



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

## Reaching out to the community

This year has been one of consolidation and marks my fourth and last year in office as President. During this period much effort has gone into the Kew Court House and Police Station project, which came to fruition in 2011, thanks to the good offices of the City of Boroondara.

The Kew Court House and Police Station has been and continues to operate successfully as a community hub and our room there is open to the public and being manned for two days a week. In addition we have been very much involved in the special Kew Festival presentations that took place and the first anniversary of the official opening of the building. Among the highlights was the first of our intended annual McIntyre Lecture.

It is also pleasing to note that this building itself has given rise to two awards: the Victorian Planning Minister's Heritage Award given to the City of Boroondara and the local community, represented by the Kew Historical Society, for reinvigorating the Kew Court House and Police Station as an arts and culture centre, and the Victorian Sustainable Cities Awards – Community and Government Partnership Award for the Kew Court House and Police Station refurbishment project.

On the subject of awards, we were pleased to also see Dione McIntyre receive an Award of Merit from the Royal Historical Society of Victoria for her work over the years in the area of local history.

Financially we are today in a much healthier position than we were four years ago. This is in part due to the increasingly successful quarterly book sales. Most of these books come from the Boroondara libraries and sales now exceed \$2,000 per quarter with half the proceeds going back into the library service.

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HISTORY AND HERITAGE ONLINE – Websites of interest to those studying the history and heritage of the City of Boroondara

The Secretary and the Treasurer of the Kew Historical Society 'step back in time' during History Week at the Kew Court House.





Villa Alba

*These activities have received fresh impetus following on from the Vision 2015 workshop we held which helped define our future directions as an historical society*

We now have Deductible Gift Recipient status that will enable us to provide tax deductible receipts for donations over \$2. This should very much help in fundraising in the future.

We have also been fortunate in receiving a number of grants for equipment and specialised furnishings that has enabled the ongoing upgrading and expansion of our equipment and facilities. And along with this, we have been active in upgrading the skills and knowledge of various volunteers, so that they can better perform the new tasks that are presenting.

Administratively, we have revised our Constitution and By-Laws under which we operate and so now have an up-to-date framework within which to operate and regulate activities. These activities have received fresh impetus following on from the *Vision 2015 workshop* we held which helped define our future directions as an historical society. There will hopefully be a number of activity groups dealing with such diverse areas as research, cataloguing our collections, storage and digitisation of records. This is in addition to maintaining our service to the public in meeting their enquiries. This however is only the beginning and more is in the pipeline to be done.

This has been an active four years in which a great deal has been achieved. Over this period there has been an active and committed Committee without whose assistance much of what we have achieved would have been that more difficult. As three of us are retiring from all offices this year, Graeme, Joan and myself, there is a real changing of the guard, so special thanks to them and the remaining Committee members, and good wishes to those elected to fill the empty places.

Finally I would like to thank all of the Society's members for their help and support over the past four years. It has been a privilege to occupy this chair in your company.

David Benwell (President 2011–12)

#### MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

2012–2013

President Alex Wilson OAM

Vice President/s Dione McIntyre / Philip Slobom

Secretary Judith Vimpani

Treasurer Margaret Robinson

Archivist Dorothy Benyei

Assistant Secretary Robert Baker

Committee members Don Garden / Rosemary Smart

#### MONTHLY MEETINGS

The Kew Historical Society holds monthly meetings in the Phyllis Hore Room at the rear of the Kew Library. Meetings are held at 8:00PM on the second Wednesday of the month unless otherwise announced. Refreshments are provided. Meetings are open to members and non-members.

#### KEW COURT HOUSE

Members of the Society played a key role in the preservation and restoration of the Court House. A History Centre at the Court House, 188 High Street, Kew is staffed by members on Tuesdays 10:00AM–4:00PM and Saturdays 10:00AM–1:00PM. At the Centre you can ask questions about Kew's history and heritage and view displays of some of the Society's collection.

#### NEWSLETTER

This newsletter is published quarterly and is distributed to all members. Some additional copies are made available to the community. If you would like a copy of a particular issue, please contact the Assistant Secretary at [info@kewhistory.com.au](mailto:info@kewhistory.com.au)

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PO Box 175 Kew VIC 3101

## SOCIETY ACTIVITIES

HISTORY WEEK  
20-27 OCTOBER

The Kew Historical Society participated in History Week for the first time in many years. Activities were centred at the Court House and included a photographic exhibition 'Step Back in Time', curated by Ms. Eli Newton, Arts & Culture, City of Boroondara. Photographs were supplied by Members of the Boroondara Historical Societies Association and the Friends of Boroondara (Kew) Cemetery. Judith and Margaret had worked with Eli on the original concept.



Judith & Margaret behind the clerk of court's desk

On the Tuesday, Saturday and Sunday, Margaret and Judith were at the Court House in their costumes taking tours around the restored building. With minimum publicity, they were able to tell 38 people, aged 21 to 80, the history of this iconic complex. Thanks go to the KHS rostered staff, to QArts and e.motion21 for their support.



## A VISIT TO KEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

In October, at the invitation of the grade 1 & 2 teachers, Margaret and Judith visited Kew Primary School. Students were studying 'Changes over the years' in the local area – investigating old buildings and clothes. You can imagine their excitement when two ladies dressed in costumes from the early twentieth century walked across their playground at lunchtime.

Margaret showed students slides that included early photos of the school, fashions and transport. The horse-drawn tram also intrigued the boys. A slate, with chalk, was passed around for everybody to practice writing. Students also viewed other items from the Society's collection relating to schooling and cooking.

## PAST MEETINGS

In the final quarter of 2012, the Society invited three speakers covering different aspects of Kew's varied economic, political and cultural landscape to speak to the Society's members and visitors.

## SHOPKEEPING IN KEW

Mr. Leo Blake  
12 September 2012

Leo Blake and his family have built a highly successful supermarket business over the last 30 years of which Leo's Supermarket in Kew will be most familiar to our readers. Leo briefly described the history of his family's business and talked about the importance of differentiating from the big supermarkets. He has done this by specialising in local products. Initially he visited local markets and now he has a reputation for supporting small enterprises. He mentioned that he is working on plans to extend the supermarket as part of a 10-year refurbishment.

## PLANNING AND HERITAGE IN BOROONDARA

Ms. Michelle Wyatt and Mr. Mark Stevenson, Planning Department, City of Boroondara,  
10 October 2012

Michelle Wyatt and Mark Stevenson spoke instead of the advertised speaker, the Mayor of Boroondara, Cr. Henry Kreutz, who was unable to speak due to a Council Meeting. Michelle provided a comprehensive overview of previous heritage reviews and history reports in Kew, Camberwell and Hawthorn, and since amalgamation within the City of Boroondara. Mark provided an illustrated presentation on how decisions are made about planning applications, and the ways in which these are judged according to established heritage criteria to protect the Council's heritage precincts.

## KEW HIGH SCHOOL'S FIFTIETH

Ms. Val Bourke  
14 November 2012

Val, a member of the Society spoke to members about the forthcoming history of the school that will be published in 2013. She described the special challenges that a paucity of written sources has caused and the consequent dependence of the history on newspaper accounts and oral history. She also described the reasons for the expansion of secondary schools in Melbourne in the post-war period and the particular fight for a high school in Kew. The first high school students began classes at East Kew PS in 1962. The new high school building commenced in 1963 and the first classes in the new building were in 1964.



Val Bourke

# FROM THE ARCHIVES

The year 2011–12 has been a fulfilling year for our Archives section in many ways, not least of which was the establishment of a visual presence in the Court House.

735 visitors have come through the doors since our 2011 opening day, and our Day Book is a delight to read. Some folk only want to look around but the giving and receiving of information on Tuesdays and Saturdays, which are the days we are there, is of great importance.

We have been encouraging people to write their own life history and hope to do more of this. Many people do not want to be 'taped', but are willing to do their own writing. Then there are the gifts to our collection of memorabilia, often very exciting.

Many of our members 'drop in' for a chat and a cup of tea – everyone is welcome – and from time to time 'extra duty' members would be helpful – remember it is our room and quite often there are small or large jobs to be done.

I give thanks for all those past and present members, office bearers and committees who have faithfully worked since 1958 to collect and preserve the history of this beautiful area.

But there remains much to be done, and whilst we present members cannot live in the past, we must learn from it, and understand that a friendly volunteer organisation such as the Kew Historical Society has a vital role to play in the local community.

This past year, much time spent in our Archive Room behind the Library has been in research and filing. Our clothing collection is currently being reviewed and listed with the assistance of Dione McIntyre, Margaret Robinson and Judith Vimpani. Many house sale notices still require filing. There is also much to do in in general filing and in provenancing donations to the collection.

I wish to make a special mention of Louise Pitcher who retired this year after 17 years as leader of the Kew Library Service. Her co-operation and help at all times, together with that of all the Kew Library staff, has been greatly appreciated.

Once again, I thank you for your friendship and encouragement.

**Dorothy Benyei**  
Archivist

Field Place



## LOST AND WANTED

It is frequently the case that researchers cannot find illustrations or photographs of Kew's great mansions, many of which have now been demolished. While we are lucky to have a number of photographs of Tara Hall, there seem to be none of John Carson's 'Clutha' (1856-1939), which once stood nearby in Studley Park Road. The Society has no photographs or illustrations of this house. Nor seemingly does the State Library of Victoria. Do any of our members or friends know of any that we can borrow or copy for our archives?

The Kindergarten Teachers College, aka the Institute for Early Childhood Development in Madden Street has now been demolished. It was built on the site of one of the great mansions of Kew, **Mooroolbeek**, home of Sir Frank Madden MLA. Mooroolbeek itself was only demolished as late as 1968. Dorothy Rogers records that the Madden Coat of Arms from the old house was set into the façade of the new building. Panels from the stairs depicting Australian birds were also incorporated\*. No word of their fate has reached the Society. Does anyone know about what happened to them? Or do you have any pictures of Mooroolbeek that you wish to share with the Society?

\* Rogers D 1973, *A History of Kew*, p.173.

# GALLIPOLI AND BEYOND: APRIL 2015

ALEX WILSON OAM



World War I Memorial, Kew Junction

A meeting of members of the Boroondara Historical Societies Association, together with a representative from The Friends of Boroondara (Kew) Cemetery, held an inaugural meeting in October 2012 at the Surrey Hills Neighbourhood Centre to discuss 'Gallipoli and Beyond: April 2015'.

The following Historical Societies were represented at the meeting: Balwyn Historical Society, Camberwell Historical Society, Canterbury History Group, Kew Historical Society, and Surrey Hills Historical Society. An apology was received from the Kew RSL.

The Societies met to plan and discuss support for the development of well-coordinated activities within the City of Boroondara to mark the 100th Anniversary of the Landing at Gallipoli in April 2015.

The meeting developed a range of ideas and a delegation from the Boroondara Historical Societies Association then met with representatives of the City of Boroondara in November to co-ordinate plans for the commemoration of the Centenary. The plans involve developing a display at the Court House together with smaller displays at local libraries, talks, power point presentations for schools and a bus tour focusing on the War Memorials in Boroondara and the Boroondara General Cemetery. A series of articles and photographs will promote the anniversary and the activities in local newspapers. The articles will cover the impact of World War I on Boroondara, the role of women, the conscription debate and the development of an Australian national identity.

Some of the fiercest fighting of World War I took place at Gallipoli. Nine Victoria Crosses were awarded during that unforgettable campaign. The ripple effect of Gallipoli impacted on practically every home and family in Kew, and many a tear was shed during that terrible period.

If you have any memorabilia that you may wish to lend or donate that could be displayed during the 100th anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli in April 2015 please contact us on [info@kewhistory.com.au](mailto:info@kewhistory.com.au).

A member has already shown us a copy of *The Anzac Memorial 1916*. A tear stained letter marks page 62, and highlights the sorrow expressed in the poem, 'The Mother', printed there.

'The Mother'

He was all I had to give:  
Now, life has nothing for me;  
For my heart lies dead in a nameless  
grave  
On far Gallipoli.  
Why should I dry my tears,  
Or talk of victory?  
For my heart lies in a nameless grave  
On far Gallipoli  
God guard all mothers' sons  
Fighting for liberty,  
But my heart lies dead in a nameless  
grave  
On far Gallipoli.

Dowell O'Reilly

*Anzac Memorial 1916*, William Brooks & Co  
Ltd., p.62.

*The Gallipoli League of Anzacs required a band for an Anzac service in 1937, and the Kew Brass Band was selected to play. They gave such satisfaction that they were appointed official band to the League, playing at Bundoora, Mont Park, Caulfield and other Repatriation Hospitals. The League decided to attend the Anzac march in Sydney in 1938, and the Band went with them.*

Paraphrased from Rogers D 1973: *A History of Kew*, p.182.

# THE MYSTERY OF BARKERS TRACK

ALEX WILSON OAM

## ARE YOU A HISTORY SLEUTH?

Have you ever asked yourself as you travelled eastwards along Barkers Road, why it stops at a 'T' intersection at Burke Road?

Which lends itself to the next question. Did Barkers Road ever extend further east in some shape or form?

Was there ever a Barkers Track sometime in the past?

And you may well have asked yourself the next question. Where did the name Barker come from?

Was it named after the owner of a vineyard near Burke Road? <sup>1</sup>

Was it the name of the track that led to the man who sold bark? <sup>1</sup>

Could it have been the name of the track used by the timber cutters who operated in the Messmate Stringybark forests of Nunawading?

Or again could it have been the name of the overland stock route that lead through the inhospitable wilderness to Barker's Heifer Station?

Was the termination of Barkers Road at Burke Road the price it had to pay for the privilege of conforming to the expanding requirements of Melbourne?

Man walking along a road (c1910) – Series: 'Yallambie' views, now Preshill School, Barkers Road, Kew; State Library of Victoria.



### PIONEERS

They came of bold and roving stock that  
would not fixed abide;  
They were the sons of field and flock since  
e'er they learnt to ride,  
We may not hope to see such men in  
these degenerate years  
As those explorers of the bush -- the brave  
old pioneers.

Banjo Paterson

Paterson AB 1896, 'Pioneers' [Stanza 1], *The Town and Country Journal*.

'Barkers Track' is just one of several research projects being undertaken by the Kew Historical Society Research Group lead by Dione McIntyre. This particular project follows on from the success of the Society's free display in March this year, at the Kew Community Festival 'From lonely Bush Camp to thriving Metropolis'. It is expected that when the Barkers Track research is completed, it will show the significant role that those 'brave old pioneers' which Banjo Paterson wrote about played in the early days of Kew, using the riverside track from Kew Junction to Warrandyte and the shortcut stock routes close to Princess Street and Denmark Street.<sup>2</sup> It is expected that the research will also give us a better understanding of how the consequences of a dispute over 'Elgar's Special Survey' impacted on Barkers Track and Barkers Road.

Other aspects of the Barkers Road research touch on the sad story of the little six-year-old boy, who after being sent to his upstairs bedroom for punishment sought to escape detention. Tying some sheets into a makeshift rope he climbed out of the window and accidentally hanged himself. Over the years passersby in Barkers Road claim to have seen his ghost.

Other research is looking into the story about the old unoccupied two-storey Georgian-style house that stood near Barkers Railway Station. After several reports of uncanny events, including the rattling of chains and the spooky flashing of lights at night, the Kew Police pounced and arrested an absconder who had taken up residence and had become the local poultry poacher.

1. McWilliam, G 1975, 'Hawthorn Historical Society Newsletter'

2. Lay Dr. M 2003, *Melbourne Miles: The Story of Melbourne Roads*,



52 Davis Street, Kew

# ELEANOR HAIDEE SIMEON (c1822– 1910)

ROBERT BAKER

To be Jewish in Kew in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, was to be part of a small group of individuals and families. It is not until 1881 that a census records Jews living in Kew, even though Jews had been among the first settlers in Victoria. The 1881 Victorian Census records that ten Jewish individuals resided within the municipality on the night of the Census. In 1891, the number had increased to 45. By 1901 it had declined again to 20. Neighbouring Hawthorn, with a significantly larger population, had greater numbers of Jewish residents. Hawthorn's Jewish population increased from three in 1881, to 108 in 1891, and slightly declined to 98 in 1901. In this period, Hawthorn counted among its Jewish residents John Monash, Isaac Isaacs and Eleanor Haidee Simeon. Eleanor was also to live, die and be buried in Kew.

Some of the details of Eleanor Simeon's life are surprisingly well known; others have remained until now undocumented. She merits three paragraphs at the end of the entry of her husband James Simeon (1815–1874) in John Levi's chronicle of the lives of more than 1,500 Australian Jewish lives, ending with Levi's '... she was not buried as a Jew'.

More has been recorded of the life of the first husband of Eleanor Simeon than of Eleanor. That James Simeon had testified in trials at the Old Bailey in 1831, had contributed to the Sydney Synagogue Building Fund in 1839, had opened a clothing store in Collins Street, and his involvement in various legal cases is all on the public record. His life as a Jew and his commitment to Judaism is unquestioned. All the more odd must appear his marriage to Eleanor Haidee Saunders in St. David's Church in Hobart in March 1843.

This first marriage between James and Eleanor across faiths was to have long standing repercussions. After the marriage, they returned to Melbourne, where James Simeon is known to be a founding member of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation in 1844.

From 1844 until 1868, Eleanor gave birth to ten children: Frederick Peter, Michael, Marcus Adler, Minnie Miriam, Henrietta, Henry Woolf, Ada Hannah, Leonora, Bertram Leopold, and Arthur Isaac Saunders. Of these, only four would survive her.

In the last newsletter, I wrote about the funeral of Jonas Felix Levien, the first Jewish child born in Victoria. In this newsletter I want to write about a much more ordinary Jewish resident of Kew, Eleanor Simeon. She may not have been a Member of Parliament yet she led an interesting life.

Both stories have been researched within our Society's Research Group.

This article is abbreviated from the 6-page research study submitted to the KHS archives. The complete study has also been published online with additional pictures at [rbkr@wordpress.com](mailto:rbkr@wordpress.com)

*The KHS Research group is comprised of members of the Society. It meets on the second Monday of each month in a meeting room at the Kew Library. The leader of the group is Dione McIntyre. If you are conducting research into an aspect of Kew's history the Society would be interested to know about it. You can contact Dione or Dorothy Benyei, the Society's Archivist, by email at [info@kewhistory.com.au](mailto:info@kewhistory.com.au) or in person at the Court House.*

On Eleanor Simeon's grave there are two grave markers. One undated memorial reads: 'In memory of Eleanor Haidee / Beloved wife of / James Simeon / One of the first Colonists of / Melbourne / A true wife and devoted mother of first Jew born in Victoria / Erected by her son / Marcus.' This inscription contradicts the known evidence, which is that Jonas Levien was the first Jewish child born in Victoria.

If one considers the fragmented Jewish communities in Victoria who had separate synagogues, then possibly Frederick may have been the first Jewish child registered at the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation. It seems a very forthright claim on a grave in the Church of England section of the Cemetery to mark the burial of a woman '... not buried as a Jew'.

Sometime between 1845 and 1854, the Simeon family must have returned to London. Levi claims that at least four of the children were born in this period. Extraordinarily, a new Jewish wedding in the Melbourne Synagogue between James Simeon and Eleanor (now Sarah) Simeon was reported in the first edition of *The Age* on 17 October 1854, three days after the return of the Simeons from England, where Eleanor had, presumably, been converted to Judaism.

In 1874, *The Argus* records the death of James Simeon on 21 August, aged 59. James is recorded as dying at his residence, Eugene-house, 397 Albert-road, Emerald Hill. His friends were invited to follow his remains to their place of interment at the Melbourne General Cemetery.

By 1889 we know that Eleanor had moved to 'Anchoria', Rathmines-road, Auburn. Her new place of residence would no doubt have gone unrecorded if not for the death of her youngest son, Arthur Isaac Saunders Simeon. His death was reported in *The Argus*.

A man named John Harbordt, who resides in Irving-road, Hawthorn, reported to the police yesterday that about midday, when he was fishing in the Yarra near the railway bridge, Hawthorn, he heard a cry and saw a man struggling in the water. The man went down almost immediately, and did not rise again. A white canoe was floating in the river, bottom upwards. The police recovered the canoe, and from inquiries subsequently made they ascertained that it belonged to a young man named Arthur Simeon, who resided with his widowed mother in Rathmines-road, Hawthorn. Dragging operations were at once commenced, but the body had not been recovered last night. Harbordt states that there were several persons on the banks of the river at the time when the accident occurred, but the unfortunate man sank so quickly that no assistance could be tendered to him.

*The Argus*, 29 November 1889, p7.

One day later, a family notice and a funeral notice invited the friends of Mrs. Eleanor Simeon to follow the remains of her late and beloved son Arthur to the place of interment, the Boroondara Cemetery.



The grave of Arthur Simeon & Henrietta Levy

Unlike his father James, and other siblings who had died in Melbourne at earlier dates, Arthur was not to be buried in the Jewish section of the Melbourne General Cemetery. The database of the cemetery records his grave as located in the Church of England section (Location: C/E B 2515). His was not to be a solitary burial.

The other occupant of the grave, pictured above, was to be Eleanor's second daughter Henrietta, who was to die in 1909. Henrietta was to be caught up in the financial collapse of the 1890s. After the collapse of her husband's 'Royal Loan Office' in Brisbane in 1895, Henrietta was to be personally sued by creditors and declared insolvent.

Eleanor Haidee Simeon was living in Victoria in 1901 when she made her first Will and Testament. The Sands and McDougall Directories record her living at 52 Davis Street, Kew in 1909-10, at the house pictured on the previous page. Two doors away lived her daughter Leonora McKail. The McKails had lived at Wahgunyah, 56 Davis Street from 1891. (Both houses are still standing in 2012).

Eleanor Simeon's death notice on 13 June 1910 records the cause of her death as heart failure. It also notes that she was a colonist of 70 years, and that she arrived in Port Phillip in 1840.

In the months following Eleanor's death, a bitter dispute broke out between her descendants relating to her 1901 Will and two codicils that had been made in 1907 and 1910. Both codicils reduced the shares of specific children, one for unfilial conduct, and in other cases because of the prior deaths of two of her children. In the latter she had redistributed the amounts to other children. The widow of Henry Woolf Simeon brought a legal case on behalf of her son. After a hearing of six days, the application was rejected.

#### References

The many references used in researching Eleanor Simeon's life are listed with the articles on [rbkr.wordpress.com](http://rbkr.wordpress.com)



# MALINDA

My parents and I spent 1939 at 'Malinda' Guest House at 276 Cotham Road Kew. We were allocated the Ballroom. It was large attractive space with a separate entrance and all of our furniture and belongings fitted comfortably within it. It was a foretaste of today's Open Planning.

Many of the guests came from early Kew families. I was the only young person there, being just eight years old.

We shared the bathroom facilities with all the other guests and were summoned to meals by the ringing of a brass gong. These were served formally in the dining room by maids in uniform, who seated us at individual tables with white starched tablecloths. Typed menus listed the bill of fare.

'MALINDA' was a large Federation house designed by architect Robert Haddon. It was built in 1902 and occupied the eastern corner of Thomas Street and Cotham Road, from where the gravel driveway led via double gates towards the front door, where it looped around a mounded grassed knoll at the centre of which was a roughly laid stone fountain in line with the entrance.

It was a single-storey red brick house set back from the road. Its main feature was a central tower topped by a pagoda-like red terra-cotta roof on top of which was perched a very large and elegant terracotta dragon. The dragon was a local landmark of some significance.

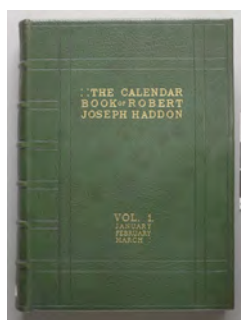
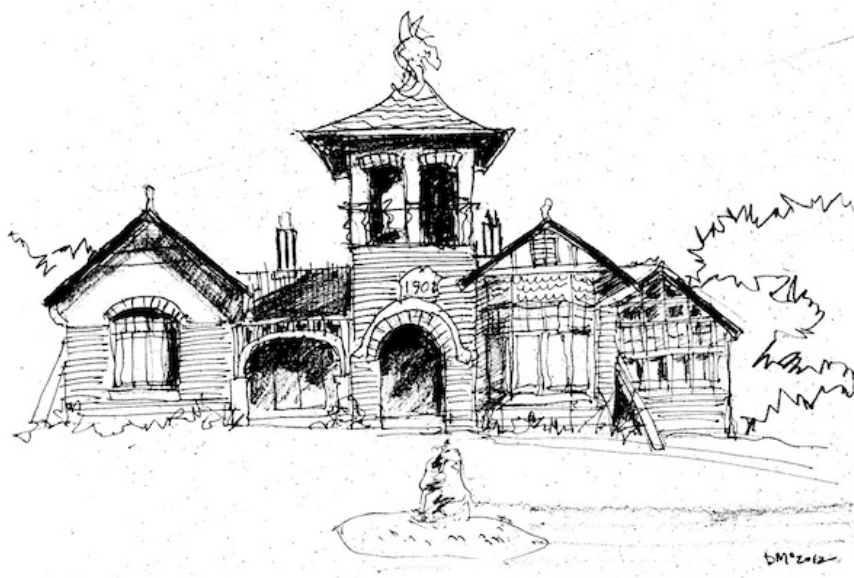
The house was originally designed and built for Abel Hoadley, inventor of the Violet Crumble Bar and many other delicious delicacies. He began by manufacturing jams and pickles in South Melbourne using fruit from his own orchard in East Burwood.

Abel Hoadley and Mrs. Annie Hoadley had 14 children. He died of cancer in 1918 at 'Bella Vista' (the original name for 'Malinda'). Mrs. Hoadley died in 1928 and the house remained vacant during the Great Depression. It was eventually opened in 1937 by Augustus Beker as 'Malinda' Guest House.

'Malinda' Guest House closed in 1940. The house was demolished the following year, and the land subdivided into 4 housing blocks.

Adieu Bella Vista!

**DIONE MCINTYRE**  
**KHS RESEARCH GROUP**



Robert Joseph Haddon (1866–1929), architect, was born in London. He arrived in Melbourne in 1889 and joined the firm Sydney Smith & Ogg. He was elected to the Victorian Architectural and Engineering Association and the Victorian Artists Society. He was an author, teacher, architect and sympathetic champion of the Art Nouveau style in Australia.

The *Calendar Book of Robert Joseph Haddon* was presented to the State Library of Victoria in 1931. *Volume 1*, covering the months of January to March 1924 contains a sketch and thought for each day.

State Library of Victoria, H2008.51

# THE BABY GRAND

Deep in the depths of the Hawthorn Town Hall lay a Blüthner baby grand piano that rarely got played. This nineteenth century gem was made in 1888, and had been hibernating quietly, and collecting dust, until one day the hall keepers stumbled upon it during a clean up ... The Blüthner, however, was [destined] to reside permanently in the Kew Court House, and it was moved, tuned and settled into 'The Just Theatre'.

To look at it upon first glance, not many people would think much of it. The piano is a bit scuffed around the edges, and there are small hints that it will need to be restrung, however the musicians who have placed their eyes on it begin to smile with delight.

One of those musicians was Chuck Mallet of 'Brecht: Bilbao and Beyond'. Chuck, with his performance partner, John Muirhead fell in love with the Court House upon first sight ... With a glint in his eye, Chuck approached the stage. "Oh, what a lovely baby grand piano," he remarked. He took his seat at the piano and let his fingers lightly touch the keys. He let out a small gasp. "Oh, it's a Blüthner!" he exclaimed.

"Nineteenth century," our Cultural Facilities Coordinator casually remarked.

"Oh my, it is beautiful," Chuck replied as he tentatively played a chord and listened very closely to the sound it produced. "Hmm," he quietly said. "It may need some new strings, but never mind that. I can certainly work with this."

And for the next hour, Chuck produced magic from the keys ... Well, with thanks to Chuck, the Blüthner baby grand piano had its moment in the spotlight. It has also been featuring with Sheila Bradley, Megan Shorey and the 'Sheilas of the 70s', and we hope that it will continue to delight many a musician and audience in the years to come.

*From the Kew Court House blog, Thursday, 19 July*

Julius Blüthner started producing pianos in his factory in Leipzig in 1853. He developed quickly, developing a reputation for outstanding instruments. The factory expanded, survived nationalisation in East Germany and today is still in the hands of Julius Blüthner's descendants.

The list of notable owners of Blüthner pianos is impressive. Past owners include Willhelm II, Emperor Franz Joseph I, Brahms, Mahler, Liberace, Bartók, Debussy, Dodie Smith, Max Reger, Wagner, Johann Strauss, Tchaikovsky, Shostakovich and Rachmaninoff.

Today a Blüthner piano sits in the Abbey Road Studios in London. It featured in the Beatles hit songs 'Let it Be' and 'The Long and Winding Road'. The haunting piano in the movie *The Sting* was also a Blüthner.

**JUDITH VIMPANI**



Chuck Mallett & John Muirhead

The Kew Court House is a heritage building that has been redeveloped into a thriving contemporary community cultural centre. It is located in the heart of Kew Junction at 188 High Street, Kew and is surrounded by a great range of shops, cafes and restaurants.

The venue provides a range of facilities including an intimate performance space with excellent audio and lighting capabilities, a large meeting room or workshop area, and a community access gallery in the foyer that is suitable for small exhibitions. The Kew Historical Society, Q Arts Studio, and e.motion21 are tenants at the Court House.

The Kew Court House Restoration Appeal, coordinated by the Kew Historical Society, raised over \$500,000 for the redevelopment of the Kew Court House into a community arts hub. The community's ability to raise funds for the redevelopment of the centre was key to Council's purchase of the facility.

**NOTE:** The Editor wishes to advise readers that Judith was also the author of the article 'The Buchans & Finhaven' in the previous newsletter.

In the December newsletter, we want to give members and non-members a better idea of the online resources available for the study of history and heritage in the City of Boroondara. Those who were present at the October meeting will have seen the excellent resources provided by The City of Boroondara Planning Department that draws together past heritage and history studies across the City.

#### CITY OF BOROONDARA – BUILDING AND PLANNING

[www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/your\\_council/building-planning/heritage](http://www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/your_council/building-planning/heritage)

The Council's Heritage page is an entry point to many resources for the study of history and heritage in Boroondara, and Kew specifically. We can recommend that you use the 'Boroondara Heritage Property Database' to search for information about particular houses, streets or areas. There is also a summary of the Indigenous Heritage Study (2002). The complete *Thematic Environmental History of Boroondara* (2012) can be downloaded from the site.

#### KEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

[www.kewhistory.com.au](http://www.kewhistory.com.au)

The Society's website includes updated information about meetings and special events. It includes the times when volunteers staff the Court House. By using the links page, you can access three major sources for Kew's history: Bonwick *A Sketch of Boroondara* (1858), Barnard *The Jubilee History of Kew* (1910), and Dorothy Rogers *Lovely Old Homes of Kew* (1961).

#### BALWYN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

[home.vicnet.net.au/~balwynhs/](http://home.vicnet.net.au/~balwynhs/)

The Society's website includes a brief history of Balwyn and contact information for the Society. Details of meetings are published on the site as are copies of the Society's newsletters.

## HISTORY & HERITAGE ONLINE

#### CAMBERWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

The Camberwell Historical Society includes on its website, in addition to information about meetings and events, a gallery of historic photographs, past newsletters, and a downloadable historic Camberwell walk.

#### CANTERBURY HISTORY GROUP

[home.vicnet.net.au/~canthist/](http://home.vicnet.net.au/~canthist/)

The Canterbury History Group's website includes information about meetings and special events. Newsletters, pamphlets and books are available through the Society.

#### HAWTHORN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

[hawthornhistoricalsociety.com.au](http://hawthornhistoricalsociety.com.au)

The website of the Hawthorn Historical Society has recently been redesigned by Swinburne students. The History section of the site includes pictures and information on 'Plans' (subdivisions, maps), 'People' (famous residents), and 'Location' (significant areas, buildings etc). A 'News' section includes current heritage and planning issues relevant to Hawthorn.

#### FRIENDS OF BOROONDARA (KEW) CEMETERY

[www.fobkc.org](http://www.fobkc.org)

The website of the FOBKC includes information about publications, meetings and events such as walks in the cemetery.

#### STUDLEY PARK MODERN

[home.vicnet.net.au/~studlypk/p1.htm](http://home.vicnet.net.au/~studlypk/p1.htm)

While *Studley Park Modern* includes an enormous amount of information about post-war Studley Park and its architects and landscapes, there are also large parts of the website covering the early history of Studley Park. Information and resources on the website are organised: 'chronologically' ('Up to 1890s Crash', 'To World War II', 'Post War Development', 'Development today') and 'thematically' ('Street names and streetscapes', 'Architects in the 50s and 60s', 'Flora and landscaping').

#### REDISCOVERING KEW

[rbkr.wordpress.com](http://rbkr.wordpress.com)

*Rediscovering Kew* contains a growing series of studies of Kew's history that are being investigated by Robert Baker, a member of the Research group of the Society. A number of these cover aspects of Jewish history in Kew. More recent research articles have focused on the history of the mansion Tara Hall (aka 'Coonor', 'Goathland') that was demolished 51 years ago, and that was located in Studley Park Road.



## 2012–2013 CALENDAR

We meet monthly in the Phyllis Hore Room of the Kew Library on the second Wednesday of each month except January unless otherwise announced.

12 December 2012	* Christmas Party
10 January 2013	No Meeting
13 February 2013	Suzanne McWha: 'A Society Wedding in Kew (1892)'
March 2013	The McIntyre lecture
10 April 2013	'The Toscanos'

\* CHRISTMAS PARTY  
Wednesday 12 December at  
7:00PM in the Phyllis Hore  
Room. Please bring a plate of  
finger food. Heating facilities are  
available. Santa Claus asks  
everyone (members and visitors)  
to bring a small wrapped gift  
(about \$5-10) – men something  
for a man, women for a woman.  
Please place in correct basket.

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[www.andrewmcintoshmp.com](http://www.andrewmcintoshmp.com)

### **Kew Historical Society Inc.**

Established 1958 Incorporated 1987

*'Preserving Kew's History for future generations'*

We invite you to join our Society and in collaboration with others to  
find out more about Kew's unique history and heritage

#### Annual Memberships

Individual \$15; Family \$17; Student \$5.

Inquiries: The Secretary, Kew Historical Society,

PO Box 175, Kew VIC 3101

or [info@kewhistory.com.au](mailto:info@kewhistory.com.au)

## **BIG QUARTERLY BOOK SALE**

1 PM – 4 PM

SUNDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2013

Phyllis Hore Room (Rear Kew  
Library)  
Civic Drive, Kew

Lots of Bargains

Please put this date in your  
diary

**Kew Historical Society Inc.**

**PO Box 175**

**Kew VIC 3101**