“STEAM RETURNS TO ESSENDON” - SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 20th
courtesy of the ROTARY CLUB OF ESSENDON

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Dear Members,

With the Melbourne Cup now run and won we are rapidly heading for the Festive Season, and this will be the final Newsletter for 2016. This will bring to a close one of the most challenging years experienced by the members of the Essendon Historical Society since the establishment of the Society in 1970.

It has been twenty weeks since the tragic fire which caused considerable damage to our much loved Courthouse headquarters, but we have battled on the best we can, to keep the Society operating. We were able to make a visit to Lowther Hall for our September Meeting and all enjoyed learning of the history of the 126 year old building, now the administration centre of the Lowther Hall Girls’ Grammar School. Thank you to Kelsey Collins for arranging the visit and tour for us.

Our October Meeting was held in the Hi Marquee Room at “Windy Hill”. It was great to see so many of our members take advantage of the opportunity of dining in the Bistro prior to attending the Meeting. Arrangements have also been made for us to meet at this venue for our November Meeting on Tuesday, November 22nd.

Our Christmas Break-up Dinner will be held at the East Keilor R.S.L. (Hoffmans Road, Essendon) on December 13th. Members will receive a separate mail-out from our Treasurer shortly which will include a booking slip and additional information about this evening.

We are greatly looking forward to the Special Gala Event on Sunday, November 20th when “Steam Returns to Essendon”. We are very grateful to the Rotary Club of Essendon for organising the Steam Train excursions from Essendon Railway Station as a fund raiser for our Courthouse Recovery. We hope that the weather is kind to us on this day, and that many people are able to enjoy the excursions to Box Hill, Broadmeadows or Wyndham Vale.

Visitors to Queens Park in recent times will notice the recently erected, attractive, highly polished memorial adjacent to the Lone Pine in the south east corner of the reserve. This was unveiled and dedicated at an impressive ceremony on Saturday, October 8th, and records the sixteen battles which involved the soldiers of the 58th Battalion during the Great War (1914-18).

Bob Mackay gave a talk to a group of Seniors at the Sam Merrifield Library on Wednesday October 5th as the E.H.S.’s contribution to “Seniors Month”. Bob’s talk revolved around the history of the Pascoe Vale National School which was established in Government Road near the Five Mile Creek in July 1850, and was the fore-runner of Essendon State School No 483. Thank you Bob, for preparing this material.

Julie and Terry Scott have been in communication with Signature Engraving and have taken delivery of more tiles to be laid in the Memory Lane Garden. This work will be undertaken shortly by Michael Barrette of “Earth’n’Grass” and will complete the orders that have been received. They will occupy the north-west corner of the garden.

Bob Mackay and I represented the E.H.S. at the City of Moonee Valley’s “Moving and Grooving” day on Thursday, 13th October at the Maribyrnong Park Bowls Club. This was organised as part of the Seniors Month Program. There were many local organisations in attendance and it was important that we participated on this day to let it be known that in spite of the difficulties that we are currently facing, we are still operating.

In September we sent out a letter and brochure to 172 Historical Societies and like organisations to inform them of our circumstances and to seek their support. We are very grateful for the kind donations received from a number of societies as a result. Thank you Terry and Julie Scott and Lyndall Byrne for getting the message out for us.

We have also conducted a letter-drop throughout the City of Moonee Valley, covering Flemington, Ascot Vale, Moonee Ponds, Essendon, Aberfeldie, Strathmore and parts of Airport West, East Keilor and Niddrie. This has also resulted in a positive response. I wish to thank those who have written letters or made donations to our cause, and to those members who volunteered to distribute the flyers throughout the district. Thank you also to Brad Teal Real Estate for producing the 25,000 leaflets for us.

_Wishing you all the Best for Christmas and the New Year._

Bob Chalmers
SUPPORTERS OF THE E.H.S. 
RESTORATION FUND

We thank the following local Businesses for their generous support

Paul McDonald Real Estate
Bendigo Bank—East Keilor
Bendigo Bank—Strathmore
Bendigo Bank—Flemington
Lions Club of Essendon Inc.

KEEP IN TOUCH WITH E.H.S. ACTIVITIES ON OUR WEBSITE

www.esshissoc.org.au
Email Address esshissoc@mail.com

REMEMBER THAT YOU CAN ALSO COMMUNICATE WITH US THROUGH FACEBOOK AND TWITTER


THINKING OF A BEQUEST OR A DONATION TO THE ESSENDON HISTORICAL SOCIETY?

Members, you are invited to think of the Essendon Historical Society when attending to your personal affairs. A kind gesture by you by way of a donation or bequest can make a big contribution to the work of the Society in the future. Your Solicitor will be able to assist you in drawing up the necessary documents to ensure that any part of your estate left to us will be used according to your wishes. Members wishing to make donations to the E.H.S. are reminded that the Essendon Historical Society Museum Restoration Fund is Tax Deductible.

As a result of the recent Council Elections and the necessity to reform the various advisory committees, there will be no further Meetings of the above Committee until February 2017.

However, the main highlight in relation to the Anzac Centenary Celebrations was the unveiling and dedication of the 58th Battalion Memorial at Queens Park on Saturday, October 8th. This was arranged by the 58th/32nd Infantry Battalion Association and the Moonee Valley Council.

The CEO of the City of Moonee Valley, Bryan Lancaster, was the Master of Ceremonies.

The Dedication Address was delivered by Major General Kevin G. Cooke, AO, RFD ED, Patron of the 58/32 Infantry Battalion Association, who unveiled the memorial. It was dedicated by Padre Mark Dunn, the coordinating Chaplain Headquarters 4th Brigade.

Battle Honours were recognised by the planting of white crosses by families in memory of the Fallen.

Wreaths were laid at the base of the monument by various organisations.

Buglers from Penleigh Essendon Grammar School played “The Last Post” and “Rouse” as part of a moving and dignified ceremony.

Afternoon Tea was provided by the Moonee Valley City Council.
DANCE HALLS IN AND AROUND MOONEE PONDS

Conversations with Malcolm Macaffer

In the 1950s when my mate Leo and I were between the ages of 16-18 we went to the Moonee Ponds Town Hall to attend the regular dances. It was about 7/6 to get in. Modern dancing was downstairs which included modern waltzes, and slow fox trots. Upstairs it was the 50/50 dance which was half modern and half old time, with dances like the Pride of Erin, Barn dance and the Three step. Dance nights were always Wednesdays and Saturdays from 8.00pm until about 11pm.

When you left the Moonee Ponds Town Hall to go out they would give you a pass and you could use that to get into the Brunty Town Hall (up in Brunswick). We would get the Dawson Street bus up there to Sydney Road. That’s what we did if the talent was lousy on the night at Moonee Ponds Town Hall, we went to the Brunty town hall, and you would show your pass out from Essendon Town Hall and that would get you in for free.

Sometimes we went to the Coburg Town Hall but there were often a lot of teeny boppers there so we didn’t go there much. We also went to the Heidelberg Town hall and the Freemasons Dance Hall in behind Collins Street Melbourne and upstairs.

I would wear a grey suit with light red pin stripes that I bought second hand for about 4 pounds at the Victoria Market. I would have a white shirt and I would spit and polish my shoes so they were nice and shiny.

When I met your mother she said my outfit was too old fashioned so then I got a black suit with gold flecks from Freezer bros, because her father worked there. I danced with your mum to the song ‘Around the world’ by Nat King Cole at the Moonee Ponds Town hall.

I went to dances when I was younger too. Footscray Highland Pipe Band would play at the dance hall in the street behind Barkly Street and have ballroom dances and I would dance with my sister, Betty, when I was younger at about 10 or 11 years old. My father played in the pipe band at those dances.

The dance halls like Moonee Ponds would have 10 piece bands with pianist, drums, wind instruments and the liquorice stick (that’s what we called the clarinet), trumpet and a lead singer.

After leaving the Moonee Ponds Town hall, Leo and I would go across to the hamburger joint called the Morocco. We would eat the hamburgers walking along the plantation from Moonee Ponds up along Mt (Alexander) Road to our houses up there.

The only other dance hall I recall is one my father talked about which was the Green Mill over Princess Street Bridge there near the Tracadero in St Kilda Road. There was also one you would pass on Puckle street side as you got to Moonee Ponds station on the train – I don’t know what it was called but you would see the neon lights on out the front from the train when you went by to Essendon. I didn’t dance there but my father said he went there in the 1930’s – I can’t recall what it was called, something like St Moritz but I don’t know now.

Thank you Jenny, for producing this article recording the memories of your father and his recollections of growing up in Essendon. I am sure that many other members will recall your early social activities, attending dances and balls in the local area, and particularly the regular dances at the Moonee Ponds Town Hall.
MALCOLM MACAFFER BIO

Malcolm was born in 1937 and lived his childhood and youth in Essendon in a big old bluestone house at 815 Mt Road (corner of Ophir Street) Essendon which was demolished in the 1960’s to make way for 6 pack flats. Later as a young adult he moved to 39 Stuart Street Moonee Ponds with his family. This weatherboard house was originally built by his Uncle and grandfather on a big hill overlooking the city and Moonee Ponds creek valley in the late 1920’s near the Moonee Valley racecourse.

He attended Essendon State School and Essendon Grammar. He worked in local businesses and also assisted his father in building homes in the local area. Malcolm was an avid bike rider as a teenager and also tinkered at fixing old cars which he came to love and collect. He inherited a keen interest in highland music and was a long serving respected bass drummer playing in a number of Highland Pipe bands in Victoria. He is now retired and living in Rosebud, Victoria.

Moonee Ponds Town Hall (State Library, Vic)

MOVING AND GROOVING AT MARIBYRNONG PARK BOWLS CLUB

The Two Bobs man the E.H.S. Display

Eve Park sings with the U3A Choir
On Thursday, November 3rd contractors working for Johns Lyng Insurance Builders, removed the debris from the Courtroom under the watchful eye of our Treasurer, Terry Scott.

His wife, Julie, an avid photographer, couldn’t let the opportunity pass without capturing the events on her camera.
WINDY OCTOBER

We experienced some rather hostile weather during the month of October. It proved to be the wettest October for many years and gale force winds caused havoc at times. Fortunately, October 8th, the day of the unveiling of the 58th/32nd Monument in Queens Park, was warm and sunny, but the following day was marked by extremely strong winds which caused considerable damage in many parts of Melbourne. As can be seen by the following photographs, Moonee Ponds did not escape nature’s wrath.

COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2016

Council Elections throughout Victoria were conducted over the weekend of October 19th—21st. Most municipalities, including the City of Moonee Valley, conducted postal elections.

8-10 candidates stood for election for three positions in each of the three Wards and the results were unknown until the preferences were counted.

Three Councillors who had served the City of Moonee Valley for many years, lost their seats in favour of new blood.

Cr. Jan Chantry, who had represented the Buckley Park Ward for 13 years, failed to win enough support to hold her seat. Paul Giuliano, also a representative of Buckley Park Ward, failed to gain re-election after a period of 12 years. They were replaced by Rebecca Gauci Maurici and Richard Lawrence.

In Rose Hill Ward, Shirley Cornish, a Councillor for the past ten years, was defeated at the polls by Samantha Byrne.

The three incumbents representing the Myrnong Ward were re-elected.

The City of Moonee Valley Councillors for the next four years are:

**Buckley Park Ward**: Narelle Sharpe, Richard Lawrence and Rebecca Gauci Maurici

**Rose Hill Ward**: Andrea Surace, John Sipek and Samantha Byrne

**Myrnong Ward**: Cam Nation, Nicole Marshall and Jim Cusack

KIRK’S BAZAAR (North Essendon Junction)

Thanks to member, Maurice Austin, for this lovely photograph of Kirk’s Bazaar found amongst a collection of half plate glass negatives.
IN SUPPORT OF THE ESSENDON HISTORICAL SOCIETY REFURBISHING FUND

STEAM RETURNS TO ESSENDON ON SUNDAY 20TH NOVEMBER 2016

ALL DAY STEAM TRAIN RIDES FROM ESSENDON:

‘THE CITY OF MELBOURNE’ - A 190 TONNE STEAM ENGINE WITH 5 HERITAGE CARRIAGES WILL BE RUNNING TO BOX HILL, WYNDAM VALE AND ACROSS THE TRESTLE BRIDGES.

ONLY 180 PASSENGERS PER TRIP - SO BOOK EARLY.

TICKETS: WWW.TRYBOOKING.COM/EVENT/EVENTLISTINGURL.ASPX?ID=31002

ENQUIRIES: STEAMTRAIN@RCE.ORG.AU

PLEASE NOTE: NO PRAMS ALLOWED DUE TO OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY REGULATIONS

TIMETABLE & PRICES:

1ST TRIP: BOX HILL & RETURN - LEAVE 9.45AM & RETURN 11.35AM
ADULTS $45, CHILDREN (UNDER 11) $25, FAMILY (2 ADULTS, 2 CHILDREN) $110

2ND TRIP: ALBION BROADMEADOWS VIA GOODS LOOP - LEAVE 11.45AM & RETURN 1.20PM
ADULTS $50, CHILDREN (UNDER 11), $30, FAMILY (2 ADULTS, 2 CHILDREN) $130

3RD TRIP: WYNDAM VALE & RETURN - LEAVE 1.30PM & RETURN 4.04PM
ADULTS $50, CHILDREN (UNDER 11) $30, FAMILY (2 ADULTS, 2 CHILDREN) $130

4TH TRIP: BOX HILL & RETURN - LEAVE 4.15PM & RETURN 6.10PM
ADULTS $45, CHILDREN (UNDER 11) $25, FAMILY (2 ADULTS, 2 CHILDREN) $110

5TH TRIP: NEWPORT NOT RETURNING, RETURN BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT - LEAVE 6.20PM
ADULTS $25, CHILDREN (UNDER 11) $15, FAMILY (2 ADULTS, 2 CHILDREN) $70
The Courthouse Recovery Committee which is a community committee chaired by Danny Pearson MP continues to meet and oversee the project. This committee includes representatives from MVCC, Essendon Rotary, Moonee Ponds Traders’ Association and EHS.

**Government Funding**

We have been notified by Minister D’Ambrosio that a grant of $100 000 is to be allocated to EHS for the first stage of the restoration which is to make the building ‘safe and watertight’. The costings from builders indicate that the bill for the completion of this initial stage will be greater than $250 000. Clearly further funding is required. EHS has applied to the State Govt. Living Heritage Grants Program for funding for this first stage. Peter Bromley has been working on the preparation of this application. Unfortunately we will need to wait until February 2017 to learn if our application has been successful.

Whilst we are reliant on government funding for this project, it is important that every effort is made to raise funds locally and thereby show the government that the restoration of the Courthouse is fully supported by the community. It is not too late to make a donation or write a letter to a politician!

**Employment of an Architect**

Doug Maunder (FPPV Architecture) has been employed by EHS for the initial stages of the restoration of the building. He is working with Mark Hodkinson, a structural engineer who was contracted by Heritage Victoria for this project. Using the original (1889) drawings they have drawn up plans for protecting the courtroom with an iron roof which we hope will eventually be covered by a slate roof.

**Courtroom clean up**

Terry Scott has organised contractors to remove the damaged contents and debris from the courtroom floor and walls. The contractors did a great job but the courtroom is still a black sorry sight.

Items such as the witness stand, large picture frame, press table and large table have been retrieved and stored locally. The Book of Remembrance is being restored by professional paper conservators at the Grimwade Centre of Melbourne University. Judy Maddigan and Terry Scott, in conjunction with the 58/32 Battalion Association, are managing this aspect of the recovery process.

**Alternative venue**

The Community Recovery Committee continues to seek an alternative venue for EHS whilst the courthouse is undergoing restoration works. Currently the EHS Collection is spread across five locations, and there is no venue for face-to-face contact with the public in order to answer their queries re local history. The requirements of EHS would be a building which, if possible, has the following features:

- easy access for the public eg. located near public transport,
- parking availability
- a display area/meeting space for about 50 people
- a room for administration and computer equipment
- storage area for the EHS collection
- kitchen and toilet facilities
- minimal rent.

Please let us know if you are aware of a suitable venue in Moonee Valley.

**Publicity/Fundraising**

Thank you to Julie Scott and Lyndall Byrne for their effort in sending out a letter to 172 historical societies in Victoria requesting donations or letters of support to politicians. With the assistance of about 30 volunteers, Bob Chalmers has organised a letterbox drop to more than 20 000 homes in Moonee Valley. There has been a moderate response to these initiatives; we are very grateful to those people who have supported our requests. Kelsey Collins has been working on a crowd funding campaign which is soon to be launched on Chuffed.org. The Strathmore Theatre Arts Group (STAG) has promised to donate the takings from one of their shows in 2017.

We are hopeful that the Steam Train Day on 20 November will be a great success: please support this day and bring friends and family – it should be fun. Please spread the word!

- Mary Cahill
DECEMBER STREET STALLS

We will be conducting Street Stalls in Puckle Street, Moonee Ponds, on two days in the week leading up to Christmas.

These will be set up on the following days, between 10.00 am and 4.00 pm

Thursday, December 15th
Friday, December 16th

Any E.H.S. Member who is able to assist us for a couple of hours on either of these two days should contact Bob Chalmers (9 3792750) or Mary Cahill (9 3707296) to let us know the times you are available.

THE ROTARY CLUB FOUNTAIN SITE

I have, in past Newsletters, referred to various works of art that had been occupying the former fountain site in the Rotary Club of Essendon Square, opposite the Clock Tower Centre.

I noticed, while passing by last month, contractors digging out the soil and cleaning up the circular fountain area, and suspect that the intention is to restore the fountain which was set up in 1985 to mark the Golden Jubilee of the Rotary Club of Essendon.

The prominent Service Club was formed at a gathering of Professional and Businessmen, at “Edenhope” on 13th February 1935, and it received its Charter on 21st May from the Governor of the 65th Division, Angus Mitchell.

The Community Square, opposite the then Civic Centre, was dedicated to the work of the Rotary Club and opened on 28th March, 1985. The fountain, which formed the main attraction of the square, was dismantled during the drought years, and for the past three years, featured a number of interesting pieces of modern sculpture designed by local artists.

There has been talk in recent times of the Fountain being rebuilt, but I have a strong suspicion that this site might first be used by the City of Moonee Valley for some attractive feature relating to the Christmas Season that is fast approaching.

MOONEE PONDS CENTRAL SCHOOL REUNION OF THE YEAR OF 1946 (70th)

Bob Mackay and I were privileged to accept an Invitation from Past Students of the Moonee Ponds Central School (Wilson Street) to attend a Reunion of the Classes of 2A and 2B of 1946.

This happy occasion was held on Sunday, November 6th at the Moonee Ponds Club (formerly the North Suburban Club), and was attended by 17 ex-students, who left the school 70 years ago, and family members (with 29 people in attendance). The Reunion was organised by former student, John Tennant (now 84 years old), assisted by Max Meuleman.

The Luncheon was most enjoyable, and we were made feel most welcome as we shared their tales and reminiscences of their “good old school days”.

This group has been meeting annually for over 20 years, having first arranged reunions following the school’s 75th anniversary in 1994.
Thirty-one members and friends attended the E.H.S. General Meeting which was held on Tuesday, September 27th at Lowther Hall Anglican Girls’ Grammar School.

We were all given a warm welcome by Simon Oldham, the Business Manager of the school, and directed into one of the large, luxurious rooms of the old mansion where the Meeting was conducted.

President, Bob Chalmers, welcomed those in attendance, making special reference to new member, David Brown and to Zelma Riddell, who had returned to us after recovering from a fall.

Most of the Business of the evening centred around up-dating members of coming events, future meeting venues and reports on the progress of the Recovery Committee.

Following the Meeting, Simon gave us a brief talk on the history of the mansion, built c1890 for Coiler McCracken and known originally as Earlsbrae Hall. McCracken faced financial difficulties during the 1890s and moved out of his large residence. From 1911 to 1918 it was occupied by eccentric book seller, E. W. Cole (of Cole’s Book Arcade). In 1920 it was acquired by the Anglican Church and was dedicated by Archbishop Lowther Clarke. It was later renamed Lowther Hall, and is mainly used today as the administration block of the well known Anglican Girls’ School.

Simon led us on a conducted tour of the magnificent building and the evening concluded with a most enjoyable supper supplied by Kelsey Collins and her helpers.

Thank you Kelsey, for organising a most successful evening that was enjoyed by all.
E.H.S. CHRISTMAS BREAK-UP

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13th at 6.30 pm
at KEILOR EAST R.S.L.
(12—22 Hoffmans Road, Essendon)

Two Course Meal served at 7.30 pm.

COST: $35.00 PER HEAD
Drinks at Bar Prices

SPECIAL GUESTS: Trish Simpson & Jimmy Fong
(vocalists)

Bookings for the Meal and Payment due
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 28th 2016
PAYMENT DETAILS ETC. WILL BE MAILED TO
YOU IN A SPECIAL MAIL-OUT SHORTLY

***COMING EVENTS***

TUESDAY 22nd NOVEMBER
At the Hi Marque Room
WINDY HILL RECEPTIONS
(cnr Napier & Brewster Streets)
commencing at 7.30 pm

Guest Speaker
JOHN HILLS

TOPIC:
The Shrine of Remembrance

TUESDAY, 13th DECEMBER
CHRISTMAS BREAK-UP
At
KEILOR EAST R.S.L.
Hoffman’s Road, West Essendon
From 6.30 pm
Two Course Meal
Entertainment
(There will be a special Mailout to give you further information shortly)

NOTE:
There is no General Meeting in January

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28th
Members’ Night (T.B.A.)

Meetings
The Society will continue to meet on the fourth Tuesday of each month, from February to December.

General Meetings, unless notified otherwise, will be held in the Hi Marque Room at “Windy Hill Receptions”, cnr Napier Street, and Brewster Street, Essendon, commencing at 7.30 pm

Courthouse Museum
Due to severe damage caused by the fire, the Courthouse Museum will be out of action until further notice.

The Newsletter
The deadline for the next E.H.S. Newsletter is February 3rd, 2017.
Material forwarded before this date would be greatly appreciated.
Members are encouraged to provide items of local interest.

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