *Should this meet the Eye*. He was a bowler and a Club committeeman. In 1883, Noel represented the Kew Cricket Club at a meeting of the Victorian Cricketers Association.

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## FIRST KEW HIGH SCHOOL (from page 10)

Noel married Emily Ellen Edith Ada Cresswell (Ada) in 1883 and by 1885, Noel had bought a Bacchus Marsh medical practice and relocated there. He settled comfortably into the community where he became a Justice of the Peace, President of the Bacchus Marsh Golf Club, Health Officer for the Shire of Bacchus Marsh and foundation member of the Bacchus Marsh Australian Natives Association. He was a respected and hard-working family doctor until 1913, when he retired from practice due to ill-health. He died the following year in Bacchus Marsh and is buried in the nearby Maddingley General Cemetery.

Mrs John Bon who presented the trophy, was the widow of John Bon, a Scottish immigrant. Anne Fraser Dougall married John Bon in Scotland in 1858. The couple settled on *Wappan* pastoral lease on the Delatite River, near the present-day location of Bonnie Doon. John was a pastoralist who died suddenly in 1868 leaving Anne with four young children. A capable and resourceful woman, Anne successfully took over the management of the property. She is remembered as a philanthropist, pastoralist and advocate for the local Aborigines. The *Wappan* run was on the traditional land of the Taungarong or Goulburn people. John Bon had established good relations with the people of the Goulburn tribe of the Kulin Nation and after his death Anne continued the close relationship. Following the closure of the Acheron Aboriginal Station near the present-day location of Taggerty, the resident Aborigines walked to present-day Healesville where the Coranderrk Aboriginal Station was established in 1863. The Board of Protection of Aborigines, which ran Coranderrk, was pressured to relocate the Aboriginal Station to a more remote site. This threat of closure resulted in repeated delegations of Aborigines, led by the respected Wurundjeri leader William Barak, to protest at Melbourne's Parliament House.

From 1877, Anne Bon lived in Charles Street, Kew, with her family including son David, a student at Kew High School. While in Melbourne, it was common for deputations of Coranderrk Aborigines to sleep overnight on the Bon family verandah. Despite the closure of the Station being averted, conditions deteriorated and in 1881, Anne was appointed to a Government Board of Enquiry. William Barak made a submission and Coranderrk was made a permanent reserve by Premier Graham Berry, which ensured its survival until 1924.

Anne also took up the cause of the many Chinese children living in Victoria, by assisting them into education.

F.G.A. Barnard states in his *Jubilee History of Kew* (1910) that in the early 1870s, some of the leading residents of Kew invited Mr Ernest Ingle B.A., a graduate of Trinity College, Cambridge, to open a high-quality secular school for boys in Kew. The Education Act had been legislated in 1870 making it a requirement for children to attend school and Kew parents wanted a good school for their sons.

Mr Ingle's school, which he called Kew High School, opened in 1872 in a private house on the corner of Mary Street and Cotham Road. As the house was too small to allow for increasing student enrolments, he moved the school to Charles Street, between Cotham Road and Wellington Street, adding extra rooms and establishing the school at the forefront of Kew's educational establishments.

The school's marketing prospectus of 1875 asserted that: *'The School is admirably situated in one of the healthiest suburbs of Melbourne and since its opening in January 1872, has steadily risen in public esteem.'*

Despite the healthy location, Ernest Ingle contracted typhoid fever in 1875, and consequently died. Mr John Henning Thompson M.A., formerly of CEGS, became the new Headmaster and moved the school to *Molina*, a mansion near the corner of Charles and Wellington Streets.



**MOLINA** [foreground]  
JCA Farquhar, photographer, 1891  
KHS

The school stretched westward from Charles Street to Stanley Street. The students excelled academically, on the sporting field and on the river. Competing in the rowing competition of the Private Schools Association, it won the Head of the River on two occasions. The School held its Athletics Sports at the Kew Recreation Grounds. Its motto, *Instante Operare*, meaning 'work urgently', gives an inkling of the focus of Kew High School. The sentimental words of the school song, *The Reaper* were written by Mr Thompson. In his history, F.G.A. Barnard names Dr Noel Vance as a member of the school's distinguished alumni. In 1908, when Henning Thompson retired, the property was leased to Trinity Grammar School, which was then located in *Roxeth*, a mansion on the eastern side of Charles Street. *Molina* was sold to Trinity Grammar School in 1924, and subsequently renamed.

It should be noted that the second and current Kew High School, a State Secondary School, has no connection to the first.

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