



KEW

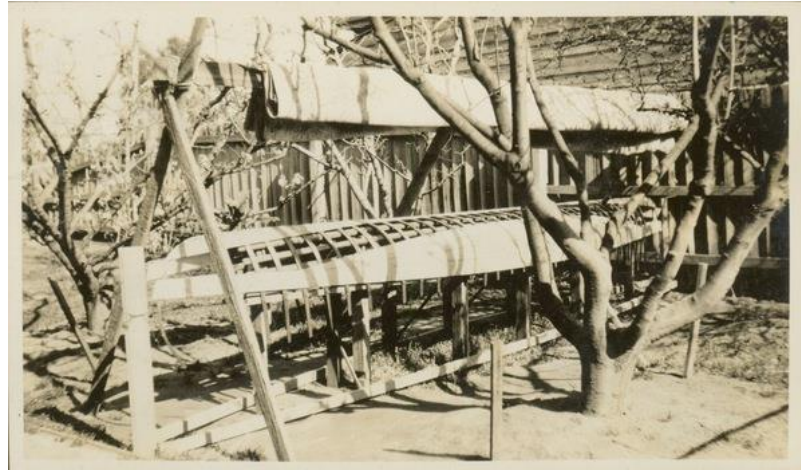
HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

ESTABLISHED 1958

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

NEWSLETTER

No. 149
DECEMBER 2024



BOATING ON THE YARRA

The *Boroondara Community Plan 2021–2031* was approved after extensive community input about what matters to the residents of Kew. Consultation clarified that there were five community priorities, two of which were relevant to sport and recreation: Parks and Green Spaces, and The Environment.

The most significant green space in Kew is Yarra Bend Park, once managed by the Yarra Bend Trust, with representatives on the Trust of the City of Kew, and now by the Parks Victoria. Parks Victoria has a two-fold responsibility to manage areas designated for active recreation as well as the natural environment within the park, which extends on both sides of the Yarra River.

Historically, the area once designated as Studley Park was a centre for sports and recreation for the people of Melbourne. The area was continually used by groups such as the Victorian Canoe Club, whose members' clubhouse in Kew was situated beside the river. The club was formed in 1912 at a meeting in Melbourne, and its first committee elected in the same year. Records indicate that the Club continued into at least the 1950s. Like that of other past community groups, some of its records are held in the Kew Historical Society collection. They reveal a great deal of the preoccupations of young people, in this case men, in the first half of the twentieth century.

The items include two photographic albums, the first devoted to the building of canoes and their use on the Yarra at Studley Park, while the second records the use of the canoes by club members in all parts of the Yarra River, including its headwaters. The photos are presumed to date from the 1920s.

The lead picture (above) is taken from the first album and identifies one stage in the construction by hand of a canoe. This backyard activity clearly required precise carpentry skills. The stages recorded in the photographs of the building of this single canoe include assembling the steaming gear, building a mould for the racer, bending the ribs to fit the mould, and planking. Planking is illustrated in seven of the ten photos devoted to the construction process.

In addition to the detailed photos of canoe construction, some of the more interesting photos relate to the wooden club house and to Dight's Falls.

CONTENTS

1

BOATING ON THE YARRA

Historic sport and recreation organisations and events

3

HISTORY NEWS

Exhibitions; Grants & sponsorships; New conservation grant

4

BE WORTHY

The 150th anniversary of Kew Primary School No.1075

6

MISSIONARIES TO CHINA

St Hilary's Church and overseas church missions

8

KEW! KEW!

Interpreting an 1888 subdivision plan near the Harp of Erin Hotel

10

ASHWICK PREPARATORY SCHOOL FOR BOYS

A story of a boy and a headmaster in one of Kew's early schools

10

MASONIC LODGES

A gift by the descendants of Bro E.P. Kennewell

[Front page]

PLANKING A CANOE

Victorian Canoe Club album, circa 1920s

KHS

BOATING ON THE RIVER YARRA (from page 1)

The photo of the boat house would indicate that it was located on the Kew side of the river. This would be logical as the Yarra Bend Asylum continued to operate on the other side of the river until 1929. The photos of Dight's Falls, reveal that at one stage there was a wooden walkway across the Falls on which one could cross from one side to the other.

Apart from a particular group, such as the Victorian Canoe Club, who used canoes on the river as their primary recreational activity, there was more general use of canoeing as a whole of community pastime in events such as the Kew Canoe Carnivals. These raised money for community organisations such as the Victorian Society for Crippled Children. The carnivals had organising committees who planned and published a programme of events. The events at the Canoe Carnival of 1910 included a grand parade of canoes, a canoe race for pairs, a tub race, a parade of decorated boats, comic diving, a canoe obstacle race, an upset coffin race, a canoe race for fours, a parade of illuminated boats and canoes, and musical items performed by Zingari Amateur Orchestra, and the Welsh Male Voice Choir. The carnival's site, at least in 1939, took place in the vicinity of Macaulay's Boatshed. An indication of the event's popularity is the advice about transportation to the Carnival on special buses from Heidelberg Road, Fairfield; Kew Junction; Johnston Street Bridge, Collingwood; with a fare set at threepence. As a sidenote, the booklets include rare photos of businesses and locations which we will publish on *Victorian Collections*.

But getting back to catering for sport and recreation today. Council's role has been reduced, with no automatic role in the management of the Yarra Bend Park or the Yarra River. Instead, Council Officers only determine how facilities can be maintained and developed in Council controlled parks, green spaces and recreational centres.

ROBERT BAKER

GRANTS & SPONSORS

In 2024-27, Kew Historical Society is supported by the City of Boroondara through a Triennial Operational Grant. Other grants have been provided by the National Library of Australia and Bendigo Bank.



[above] **KEW CANOE CARNIVAL, 1920s**
Gift of Diane Washfold, 2021
KHS

KEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

PATRON

Sir Gustav Nossal AC CBE FRS FAA FTSE

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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 January 2024 and 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 11am and 3pm. 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 AND SOCIAL MEDIA

www.kewhistoricalsociety.org.au

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

www.facebook.com/kewhistoricalsociety

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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.

HISTORY NEWS

EXHIBITIONS

The current exhibition at the Kew Court House is *Travelling by tram: building new tram networks across Boroondara*. The reason for the exhibition covering all of Boroondara, rather than just Kew, is because we were loaned a collection of photos from the second decade of the twentieth century that included rare photographs of tram line construction in Kew, Hawthorn, Camberwell and Surrey Hills. In addition, the Tramways Museum lent us an early photo of a tram in Balwyn. The exhibition is open on Fridays between 11am and 1pm. [It will be closed for the holiday period from 20 December and reopen on 7 February,]

In 2025, we are already planning a number of exhibitions. A new exhibition on postwar WW2 Kew will open at the Court House in March.

We are also working to prepare an exhibition and lecture series on wedding fashion at Villa Alba Museum in April and May during the 2025 Australian Heritage Festival.

Finally, our proposal for an exhibition at the Town Hall Gallery in Hawthorn has been accepted by the City of Boroondara. The exhibition will be a retrospective, showcasing the work of Grace James and Viola Ayling. Grace James was a skilled amateur knitter and dressmaker, while Viola Ayling was a self-taught art potter. Both women were residents of Boroondara. The exhibition is scheduled for six weeks in the months of August and September 2025.

GRANTS & SPONSORSHIPS

In 2024-25, KHS is the beneficiary of a number of grants & sponsorships. This includes Year 1 of another three-year *Triennial Operational Grant* from the City of Boroondara. In June 2024, we also received funding from Community Bank Inner East, Community Investment Program [a franchisee of Bendigo and Adelaide Bank Limited] to purchase a new laptop which is used for improved connectivity with members and the broader community. An additional grant has been provided by the National Library of Australia for the conservation of the Henty Family Costume Collection.



NEW CONSERVATION GRANT

In 2023, Kew Historical Society was funded by the National Library of Australia for a second Significance Assessment of its collection. The items specified for assessment were the costumes and costume accessories donated to the Society in 2023 by the descendants of Francis and Mary Ann Henty. The assessment was conducted by Dr Laura Jovic, an expert in colonial Australian costume.

Following the acceptance of Dr Jovic's Significance Assessment, a subsequent grant was sought to fund the conservation of a number of items in this collection.

On 12 November 2024, the National Library announced the list of 2024 Community Heritage Grant recipients, including a grant to the Kew Historical Society of \$19,375 for the conservation of a number of the Henty costumes by Grimwade Conservation Services, University of Melbourne.

This grant is the largest KHS has received to date, eclipsing a grant from the Public Record Office, Victoria, for the restoration of the Kew Mayoral Portraits. The costs of restoration of four of the Henty costumes is due to the risks of working with fragile textiles that are almost 180 years old. Textile conservation is also a time consuming process that can only be performed by a small number of accredited conservators.

MEMBERSHIPS

These were due on 1 July 2024. 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 BSB 633-000, Account 171300288. Please send any queries to the Secretary: secretary@kewhistoricalsociety.org.au

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS

Subscriptions to the Society should be paid either by cash or cheque directly into our account BSB 633-000, A/C 171300288 at the Bendigo Bank, 278 Whitehorse Road, Balwyn, Vic. or by direct funds transfer. Please identify your payment by using your last name and the word Subs.

Donations to the Society should be paid directly into our account 633-000 171 300 395 at the Bendigo Bank, Balwyn, using your chosen payment method as above. Please use your last name and the word Donation in the reference or subject line. Donations to the Society are tax deductible. Please use the email info@kewhistoricalsociety.org.au to request a receipt for your donation.

POSTAL ADDRESS

Kew Post Office has now closed. The Society' new mailing address is PO Box 3147, Cotham, Vic. 3101. Our email address remains info@kewhistoricalsociety.org.au

‘BE WORTHY’ KEW PRIMARY SCHOOL – NO. 1075

At the 1851 Kew land sales, Nicholas Fenwick purchased Lot 87 covering 122 acres or 49 hectares, constituting much of what became central Kew. North of High Street and named the *Kew Estate* it gave the district its name.

The Anglicans established the first Kew school No. 346 in 1856, five years after the Colony of Victoria was proclaimed. Mr Fenwick gave land to the Church on which it built its school on the east side of Walpole Street. The large block of land was located between Peel and Walpole Streets, opposite the current Kew Primary School.

Three years later in 1859, the Independent Church established a school, No. 356, in its chapel on the same property, this time on the Peel Street frontage. The Independent Church school was brought under the *Common Schools Act 1862* in 1863 after only four years as a denominational school. Due to rapid expansion, additional space was required. The government provided a grant, and fund raising by parents and the school committee allowed the school to purchase land on the east side of Peel Street, the current site of Kew Primary School.

School Nos. 346 and 356 were the predecessors of Kew State School No. 1075, which opened on 1 November 1870 as a Common School, absorbing the students at the former Independent Church school. Soon after 1875, Kew Common School amalgamated with the Anglican school. Today, Kew Primary School is the oldest school still operating in Kew. The three schools predate the establishment of state education in Victoria.

Common Schools were funded by government and local councils and facilitated government oversight of schools which sprang up all over the State. Often run by Churches, schools were required by the State to provide four hours of secular education daily.

At the State election of 1871, the incumbent government included in its campaign a proposal for free, compulsory and secular education. There were opponents to education being compulsory and there were opponents to education being free, but the most strident objectors were opposed to education being secular. However, at the election, voters returned the government with a majority of almost two to one.

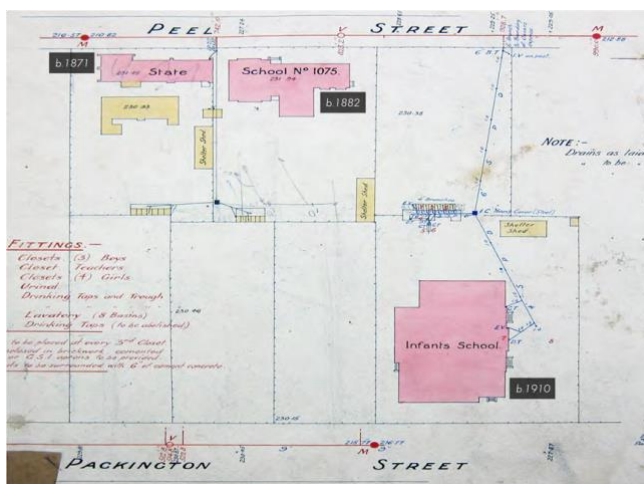
The Education Act 1872 was legislated in December and was passed by majorities of approximately two to one in both State Houses. It mandated State Schools and State Education to be compulsory, free and secular. The Act was enacted in January 1873 and Kew State School, along with 452 other schools already owned by the State, were taken over by the new Education Department under a Minister of Public Instruction.



STATE SCHOOL KEW
Postcard, undated
Gift of Diane Washfold, KHS

Of the 172,000 children of school age at the time, only about 70,000 were receiving formal education either in schools or with private tutors. With the passing of *The Education Act*, with its prime purpose to promote literacy and numeracy, school attendance increased by 50 per cent.

Little is known about the original Kew State School which was built close to the road in Peel Street on the current site. The foundation stone for a building, which was described as ‘handsome, substantial and brick’, was laid on 29 April 1871. The building was constructed by the Education Department which took over responsibility for buildings, grounds, staff and students following the passing of *The Education Act*.



[Extract] **DETAIL PLAN NO.1582, BOROUGH OF KEW**
Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works, 1904
Courtesy Public Record Office Victoria

'BE WORTHY' (from page 4)

In 1882, a building of tuckpointed Hawthorn bricks, with polychromatic brickwork of cream and red bricks in a diaper pattern, was built on the Peel Street frontage, next to the 1871 building. These buildings became the foundation of the current senior school building.

The foundation stone of a building on Pakington Street to accommodate the infant and junior classes was laid by Alfred Billson, Minister of Education, on 5 April 1910. Also present were Frank Tate, Director of Education, Hon George Swinburne MLA, Hon James Balfour MLC, Cr Walter Hiscock, Mayor of Kew, and Francis Barnard, chair of the Kew Board of Advice. There were speeches and the following snippets are an example of the comments: Francis Barnard noted that the Peel Street building was very old and in need of urgent refurbishment, while Frank Tate said that Kew had suffered for many years with a school building which was amongst the worst in the metropolis. It was to be another thirteen years before the shortcomings of the Peel Street buildings were addressed.

To coincide with celebrations for Kew's Golden Jubilee, the new building was opened on 8 December 1910 by the Governor, Sir Thomas Gibson-Carmichael. Following the Governor's official opening of the school, the highlight of the day was the presentation and hoisting of a handsome Union Flag which was embroidered in yellow silk with the words 'The King's School, Kew, England'. The Flag was presented in a handsome timber casket which had an interesting history of its own. It was made of oak from the first Kew bridge over the river Thames, demolished in 1774, and was beaded with boxwood and lined with sycamore. This gift was in response to an Australian flag and casket made from Australian timbers which was sent to the King's School, by the students and staff of the Kew State School. This exchange was initiated by the Kew Board of Advice. The Kew students contributed to the cost of the flag which was sent to the English school and the senior girls embroidered the name and suburb of the school onto it.

The new building on the Pakington Street frontage was built in the Edwardian architectural style of the period. It was designed to accommodate up to 300 children in six classrooms. The plan included an office, storeroom, cloakroom with lavatories, and an assembly hall. The building has an attractive, stained timber hammerbeam ceiling in the assembly hall, which is lit with stained-glass windows. The cost of construction was £4,000.

The City of Kew Urban Conservation Study (Sanderson, 1988) lists the building as of Grade B significance as it became the model for at least ten other infant school buildings in Victoria.

In 1923, the buildings on the Peel Street frontage were combined. The original school rooms built in 1871 were in the multi room Common Schools design. They were L-shaped with a subordinate room across the end. To create the larger building, these rooms were joined to the 1882 building by a corridor with adjoining classrooms added.

Bluestone footings and tuckpointed polychromatic brickwork from the 1871 building at the northern end of the building were retained and incorporated. Typical of the school style of the interwar period, it is consistent with post-World War I architecture. It is a two-storey, Georgian Revival, red brick building with a terracotta tiled roof. A memorial stone was laid to commemorate the remodelling of the school building by the Hon Sir William McPherson MLA on 19 December 1923. Currently the building houses the senior school and administration wing.

In a corridor in the senior school building is a memorial and honour roll naming the 268 students who served in World War I. Their names were compiled into a book which is in a timber and glass box fixed to the wall.

A shelter shed, built in 1929, is extant. Many similar shelter sheds in other schools have been demolished over the years. This is an excellent example of a building type that was once common in Victoria schools but is becoming increasingly rare.

Over subsequent years, there have been significant changes. The formal Peel Street main entrance to the school was sacrificed when new, flat-roofed offices were added at the front, and the grounds were enlarged when two houses, adjoining the school on Pakington Street and adjacent to the Holy Trinity Church manse, were purchased and demolished. Alterations to the senior school building include a library, canteen and a lift to the first floor to provide inclusionary access. The shelter shed is now used for out-of-school-hours care. An impressive school hall, with classrooms above, has been built on the Peel Street frontage.

Currently a polychromatic brick main entrance to the school is under construction on the Pakington Street frontage. This entry will improve access to both main buildings and will ultimately turn the school's focus away from Peel Street.

The historic significance of Kew Primary School is immense. The three largely intact early-twentieth century buildings, the infant school, senior school, and shelter shed make the entire site important. The site also contains mature trees such as Peppercorns and a Monterey Cypress. Additionally, the 1919 honorary marble tablet is an unusual example of a war memorial associated with a primary school and demonstrates the impact World War I had upon community life in Kew.

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MISSIONARIES TO CHINA

HARRIET & ELIZABETH SAUNDERS

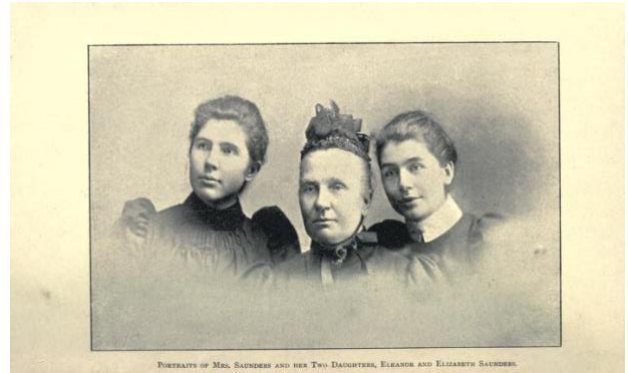
When former Kew residents, Harriette Elinor (Nellie) Saunders (1871–95) and Elizabeth Maud (Topsy) Saunders (1873–95), arrived at Fuzhou (Foochow) in November 1893, they were the first missionaries to arrive in China under the auspices of the recently formed Church Missionary Association of Victoria. After little more than eighteen months in China, they were among nine British adults and two children murdered by Chinese rebels at a hill-station near the village of Huashan (Hua Sang) in Fujian Province.

The story of Nellie and Topsy Saunders time in China was first published in a compilation of their letters to their mother, Eliza Saunders, titled *The Sister Martyrs of Ku Cheng – Memoir and Letters of Eleanor and Elizabeth Saunders (“Nellie” and “Topsy”) of Melbourne*, edited by D.M. Berry. Their letters are compelling reading, conveying their experience of missionary life in nineteenth century China through the eyes of two very observant and devoutly Christian young women. This book is now accessible online.

Their story was republished for the 1988 centenary of St Hilary’s Church Kew, in an abridged version of D.M. Berry’s book titled, *Letters from China 1893-1895 : the story of the sister martyrs of Ku Cheng*, edited by Keith Cole. A copy of this book is held in the Kew Historical Society collection. The ‘Kucheng Massacre’ has also been extensively researched by Australian National University academic Ian Welch. His research has been published online as *The Flower Mountain murders: A “Missionary Case”*

The two sisters and their parents, merchant and commission agent, John Alexander Saunders (1826–77) and his second wife Eliza Saunders née Arabin (1833–1915), a respectable Brisbane boarding house proprietor before her marriage, lived in Brighton with four children from his first marriage until shortly after the birth of Elizabeth in July 1873. John Saunders, having recently terminated his Melbourne business partnership, then moved his family ‘up-country’.

In September 1876, newspapers reported his purchase of the Limestone Ridge and Ardno Stations on the South Australian border, west of Casterton, and advised that he was moving there from Geelong. In September of the following year the stations were put up for auction, and in October 1877 John Saunders died suddenly of an aneurism at his home in Mt Gambier. Following the death of her husband Eliza Saunders returned to Melbourne with the children and by 1879 she was listed in the Sands & McDougall directory as living in Connor Street; soon to be re-named Normanby Road, Kew.



PORTRAITS OF MRS SAUNDERS AND HER TWO DAUGHTERS, ELEANOR AND ELIZABETH SAUNDERS
Frontispiece, *The Sister martyrs of Ku Cheng* (1988).

The Saunders children apparently enjoyed a healthy outdoor life around *The Willows* and became known to their neighbours as ‘the paddock children’. In 1887, Nellie Saunders was awarded the Senior German prize, the Mister Clezy prize for Latin, and shared the English Language and Literature prize at Mrs Colvin Clark’s Grace Park Ladies School in Hawthorn. The following year, she passed the Melbourne University matriculation exam.

When St. Hilary’s Church of England, on the corner of John and Rowland Streets, Kew, opened in 1889, the Saunders family joined the congregation. The new church had come about because some members of the Holy Trinity, Kew congregation, had felt the need for a church run on more conservative evangelical lines.

The evangelical movement in the Church of England emerged from eighteenth century religious revivals and emphasised domestic religion, especially family prayer and the moral reform of society above high-church concerns with church order and ritual. The movement provided large scale support for missions, schools and charitable societies for the poor. A network of evangelical social reformers, known as the Clapham Sect, were instrumental in the campaigns in the British Parliament to abolish slavery, and less successfully, to provide for the welfare of the indigenous people in British colonies. The Church Missionary Society (CMS), founded in 1799 as an evangelical alternative to the high-church Society for the Propagation of the Bible in Foreign Parts, embraced the words of *Mark 16:15* “Go ye into the world, and preach the gospel to all creatures”.

Elizabeth Saunders undertook confirmation training with the first incumbent of St. Hilary’s, Kew, the Reverend Harry Stanley Mercer, a notable evangelical preacher.

MISSIONARIES TO CHINA (from page 6)

Around this time, the Saunders sisters and their mother became interested in serving as missionaries. In 1891, they moved from Kew to Caulfield where the Rev H.B. McCartney was the Victorian agent of the Church of England Zenana Missionary Society (CEZMS). This organisation had originally sent women missionaries to India to work in *zenanas*, those parts of houses in India where the women of high-caste families were segregated, and had since extended its activities to China.

Following visits to Melbourne by Hudson Taylor, founder of the China Inland Mission, and a delegation representing the English Church Missionary Society, the sisters and their mother conceived a plan to sell *The Willows* and serve as self-funded honorary missionaries in China. The girls were accepted as missionary candidates by the newly formed Church Missionary Association of Victoria. They commenced nursing training at the Melbourne Hospital as well as theological training to prepare them for their service as missionaries. Eliza Saunders intended to accompany her daughters as a housekeeper, however the failure of the 1890s banking system, and the subsequent economic depression in Victoria, caused difficulty in finding a buyer for *The Willows*, and prevented her from accompanying her daughters to China in 1893.

After arriving at Fuzhou, the location of the headquarters for the Church Missionary Society in Fujian province, the sisters then made a 90 mile [150 kilometre] journey by boat up the Min River to Shuikou followed by 30 miles [50 kilometres] along a narrow foot path travelling by sedan chair and walking to reach the Gutian (Ku Cheng) Mission Station. There they joined the Reverend Robert Stewart, whom they had already met when he was a member of the CMS delegation in Melbourne and his wife Louisa Stewart, both missionaries of long experience. Thirteen women from the CEZMS were also at the Gutian Mission Station. Under their supervision, the sisters began learning the Chinese language and became involved in the activities of the station including teaching classes of local children and assisting with nursing and first aid. The sisters adopted Chinese dress, which was favoured by the Stewarts and the CEMZS women. In an early letter to her mother Nellie explained "... in China you must not have a waist. They think an Englishwoman's figure nothing more than shocking. It is much the same to them as if we were to see a lady parading the streets in tights; so you must wear your things very loose."

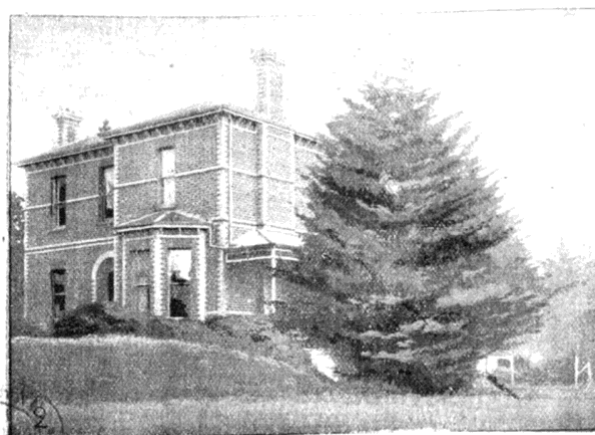
Following the Second Opium War of 1856–60 the *Treaty of Tianjin* (1858) enforced the admission of the opium trade from British India on China. It also opened up the interior of the empire to European travellers, merchants and missionaries. There was much Chinese opposition to the opium trade and foreigners, including missionaries, who were generally unpopular with the Chinese Imperial Government and intelligentsia.

The period that the Saunders sisters were at the Gutian Mission also coincided with the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–5, in which China lost control of Korea and Taiwan (Formosa) to Japan. There had also been a breakdown of civil order in the area.

In March 1895, the Chinese District Magistrate invited the missionaries behind the walls of Gutian for their safety, advising that an attack by a local rebel movement known as the 'Vegetarians' was expected. After three days the city was reopened but on the recommendation of the British and American Consuls in Fuzhou the foreign women and children moved there for safety. The CMS missionaries returned to Gutian in May–June, and in early July, walked 12 miles up to a summer hill-station at Huashan, to escape the summer heat.

On the morning of 1 August 1895, a band of Vegetarians attacked the Huashan hill-station. Nine adults and the two Stewart daughters died in the attack and two houses were burned. The remains of the victims were returned to Fuzhou and buried in the Missionary Cemetery there on 6 August 1885.

In September 1897, Eliza Saunders left Sydney on the *S.S. Australian* to travel to Fuzhou, under the auspices of the Dublin Missionary Association. She remained there as a missionary housekeeper, close to her daughters' graves until her death in 1915, when she joined them in the Fuzhou Missionary Cemetery. It would appear that she had been unable to find a buyer for *The Willows* before she left. In the Kew Rate Book for 1913, Eliza Saunders is listed as the owner, her address is recorded as 'China'.



THE SAUNDERS FAMILY HOME, *THE WILLOWS*,
NORMANBY ROAD, KEW
Weekly Times, 17 August 1895, p.10.

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KEW! KEW!

MAKING SENSE OF A SUBDIVISION

Town planning in the suburbs of Melbourne, especially when proposals conflict with public amenity or with heritage controls, is currently a contentious issue in the City of Boroondara. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there is less evidence of opposition to development.

Historic subdivision plans and real estate flyers reveal a number of aspects of urban development and history. The Kew Historical Society's collection of these plans, as well as advertisements extracted from magazines, cover key aspects of community development and the architectural history of Kew and Kew East as well as surrounding suburbs. So, it was with keen anticipation that on Thursday 28 November 2024, I collected an old subdivision plan, that was being donated to our collection by the Royal Historical Society of Victoria.

Often, subdivision plans have names such as the *Burke Road Junction Estate*, whereas others, such as in the newly donated plan, lack a true title. This makes it more difficult to discover when the plan was issued, in the absence of a printed date. The plan however revealed a number of clues which made the task of research and interpretation more interesting.

Headed with the exclamations *KEW! KEW!*, the plan identified its primary geographic location as the land immediately north and south of the Normanby Road Railway Station Reserve. The plan contains a visual map with named streets along which the '16 Choice Allotments' were to be located. The named streets bordering the allotments, albeit bisected by the 'Kew Railway Siding' included Belmore Road, Normanby Road, Gladstone Street, and Bulleen Road. The 16 allotments, clustered around Welsh Street, which is shown as extending from Belmore Road to Gladstone Street.

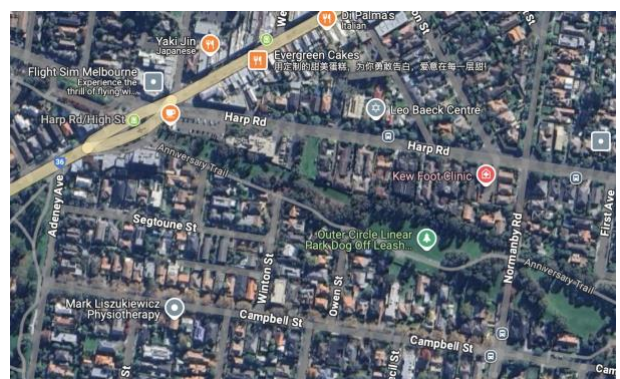
Other features on the plan that could assist in locating the area on a modern map include: the words 'Tramway Terminus' in Bulleen Road, which at that time was west of the *Harp of Erin* (located on the plan as on the corner of Bulleen Road and Belmore Road); the names of existing property owners who held land surrounding the subdivision, including G. Smith Esq., Mathew Maher Esq., and Maurice Neligan Esq.; and that the auction was held on the grounds of the Normanby Road Railway Siding, the platforms of which are shown on the right side of the plan.

The above information may be more likely to mystify the viewer of the plan rather than edifying them. Yes, the *Harp of Erin* is on the corner of Bulleen Road [now High Street], but Belmore Road begins at Burke Road, rather than at the Harp.



Nor does the southern boundary of the plan make sense as Gladstone Street is further west along Bulleen Road, opposite the Boroondara General Cemetery. Even the tiny street, designated as Park Street, at the bottom left of the plan, might not make much sense. There is a Park Crescent currently running between Derby Street and Asquith Street, and a Park Avenue in the area on which the Kew Asylum was formerly located. But these are nowhere near the area designated in the plan.

The State Library of Victoria (SLV) also holds a copy of this untitled subdivision. The SLV dates the subdivision to circa 1888, and its catalogue record queries whether Belmore Road is today's Harp Road and that perhaps Welsh Street might be Owen Street, which runs between Campbell Street and the Outer Circle Linear Reserve.



KEW! KEW! (from page 8)

So how did Wilkinson & Permewan, Architects & Licensed Surveyors, of 128 Collins Street West, err so drastically in misnaming the streets?

Perhaps this area of Kew in the 1880s was a wilderness and they were just guessing where streets were and how they were named. It might also result from subdivisions being private town planning ventures, or that the auctioneers – Swetnam, in association with S.B. Cash & Sons – were inventing the names of streets without authority, as street names needed to be proclaimed in the *Victorian Government Gazette*, before they were legally recognised as such.

So, the confusion may be the fault of the surveyors or auctioneers, however they are not the only parties who make contemporary interpretations of old plans challenging, as governments, both state and local, have responsibility for the naming and re-naming of streets. Bulleen Road [gazetted 1865] now High Street [re-named 1888]; Belmore Road is Harp Road [gazetted 1865], and Park Street [gazetted 1865].

Perhaps the confusion of street names also resulted from the construction of the Outer Circle railway, which cut diagonally across and through the traditional subdivision model, instituted by Robert Hoddle as Victorian Surveyor General in the years following the colonial settlement of Melbourne. Construction of the northern section of the railway began in 1888 and was completed in 1891. The huge Normanby Station and siding, as viewed on the plan, stretches for a considerable distance on either side of Normanby Road [originally gazetted Connor Street; re-named 1875].

But to return to the current names of the streets listed on the subdivision plan. The street erroneously named Gladstone Street on the plan might be either Segtoun Street, Campbell Street, or Argyle Road; most probably Campbell Street if the scale of the plan and the layout of the allotments are to be believed. In this interpretation Segtoun Street was still to be created when the plan was printed, while the present day Winton or Owen Streets are the possible candidates for the plan's Welsh Street.

When a member of the public asks a question such as what is the history of my house and when was it built and by whom, name changes of streets, as well as the re-numbering of houses in Kew streets in 1915, can lead to some very tricky and lengthy detective work.

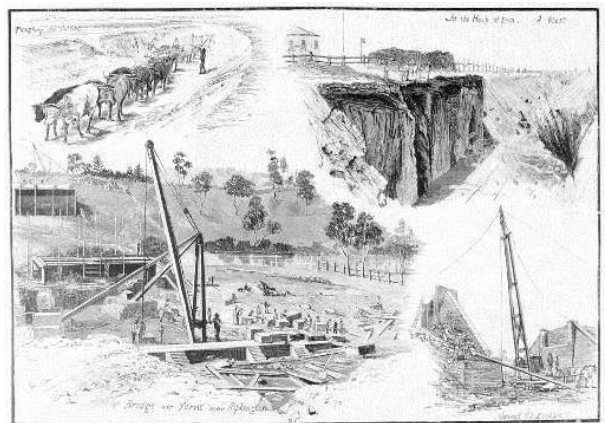
But the plan has some other stories to tell, which reveal much about the social history of Kew in the final decades of the nineteenth century. As previously noted, the cataloguer of the plan at the State Library suggested that the subdivision might have taken place in about 1888, at the height of the land boom and the expansion of what were then the outer suburbs of Melbourne. The use of a Perpetual Calendar confirms this is in fact the year.

Originally, Lot 84 was purchased in the 16 October 1851 Crown Land Sales by C.B. Reid and A. Motherwell. This enormous allotment of 146 acres cost the pair 69 shillings per acre, and was bounded by what is currently Harp Road, Adeney Avenue, Burke Road, and with a southern boundary just north of Park Hill Road. Lot 84 was considerably larger than the subdivision in the *KEW! KEW!* plan, so it must have been further subdivided during the second half of the nineteenth century. Bonwick, in his *A Sketch of Boroondara* (1858) contends that this was a common practice among land speculators and that the early sales of crown lands often changed hands within four years. However, Lot 84 was not subdivided until July 1868, a portion of the lot becoming known as 'Motherwell's Paddock'.

In advertising the subdivision, the auctioneers noted that the land owner was John Welsh Esq who was to give his name to the street, at least in the planning stage, but not later. Surrounding his landholding were those of G. Smith Esq, Mathew Maher Esq and Maurice Nelligan Esq. Of these four men, the landholdings of Welsh and Nelligan were bisected by the planned Outer Circle railway, presumably making their large landholdings of lesser value.

What the flat plan does not show is that the land rises to the hill on which the Harp of Erin is located. As the hill was too steep for locomotives on the line to travel, a cutting was required with a bridge above it for pedestrian and vehicular traffic along Bulleen Road. The illustration below, from a contemporary journal, includes on the upper right a view of the cutting which was created by the use of dynamite.

The idyllic landscape surrounding the area must have been a nightmare during the development of railway infrastructure, and while public transport was to become a selling point to the purchasers of residential allotments, such as those illustrated in *KEW! KEW!*, existing landowners, apart from those like John Welsh who intended to capitalise on the development, must have had their lives upturned.



ASHWICK PREPARATORY SCHOOL FOR BOYS

The Hawthorn Historical Society recently received a query from Sue Goss, a resident of the United Kingdom, about a private school her father, Sidney Cooke, attended in about 1915. It was called Ashwick Preparatory School for Boys, and was in Barkers Road, Kew.

Ashwick Preparatory School for Boys was opened by Reverend Clifford H. Nash in 1913. However, it closed two years later in 1915, on Nash's acceptance of the offer to be Minister of the Prahran Independent Church. The school was in a house on the south-east corner of Barkers Road and Brougham Place (now Daniell Place). Built circa 1882, the house is a red brick, two-storey residence, facing south to Barkers Road.



'ASHWICK', 2 DANIELL PLACE, KEW
J.L. Torpey, photographer, 2004

Sidney Cooke's glowing report for 1915 is now in the 'Wills Family Archive Collection' of the National Library of Australia. In 1914, aged seven, Sidney caught scarlet fever and because of his treatment became profoundly deaf. Despite this handicap, he learned to speak, lip read and was back at school in 1915. After Ashwick school closed in 1915, Sidney moved to Camberwell Grammar School and, later, Melbourne Grammar School.

His 1915 report states:

Will be a leader... Strong sunny nature. Hope and Promise. ...Has done excellent work in every subject during the term. Alert and interested in Physical Exercises... Considering his disabilities his school life is amazing. Great achievements.

Sidney Cooke's family lived in Alfred Street, Kew, which was within walking distance of the school. His father was Bertram Cooke of Sydney Cooke Ltd., and the uncle of his mother Rene (née Wills) was Tom Wills, the Australian cricketer and founder of Australian Rules football. Sue Goss's great grandfather, Horatio Spencer Wills, and family, lived nearby in a house built in 1900 facing Wrixon Street, which is now part of the Carey Baptist Grammar School complex.

The aforementioned headmaster of the school was Reverend Clifford H. Nash. A mercurial and controversial character, Clifford Nash was born in Brixton, London in 1866 and after attending Christ Church College, Cambridge, he was training to be an Anglican priest when he was accused of taking an unwelcome interest in his fiancé's younger sister.

Nash was then posted as a curate to Huddersfield, Yorkshire and was a teacher at a boys' school. Rumours of further misbehaviour led to his migration to Tasmania in 1895. After two years 'labouring' in Tasmania, Nash was invited by Bishop S. Smith of Sydney to be Superintendent of the Mission Church, Ultimo, and assistant at St Philip's Church, Sydney.

He married Louise Pearse at St Philip's in 1899. From 1900 to 1906, he was vicar at St Columb's Anglican church, Hawthorn, and then from 1906 to 1907, vicar at Christ Church, Geelong. He resigned as vicar in 1907 because of accusations of indiscrete behaviour with a young female member of his household. His extraordinary career resumed in 1908 when he was re-licensed by Archbishop Lowther Clarke as Rector of St Paul's, Sale, and Archdeacon of Gippsland. Nash was to resign again, because of John Norton's open letter in *The Truth* in October 1908, that accused Archbishop Clarke of raising the rumours of Nash's misbehaviour because he was jealous of Nash's popularity.

These rumours, initiated in Huddersfield and Hawthorn, were dismissed by an inquiry by the Cathedral Chapter. Norton's intemperate letter prompted libel action by Archbishop Clarke that resulted in his having to pay damages and issue a public apology.

Nash was re-licensed in 1912, undertaking the role of principal at Ashwick Preparatory School for Boys between 1913 and 1915. His resignation from that role in 1915 was due to his acceptance of an offer to be Minister of the Prahran Independent Church. In addition to his ecclesiastical roles, he was also the principal classics master at Caulfield Grammar School.

Nash was re-licensed in 1926, and was appointed Canon of St James Old Cathedral, a position he held until his retirement in 1942. He died in 1958, aged ninety-two, survived by his wife and four of their six children. He is buried in Dromana Cemetery.

Space is my constraint; I can only provide a summary of Nash's career. The reader is referred to Malcolm Woolrich's *Shedding Light* (2023) for more salacious detail.

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100 YEARS AGO

DECEMBER 1924

PROVIDING FOR SWIMMERS – BATHS IN THE SUBURBS
Kew Council has under consideration the question of building baths, and the city engineer has prepared specifications for a closed-in basin which, it is expected, will be constructed soon. A site has been acquired at the intersection of High street and Disraeli street. The basin will be sufficiently long for racing.
The Argus, 2 December 1924, p.15

BUYING A BRIDGE – KEW AND HEIDELBERG’S £4000 PURCHASE
The Kew Council has decided to join with the Heidelberg Council in the purchase of the temporary bridge used during the construction of the new bridge to cross the Yarra at Church Street.

Yesterday afternoon three members of the Kew Council and the Town Clerk met representatives of

the Heidelberg Council, and inspected the proposed site near the north-end of Princess street, Kew
The Herald, 17 December 1924, p.9

A FACTORY FOR KEW.

Kew Council has been asked by Kodak Pty Ltd to approve the erection of a large factory on about one hundred acres of land at East Kew near the river. It is believed that a majority of the council will agree to the factory being erected unless the ratepayers of Kew bring strong pressure to bear in the interests of their fine city.

The Age, 23 December 1924, p.7

DAVID WHITE, 2024

MASONIC LODGES

BROTHER E.P. KENNEWELL

Kew, in the nineteenth century had a number of friendly societies, many of which had relatively short lives. These societies, such as The Loyal Kew MUIOOF, provided social benefits to their members. The first masonic lodge in Kew was the Pentalpha Lodge No.90 (Vaughan, 1960, p157.), while the two-storey Masonic Hall [now demolished] in Walpole Street became a local landmark.

While many local masons were members of local lodges, such as the Pentalpha Lodge, it was also normal for residents to attend lodges outside Kew’s municipal boundaries. This may have resulted from a resident’s relocation from another part of the city to Kew, or that the lodge they attended was closer to their workplace.

In 2024, Suellen Kennewell, the granddaughter of Ernest P. Kennewell, donated items of his masonic ‘dress’ and medals to KHS. Bro. Kennewell was initiated into the Kitchener Lodge No.240 on 5 November 1921. He moved to 24 Irymple Street, Kew East on 20 May 1926. His house was a State Savings Bank house, using design n.9. His house was typical of the timber framed dwellings available under the *Provisions of the Housing and Reclamation Act*, 1920. In addition to his masonic apron, cufflinks, and tie pin, the donation also includes an inscribed gold Honour of Esteem medallion issued to him by the Lodge, dated 4 May 1935.

Kew’s research files contain information about Masonic Lodges in Kew but otherwise its collection has no artefacts relating to former members. These artefacts, owned by Bro. Kennewell have a clear line of provenance relating to Kew which has been provided by his granddaughter, the donor.



BRO. E.P. KENNEWELL, KITCHENER LODGE NO.240
Gift of Suellen Kennewell, 2024

KHS

In addition to these items, Suellen has previously donated archival material to the Local History Collection of the Boroondara Library Service. These items and archives are thus spread across two local complimentary collections.

ROBERT BAKER

Kew Historical Society Inc.
PO Box 3147
Cotham VIC 3101

MEMBERSHIP & DONATIONS

KEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY – KEEPING ALIVE KEW HISTORY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

The Society has operated continuously for 65 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 (2024-25 annual fee \$25)
- Household membership (2024-25 annual fee \$35)
- Student membership (2024-25 annual fee \$10)
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- 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.
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Signed: _____ Date: _____

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

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