



**HISTORICAL
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NEWSLETTER

No. 144

SEPTEMBER 2023



ELEPHANTS IN KEW

There is a passage in the Hindu scripture the *Bhagavad Gita* in which the lord Vishnu counsels prince Arjuna who has fallen into despair at the beginning of the Kurukshetra War. Lord Vishnu's advice includes the passage, 'I am become time, destroyer of worlds.'. This passage is appropriate to the dilemma surrounding discussion of heritage matters. Can we accept that ultimately time will erase the world we are familiar with or should we die in a ditch to preserve it.

Kew Historical Society currently faces this dilemma in the form of the proposed redevelopment of Kew Library. Since 2017, the Management Committee have been engaged in discussions with the City of Boroondara regarding the redevelopment of Kew Library, including the spaces currently occupied by Kew Historical Society's Heritage Centre and Archives, which are all located in the former Kew City Hall.

Opened by the Hon. H.E. Bolte M.L.A. Premier of Victoria on 23 April 1960 the Kew City Hall was the first municipal hall to have been built by Kew Council; both Kew Recreation Hall and the Atheneum having been built by private enterprise before passing into the hands of Council. For 27 years, Kew City Hall was the centre for social and cultural activities in Kew before it was converted to provide expanded accommodation for Kew Library and officially re-opened by the Mayor of Kew, Cr Jim Tutt on Friday 23 October 1987.

The proposed redevelopment of Kew Library will involve the demolition of the existing building and construction of a new building, which embodies the vision for Kew Library resulting from the community consultation process in 2017.

Dedicated space for the Kew Historical Society is not envisaged in the redevelopment of Kew Library and we will be relocating to heritage and community partnership spaces which will be provided as part of the refurbishment of the Michael Tuck Stand and Glenferrie Oval in Hawthorn.

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[Front page]

SNAPSHOTS FROM HERE AND THERE BY READERS OF THE WEEKLY TIMES

The Weekly Times, 16 January 1932

ELEPHANTS IN KEW (from page 1)

The Vision and Design Brief for the Michael Tuck Stand and Glenferrie Oval refurbishment suggests that the heritage and community partnership spaces in the Michael Tuck Stand will expand access to historical collections and provide further opportunities for community collaboration more broadly, including partnerships between local historical societies, local schools, elderly groups, U3As, tertiary institutions and sporting clubs. The heritage spaces will also enable: collaborative working practices and ultimately governance opportunities; more opportunity for longer opening hours for the community to come and view displays, interact with, and seek advice from local historical societies' volunteer members; greater opportunities for school groups to engage with, and learn about Boroondara's local history; meetings and research areas for the historical societies and community members to utilise; and more opportunities for community interest in learning and contributing and preserving interest in local history.

It is proposed that Kew Historical Society will share the heritage spaces with Hawthorn and Camberwell Historical Societies. Community consultation continues until 29 September 2023 on the Kew Library redevelopment and finishes on 11 September 2023 for the refurbishment of the Michael Tuck Stand. Kew Historical Society members have been encouraged to complete the surveys available online through the City of Boroondara website to contribute their views of these proposals.

Demolition of Kew Library is expected to occur in early 2026, while works on the heritage and community partnership spaces at the Michael Tuck Stand will not be commencing until late 2026. The interim period between demolition of the Kew Library and the availability of space in the Michael Tuck Stand is likely to present significant challenges for Kew Historical Society. Our world in Kew will be changed and replaced by a new world in Hawthorn. In the meantime, our collection will be put into storage and we will have to find alternative accommodation to continue working and meeting together.

The photograph of 'four circus elephants at Kew Junction on a warm day' is one of my favourite images of Kew. It appeared in *The Weekly Times* on 16 January 1932 on a page dedicated to 'Snapshots from Here and There by Readers of The Weekly Times.' Its connection to this article? The Lord Vishnu gave an elephant's head to Ganesha the remover of obstacles and the God of intellect and wisdom. May the Kew elephants guide us into the future.

DAVID WHITE



[above] 1ST BRORONIA GUIDE COMPANY AT KEW TRAFFIC SCHOOL IN 1961
Gift of Tatura & District Historical Society, 2023
KHS

KEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

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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

victoriancollections.net.au/organisations/kew-historical-society

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PO Box 175 Kew VIC 3101
KHS Newsletter, No.144/2023
ISSN 0155-1337

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.

HISTORY NEWS

2023 DICKINSON LECTURE

**UNPACKING THE STATEMENT FROM THE HEART AND THE VOICE
BY REV. CANON A/PROF GLENN LOUGHREY**

Kew Historical Society is pleased to announce that the 2023 Dickinson Lecture will be presented by Glenn Loughrey, a Wiradjuri man. Glenn is a leader at the Crawford School of Public Policy at the Australian National University in Canberra and the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne's Educator and Advocate for the Voice. He is the chairperson of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council, the vicar of St Oswald's in Glen Iris, and artist in residence at St Paul's Anglican Cathedral in Melbourne.

In October 2023, Australians will be called upon to vote for recognition of First Nations people in Australia's *Constitution* and for the same peoples to have a direct voice to the federal parliament. It is vital that we listen and appreciate the different perspectives of First Nations people and understand the question confronting us as Australians. Hear Glenn Loughrey's unique viewpoint of the issues informing The Voice debate. There will be a question and answer session at the conclusion of the presentation.

WEDNESDAY, 11 OCTOBER 2023

**JUST THEATRE, KEW COURT HOUSE, 188 HIGH STREET, KEW
7.30 for 8.00 PM**

Tickets \$20, Refreshments provided



GLENN LOUGHREY

KEW COURT HOUSE

In July, the Society agreed to a request by The City of Boroondara to provide tours for visitors to the building during Open House Melbourne 2023. We also organised a lecture, followed by questions, by Norman Jackson the project coordinator for the restoration of the Police Station and Court House from 2007 to 2011.



Simultaneously, a new exhibition was opened which explores the history of the Kew Public Offices (i.e. the former Post Office, Court House and Police Station), from the original planning stage in 1886, its functional operations from 1888 to 2002, the Save the Kew Court House campaign, and its reopening as a performing arts and community cultural centre in 2011. The exhibition will remain open for the remainder of the year and can be viewed on Fridays between 11.00 and 1.00 PM.

ADDITIONS TO THE COLLECTION

On 13 June 2023, Margaret Robinson and Robert Baker attended the launch at the Royal Historical Society of Victoria of *Failed Ambitions: Kew Cottages and changing ideas of intellectual disabilities*, by Lee-Ann Monk and David Henderson. A copy for our reference library was purchased at the event. Another recent addition to the Collection is an Skipper's trophy of Kew Bowling Club from the 1930s, gifted by Carey Baptist Grammar School.

NEW MEMBERS

The Society welcomes as new members Alison French and Justine McDonough.

MEMBERSHIPS

These were 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

GRANTS & SPONSORS

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

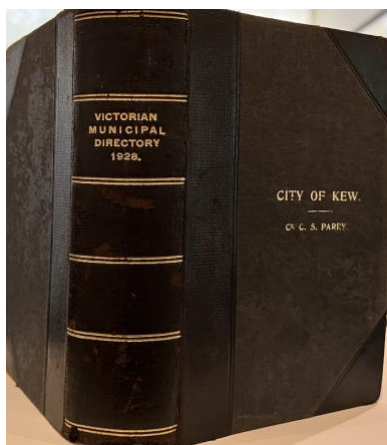
THE VICTORIAN MUNICIPAL DIRECTORIES

A number of directories and gazetteers were published in Victoria in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These allow amateur and professional researchers to reconstruct the life of Victorian people and institutions, often on a yearly basis. Some publications such as the *Victorian Government Gazette* continue to the present. Others had a shorter life, presumably because they were often published commercially by private companies.

Those with an interest in family history often consult the postal directories, which list residents and businesses by suburb and street. This task is made easier, at least for those researching the history of Kew, as Kew Library contains bound volumes of the Kew entries for the *Sands & McDougall Postal Directories* for the period 1861 to 1974. These were assembled by librarians working in the Kew Municipal Library in 1986.

In the same year, Kew Library also assembled copies of the Kew entries within the *Victorian Municipal Directory and Gazetteer* covering the period 1870–1984. The combined entries total 86 pages. Depending on the year of publication, these provide information about representatives at Commonwealth, State and Local levels of government, as well as providing snapshots of Kew as a municipality on a yearly and later biannual basis. This photocopy was clearly made from volumes of the Directory held in the Town Clerk's Office, as it includes annotations and corrections in ink to the names of Kew Councillors and their terms of office.

The copy of the Kew entries to the Municipal Directory was an indispensable resource when researchers were compiling the series of civic profiles of former mayors of Kew for the book *From Municipality to City: Chairman and Mayors of Kew 1860–1994*, as, in a number of instances, these were the only records from which a mayor's civic involvement and contribution could be determined. The entries recorded the years in which the individual was a councillor, their home address, the ward they represented, and the committees on which they sat.



Kew Historical Society's collection contains a number of print copies of the Municipal Directory. Apart from a single, card-covered edition, there are six bound issues that were donated in 1987 by the grandson of Cr Parry, Mayor of Kew in 1931–32. These copies, from 1928, 1929, 1930, 1934, 1936 and 1937, with the words CITY OF KEW and Cr. C.S. PARRY embossed in gilt on the front covers, were 'Library Editions' in 'half roan' costing about 18 shillings each. In all probability, Kew Councillors were each provided with copies during the years in which they served on Council.

Cr Parry's directories inevitably provide a more complete picture of civic life in Australia than is available in the more constrained photocopies of the Kew entries.



CR C.S. PARRY, MAYOR OF KEW 1931–32
Melba Studios, photographers
KHS

Each of the six volumes in the collection, provides data including: a Comparative table showing Municipal Returns for Twenty-one Years; an Index to Townships, Parishes and Railway Stations; Changes and appointments; Commonwealth of Australia (Constitution, Parliament, Departments and Officers); State of Victoria (Parliament, Departments and Officers / Boards, Institutions, Trusts and Loans); Municipalities in Victoria (Cities and Towns, Boroughs, Shires); and Water Supply (State Rivers and Water Supply Commission).

In addition to these lists, each civic entity is described annually, listing the nature of the area as well as the services and institutions which it contained. While the description of Kew is interesting in that it enumerates its location and character, as well as its civic and commercial entities, of more interest is the summary of statistical data.

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MUNICIPAL DIRECTORIES (from page 4)

In 1861 Kew's area was 1600 acres with 362 ratepayers. In 1928 it had expanded to 3,553 acres, with its population now 23,700 [6,195 were ratepayers] with 5,263 dwellings. In contrast, in 1928, the Kew Hospital for the Insane occupied 400 acres, just over 11 per cent of the Municipality. By 1939, at the beginning of World War II, Kew's population had increased by almost 5,000, to 28,250 individuals, however this incorporates those who resided in the Asylum. [In 1935, the Asylum's population is recorded as 1,500.] In the intervening years, the number of dwellings increased to 6,443, predictably due to new subdivisions in North and East Kew.

Tracing the civic contribution of the owner of the Directory is easy using the Kew Library copy. Cr Parry was elected to Council as a representative for North Ward in 1928. He remained as a North Ward representative on Council until 1938. He is listed as living at 109 Walpole Street in the 1928 Directory, and at 237 Fitzroy Street in 1938; perhaps the reason for the conclusion of his term as councillor.

In contrast to his fellow Councillors, Cr Parry only sat on the Finance & Legislative Committee, which dealt with By-laws & Regulations, Barkers & Burke Roads Maintenance, Baths, Anzac and Empire Day Celebrations, Valuations, and Staff. He clearly resisted the opportunity to sit on the committee for Removal of Asylum between 1931 and 1935, perhaps oddly in that the Asylum abutted his Ward. Nor was he ever a representative of Council to Government instrumentalities, such as the Metropolitan Board of Works, or institutions such as the Infectious Diseases Hospital.

In 2023, with permission, we used our new overhead book scanner to copy the Kew Library entries of the Municipal Directory. This electronic copy in Portable Document Format [PDF] is searchable which effects its file size [53.5 Mb], limiting its use online. It allows one to quickly search for names of civic representatives or Council employees. For example, Rowland Chipperfield <q.v. page 8-9> succeeded William Muntz as City Surveyor in about 1925 and remained in that position until 1948; a period of 23 years. Edgar Charles Parry was the Town Hall 'Keeper' from 1904 to 1923. Yet another Parry, Goronwy Owain Parry, was a Justice of the Peace who sat on the Kew Court from 1923 to 1927. Kew clearly had a plenitude of Parrys holding paid and unpaid civic office.

Currently, John Torpey is writing a series of articles for our newsletter on Kew's political representatives to the Victorian Parliament. From the 1870s, the Municipal Directories list the Victorian electorates to which electors in Kew could choose representatives, and following Federation in 1901 the establishment of the Electorate of Kooyong. The Directories record that between 1902 and 1955, the representatives of Kooyong included: Hon. William Knox (1902-10), Hon. Sir Robert Wallace Best (1911-22), John Greig Latham (1923-34), and Hon. Robert Gordon Menzies (from 1935). [Sir Robert Menzies concluded his term of office in 1968, and was succeeded by Andrew Peacock (1966-94), Petro Georgiou (1994-2010),

Joshua Frydenberg (2010-22), and Dr Monique Ryan (2022-).

And who created these Directories? The publisher of of the Victorian Municipal Directories was Arnall & Jackson of Collins Street West. The firm was founded by George Neill Arnall and Edward Matthew Jackson in 1873 and began publishing the Directories in 1879. Following the death of George Arnall in 1924, the original company was bought out by Arnall & Jackson Pty Ltd. The Municipal Directory for 1928, once owned by Cr Parry, includes a number of illustrated advertisements in the front and end pages. These include an advertisement for the lithographic services provided by Arnall & Jackson. The company was also the printer for our *City of Kew Centenary 1860-1960* written by researchers of the Kew Historical Society.

The State Library of Victoria holds copies of the Victorian Municipal Directories. Discovering these is made more complicated resulting from changes of the title of the directories and also to different publishers. The Library holds copies of the Directory for *Shires & Road Boards in Victoria*, published by Heath & Cordell, from 1866, and *Directory for shires, districts & boroughs in Victoria: together with form of accounts, &c. based upon the government system*, published by Evans Brothers from 1869. These are available on microfiche.

In 1880, the *Victorian Municipal Directory* published for the first time its description of Kew Borough.

Kew, a prettily situated postal, money order, savings' bank, and telegraph township, suburban to Melbourne, about 4½ miles E. It is a very favourite place of residence for the merchants and upper tradesmen of the city, and is dotted with their elegant houses, cottages, and villas, and well-kept gardens. Some parts of the locality are very elevated, from which fine views can be obtained. The town has 510 dwellings. The Metropolitan Lunatic Asylum is situated at the extreme north-western corner of the borough on a reserve of 400 acres, and being bounded on two sides by the Yarra is as little seen or noticed by the burgesses as if it were in any of the adjacent boroughs. The Literary Institute has a library of 546 volumes. It has a State school; also, a Roman Catholic college, dedicated to St Francis Xavier. Cars and omnibuses run frequently to the city. The railway reaches as far as the town of Hawthorn, one mile distant.

These descriptions were to be updated annually during the lifespan of the directories to record changes in location and character, parks and gardens, recreational facilities, educational institutions, health services and institutions, and available transport

MICHAEL MESZAROS

KEW SCULPTOR

In the Boroondara Cemetery, in a section named 'In Memory of the Forgotten People' is a sculpture known as *Paupers' Grave* by Kew sculptor, Michael Meszaros, unveiled 12 November 2011, funded and erected by the Boroondara General Cemetery.



PAUPERS' GRAVE
Michael Meszaros,
2011
Boroondara General
Cemetery

It is difficult to look at this artwork and not wonder about humanity and some of its members, dying unidentified, and alone after living a life of achievement, struggle, or nothing in particular, but still having been human and having lived a life. What is a pauper? Why remember paupers and not just simply bury them as is the norm? They were nameless at the time of death, but still human. This is a timeless theme like so many themes Michael explores and expresses in his sculptural pieces and medallions, such as sport and leisure, scientific advances, the performing arts, religious themes, the human condition, relationships between men and women, nature, the environment, politics, immortality.

Another sculpture close to home consists of three symbolic trees in the shopping plaza in Camberwell, 2013.

Let's now go to the Courtyard at the Camberwell Library and view Michael Meszaros' 1982 bronze 'Mayoress'. She is elegant, definitely female, progressive, forward thinking and strong, striding out with confidence. Again, one can't look at this sculpture and not respond to her emotions and ambitions or to matters of the human psyche.

'Mayoress' influenced the choice made by those at the Royal Women's Hospital who commissioned Michael to create the footpath sculpture in Grattan Street, Parkville 2008. This artwork is surely about women, woman, the creator of life and all that that involves.



MAYORESS
Michael Meszaros,
1982
Camberwell
Library

Michael's sculptural works can be seen in his many commissioned public works in most states in Australia, in country Victoria, and Melbourne. They include: the brass and bronze memorial to William Guilfoyle in the Melbourne Botanical Gardens (1998); a statue of John Pascoe Fawkner which was commissioned and put in place in Collins Street (1978) but which is now temporarily in storage; a memorial to Sydney Myer at the Music Bowl (2001); and the Papal candlestand in St Paul's Cathedral. The list of his works in the Melbourne CBD is long. Major works can also be seen in the United States, Belgium, Japan, and Papua New Guinea.

Michael was born 11 April 1945, lived in Hawthorn, then Kew, attended Preshil, the Margaret Lyttle Memorial School, and Wesley College before studying Architecture at the University of Melbourne. His father was Andor Meszaros, Hungarian architect and sculptor, who arrived in Melbourne in 1939, followed soon after by Michael's mother and brother, to begin a life in this country along with thousands of others, fleeing fascism, antisemitism, anticipating World War 2, or escaping from it, many bringing their artistic, literary, musical, dance, theatrical, architectural, design and other creative skills and expertise. The Meszaros family was part of that culturally rich immigrant wave.

Andor Meszaros' studio was, for many years, the family living room. Here Michael learned from his father basic compositional sculpting skills beginning with medals and medallions. At age 13, he modelled his father's profile which was cast on a medallion, the quality of which astonished his father. Michael continued creating portrait medals during school years and while studying Architecture. He learned from his father's example to think carefully about his subjects. Michael was interested in music, took violin lessons and played violin in the Junior Symphony Orchestra.

In 1952, Andor Meszaros bought a block of land in Laver Street, Kew, very steeply sloping, and for the next nine years, at a time of severe shortage of all building materials in post-war Melbourne, designed and built the present modernist dwelling with the studio in which Michael has worked for the last 50 years. His enterprising father obtained stone offcuts from stonemasons. Bricks were cast with beer bottles inside which reduced the weight of the bricks and amount of cement needed. Other bricks were obtained, and from age 7, Michael happily cleaned bricks and actually built his own bedroom up the slope at the back of the house.

MICHAEL MESZAROS (continued from page 6)

This experience may have encouraged him to study Architecture, following in the footsteps of his father and brother and doubting that he could make an adequate living from sculpture. He studied at the School of Architecture, Melbourne University, finishing in 1968 and was awarded a Churchill Fellowship in 1969 to study metallic sculpture at *La Scuola dell'Arte della Medaglia* (School of the Art of the Medal) in the Mint of Rome. Since 1970, when he returned from Rome, he has produced hundreds of medals including the marvellous Twelve Signs of the Zodiac Series, 1970.

Michael worked with his father for a few years until Andor Meszaros' death in 1972. The discipline of medallic sculpture has influenced all his work, 'encouraging a conciseness and economy of expression and design'.

Michael's work adheres to no particular style and includes medallions, reliefs, trophies, portraits and major public commissions. He specialises in bronze medallions and his clients have included governments, schools, universities, professional and research bodies, industry and private individuals.

The 1988 Bicentenary Schools Medal was presented to every Australian school student. Michael designed the obverse and Michael Tracey the reverse. 3.2 million medals were struck. Many of his medals are held in the British Museum, in the Royal Dutch Coin Collection, in several other international collections, and of course, in museums and galleries in this country.

How a sculptor transforms an idea into a finished product is complex and exacting and beyond the scope of this article.

In conversation: Michael shared some views on creating:

I was thinking about our conversation today and some central points that I should have made are that for me art is a means of communication. ... It follows that I must have something to communicate, and then I have to communicate it understandably. ... From that, style is of little importance to me, and I don't strive for a signature style. If there is a style, it is more in the way of thinking than in the way it is done physically. Certainly, there is an element of style in my work, but that is not a conscious intention. ...

I like doing many different types of work. ... The quality of the work for me lies in the quality of the idea, the quality of the interpretation and communication and the quality of the technical execution. The rest looks after itself. ... I want to encourage viewers to take notice of that same subject and think about it.



MICHAEL MESZAROS IN HIS STUDIO

Michael Meszaros has received the following awards: Churchill Fellowship (1969); American Numismatic Art Award for Excellence in Medallic Sculpture (2011); Medal of the Order of Australia Queen's Birthday Honours (2012); American Medal of the Year (2014, 2018); The International Art Medal Federation Grand Prix (2021). He has been President of the Association of Sculptors of Victoria on 11 occasions.

Michael the architect, like his father, with a highly developed knowledge of materials and structural matters, built a rather extraordinary 'country' home east of Melbourne, which, unlike most homes in the area, survived Victoria's devastating bushfires. It is a concrete shell vault sprayed over an earth form.

50 Years as a Sculptor, a comprehensive exhibition to celebrate Michael Meszaros' work as a full-time, self-supporting artist, sculptor and medallist opened at the Hawthorn Town Hall Gallery on 3 August 2021 and disappointingly closed a few days later due to the pandemic lock down. The exhibition was restaged 28 May to 18 June 2022 at the Owen Dixon Chambers. How fortunate were those who managed to see his vast body of works at this exhibition.

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CHIPPERFIELD'S BOATHOUSE

'THE MOORINGS' AND FLOATING PONTOON

Floods of rivers and creeks were frequently a challenge to early European settlers and later residents of Boroondara. In 1849, the historian James Bonwick recorded that: *our district [Kew] suffered considerably. Mr Wade (on the Yarra River flats along Kilby Road) speaks of 80 acres, out of 100 acres of his cultivated paddock, covered by water.* Newspapers continued to describe major flooding in Kew in 1863, 1869, 1878, 1880, 1889, 1891, 1916 and 1934. However, since the construction of the Upper Yarra Dam in 1957, the levels of water flowing downstream have been significantly reduced.

'The Moorings', perhaps built around 1914, was also known as Chipperfield's Boathouse or 'Chipper's' by locals. It was one of several boathouses built on the Yarra River in Kew and Fairfield in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These boathouses became regular gathering places for canoeists and led to the creation of canoe clubs. 'The Moorings' was built on the river flats on the corner of Willsmere and Kilby Roads and was very flood prone. The building was a substantial two-storey house that incorporated an upper storey residence with a boatshed underneath. The influential Australian architect of the day, Harold Desbrowe-Annear, who was at the forefront of the development of the Arts and Crafts movement in the country, grew up near the Yarra and designed several treasured projects in Kew, the first of many being The Springthorpe Memorial in the Boroondara General Cemetery and a riverside project, part of 'The Moorings' boathouse. There was a floating pontoon a short distance away on the river. It became a popular destination in its day when pleasure boating and paddling a hired canoe was at its peak.

Kew Historian, Dorothy Rogers noted in her book, *A History of Kew* (1973), that: *'...it was pleasant to sit on the bank of the river and watch the canoes glide by, a pretty girl reclining on the cushions, whilst her swain paddled smoothly along to the accompaniment of music from a gramophone.'* There was an annual river festival held between 1904 and 1945, the Henley-on-the-Yarra Regatta, which generated a busy time on the river in preparation for the just over one-mile race between the Morell and Princes Bridges. Many boats would come upstream for training from Macaulay's Boatshed near Molesworth Street, as well as Rudder Grange Boathouse and Tearooms on the Fairfield side.

'The Moorings' was almost washed away in the 1916 floods.

The *Argus* 27 September 1916, reported:

Mr. J. Chipperfield, proprietor of a boathouse and refreshment-rooms on a bend of the river on the north side of Studley Park, has had a struggle to save his home...



CHIPPERFIELD'S BOATHOUSE AND FLOATING PONTOON,
Rogers Collection, KHS

Yesterday the brick chimney collapsed, and the whole structure appeared to be in imminent danger of being swept away. ... Mr Chipperfield managed to row to the boathouse of a friend and return with a wire cable 160ft. long. With the assistance of friends, he was enabled to stay the building by means of the wire, affixing it to the stout trunks of gum trees in the vicinity. Mrs Chipperfield and three children are meanwhile housed at the residence of a relative.

In 1934 'The Moorings' was almost totally submerged when the Yarra River rose 26 feet in 14 hours. The *Argus* 10 January 1934 reported:

Mr. R. Chipperfield, whose boatshed is on the Yarra near the Willsmere swimming pool, said late last night that he did not expect the river to rise much more. In floods in 1923-1924 the water entered Mr. Chipperfield's house to a depth of 9ft.

Dorothy Rogers wrote:

The 1934 flood was so extensive that the family were taken from the upper floor windows in a boat. Scattered houses in the area were under water with only chimneys showing and cows took refuge from the farms and were grazing close to Earl Street.

Following the 1934 flood, the house was restored and the floating pontoon, sometimes referred to as a 'kiosk' or 'canteen', was used to store canoes.

In 1914, many of the Chipperfield family were living near the river. William Rowland Chipperfield, a carpenter and his wife, Elizabeth Constantia, had a daughter, May Bailey, and five sons: Frank, Rowland, Percy [Jack], Sydney and Harold. The sons were listed on the electoral roll as carpenters.

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CHIPPERFIELD'S BOATHOUSE (from page 8)

Rowland and Sydney both served in World War 1. Jack was also a boatbuilder by trade and most likely was the one who maintained the hire boats. By 1931, Jack and his wife Margaret had moved to Frankston, where he continued his trade as a carpenter and boatbuilder. Jack died there in 1953 and is buried in the Frankston Cemetery. From 1931 until 1956, Rowland Chipperfield appears to have owned the boathouse and floating pontoon. Thereafter, until 1972, it is not clear who owned or lived at the boathouse.

Rowland Chipperfield is worth mentioning. He qualified as an architect after World War 1, and in 1919 joined the City of Kew council staff as an assistant to the Municipality's Building Surveyor W.J. Muntz. He took over the latter's post after Muntz left in 1923 and held it until his own death more than three decades later. Virtually all the council buildings erected from the 1920s to the 1950s represented his work. As recorded by Cr W.D. Vaughan in his book *Kew's Civic Century* (1960), Chipperfield was responsible for the design of baby health centres at Kew East (1925), Kew North (1928) and Central Kew (1939), the entrance gates to Alexandra Gardens (1933), the Kew Croquet Club premises at Victoria Park (1934), and several kindergartens including one in Studley Park. Another noticeable legacy of Rowland Chipperfield's long period as City Building Surveyor is the smart modernist toilet block, at the rear of the former police station on Cotham Road.

Chipperfield was highly regarded, with Vaughan commenting that: *'...the greatest compliment to him is the fact that all these public buildings have been copied in other parts of the state... He passed away on February 3, 1956, and his lasting memorial will be in the very fine municipal buildings in Kew which he designed.'* Rowland and his parents William and Elizabeth Chipperfield, are buried in the Boroondara General Cemetery.

Several Fairfield Canoe Club members have fond memories of the boathouse environs. One member, Geoff Allen, remembers as a child in the 1950s and 1960s, collecting water lilies from the billabong adjacent to 'The Moorings'. His father, Fred Allen used to brag to his young son that he was very proud of the fact that he held the club record for many years for the C1 [a single, one-paddle Canada canoe] race to the floating boathouse and back to the club. Geoff recalls he took that as a benchmark for his training sessions. He never told his father that he used to regularly beat it. Of interest is that Geoff never saw the boatshed in operation; it was abandoned by the late 1950s and was rather derelict by then.

Another Fairfield canoe club member, Jonathon Mayne's father Roy, had an old second-hand Peterborough canoe, *Lazy Days*, which would have been built around 1900, dated by the fact that they encountered a problem with splitting planks.

These were switched to the close ribbed, narrow plank design sometime about 1914. *Lazy Days* was sold and recently re-purchased by Jonathon and, to his great surprise whilst restoring it, found that it has *Chipperfields* burned into the keel. Clearly *Lazy Days* had been a Chipperfield hire boat in a former life.



**CHIPPERFIELD NAME BURNED INTO KEEL OF 1914
PETERBOROUGH CANOE**

Courtesy: Fairfield Canoe Club

In the photograph from the Rogers Collection, circa 1939, (page 8) we have a panoramic view of Chipperfield's floating kiosk on the Yarra River. The children wading in the river are believed to be the three sons of Dorothy Rogers. The double-storeyed house, 'The Moorings' is observable in the background and at the extreme right we can see the channel where Connors Creek flows into the river where a large sandbank was formed. It was a favourite bathing spot.

Just beyond the sand bank was a deep, swiftly flowing, dangerous current. In January 1902, a fourteen-year-old boy named William (Willie) Angell, in the company of some other boys, swam across the river and, not a good swimmer, drowned nearby. A double drowning also occurred in January 1924 near 'The Moorings' in which two sisters, Pearl Emily McDougall aged 16, and Effie Eileen McDougall, aged 10, lost their lives. Upon hearing calls for help coming from the river, Mrs Chipperfield brought a lifebuoy with her. Two men from the adjacent boatshed dived into the river but they were unable to reach the bodies. The location at the end of Willsmere Road was a very dangerous spot. Within a few feet of the bank the bottom went down suddenly to a depth of 20 feet or 6 metres. Following a police report to authorities of the great dangers of this popular swimming spot, this sad incident was instrumental in Kew Council building the first Kew Baths.

Both building landmarks, 'The Moorings' and the floating pontoon, had gone by 1972 when the stretch of the Yarra River where they were located was diverted for the construction of the Eastern Freeway.

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WILFRED KENT HUGHES

SCHOLAR, SPORTSMAN, SOLDIER, BUSINESSMAN, AUTHOR, POLITICIAN

Wilfred Selwyn Kent Hughes (Billy) was born in June 1895 to Wilfred and Clementine (Rankin) at East Melbourne. His father was a surgeon. He was educated at Trinity Grammar School, Kew, and Melbourne Grammar School on a scholarship; he was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship in 1914. After World War 1, he obtained a Bachelor of Arts at Christ Church, Oxford University in 1922. Kent Hughes represented Australia in the 1920 Olympic Games, competing in the 400m hurdles. (He was eliminated in the semi-finals) He was manager of the Australian Empire Games team in Sydney in 1938; chairman of the Olympic Organising Committee between 1951 and 1958; president of the Victorian Athletic Association, and the Victorian Amateur Cycling Club from 1937 to 1955.

On his return to Australia, after World War 1 and Oxford University, he became a director of Ramsay Publishing Pty Ltd that included Ramsay Ware and the Ramsay Catalogue Service; his fellow director was James H. Ramsay. He married Edith Kerr in New Jersey, USA in February 1923. They lived in Selbourne Avenue, Kew from the early 1935, having previously lived in Glen Avenue, Hawthorn from 1930. He died in July 1970 at home in his sleep and was given a state funeral, which was held at St John's Anglican Church, Camberwell.



4 SELBOURNE ROAD, KEW
Photograph, The Author

Wilfred Kent Hughes volunteered in August 1914 and joined the 7th Battalion, 1st AIF as a sergeant, but later transferred to the 3rd Light Horse Regiment commanded by his uncle Colonel Frederick Hughes. He saw service in Gallipoli, Sinai, Palestine and Syria. He suffered a gunshot wound (GSW) to his arm at Gallipoli; was mentioned in dispatches four times (MID) and awarded the Military Cross (MC) in 1917. He finished his service with the rank of captain.



**STUDIO PORTRAIT OF MAJOR WILFRED SELWYN KENT HUGHES
MC, AUSTRALIAN LIGHT HORSE**
Courtesy: Australian War Memorial

His father, also Wilfred, a Collins Street specialist, enlisted in May 1915 aged 50 and served briefly with the rank of major in the Royal Australian Medical Corps (RAMC) at 3rd Australian General Hospital (3 AGH) Lemnos, where he contracted colitis in September 1915 and was evacuated to London. He was discharged 'medically unfit' in May 1916. With the outbreak of World War 2 imminent, Kent Hughes joined the 2nd AIF's 8th Division as AA & QMG with the rank of major (later promoted to colonel in 1942). He was posted to Malaya in 1941, and with the fall of Singapore in February 1942 he became a prisoner of war (POW) of the Japanese, being interred in Changi, Formosa and Manchuria. He was awarded a MID for his efforts on behalf of his fellow POWs. Released at the end of the war in August 1945 by the Russians, he returned to Australia and resumed his pre-war activities.

Kent Hughes was an original member of the reformed RSSAILA Kew Sub-Branch in 1931. He attended the annual ANZAC Day parade mounted, in 1st AIF Light Horse uniform, with emu feathers in his hat.

The Kew State electorate was created in 1927 and Kent Hughes was its first representative. Three years later in 1930, Kent Hughes and Robert Menzies resigned from William McPherson's government over subsidies to uneconomic ice works.

> page 11

WILFRED KENT HUGHES *(from page 10)*

He held a succession of portfolios in the Victorian Cabinet, and he was Deputy Premier (1938 & 1948/9) and Chief Secretary (1948). He was also a minister for various portfolios in Conservative Governments led by Sir Stanley Argyle, Albert Dunstan, Ian McPherson, and Thomas Hollway between 1932 and 1949: Sustenance 1932-4, Railways 1934, Transport 1934-5 & 1948-9, Labour 1934-45, Public Instruction 1947-8, and Electrical Undertakings 1948-9.

In 1949, with the creation of the Federal electorate of Chisholm, he became its first representative, a position he held until his death in 1970. Kent Hughes joined his friend Menzies who represented the adjacent Kooyong, who by then was Prime Minister. He was Minister for Interior 1951-6, Works and Housing 1951-2 and Works 1952-6.

Kent Hughes wrote two books: *Modern Crusaders* (1918) and *Slaves of the Samurai* (1946) a poem based on his POW experiences. David White brought the following to my attention:

John Lloyd and Gwendolen (Gwenda) were married at Holy Trinity Church, Kew in 1930... Gwenda's brother was Wilfred Kent Hughes, MLA for Kew from 1927 until 1949, who would humorously suggest that he hid the best whisky when visited by his sister, Gwenda, the 'family communist'.

Paul Hasluck in his book *The Chance of Politics* describes Kent Hughes as: '...a gallant, generous and noble-spirited man and a gentleman'.

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AS IT HAPPENED ...

100 years ago

On Monday 10 September 1923 the Salvation Army East Kew Girls were to give an entertainment in the Traralgon Mechanics Institute. The girls had met with a large measure of success in their tour of Gippsland and the program had been well appreciated.

(Traralgon Record, 7 September 1923, p.2)

A deputation of representatives of Kew Council waited upon the Minister of Public Works on Wednesday 19 September 1923 to urge the re-introduction at an early date of the bill relative to the widening and improvement of High Street Kew. One speaker asked the Government to turn High Street from a track worthy of a backwoods town into a thoroughfare worthy of a great city.

(The Age, 20 September 1923, p.12)

The State School in Peel Street, Kew was to be remodelled at a cost of £13,722 and a contract had been let to W. Howard to carry out the works.

(The Herald, 21 September 1923, p.3)



KEW STATE SCHOOL

Postcard, 1920s. Gift of Diane Washfold, 2021
KHS

Sepia postcard of Kew State School in the 1920s from the KHS Collection. In this real photo postcard, a man is pictured on the footpath, while two men are labouring to create a new schoolyard fence. If you look carefully, you will note the domed tower, or fleche, which is similar to that on the Kew Court House.

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Printing: Courtesy of Jess Wilson MP, State Member for Kew.
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