



ESSENDON HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC
ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 2017 - JUNE 2018

Essendon Historical Society Inc

Annual Report 2017 - 2018

Presented to the Annual General Meeting on Tuesday, 24th July, 2018
at the Essendon Football Club *Windy Hill Venue*
corner of Brewster and Napier Streets, Essendon

Committee of Management

President	Bob Chalmers
Vice-President	Kelsey Collins
Secretary	Mary Cahill
Treasurer	Terry Scott
Committee	Greg Thege, Elaine Brogan OAM, Michelle Laurent

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|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Restoration Committee</b>     | Mary Cahill, Terry Scott, Bob Chalmers                                             |
| <b>Cataloguing Committee</b>     | Judy Maddigan, Rod McLennan,<br>Anna Denham, Anna Maree Malmgren,<br>Zelma Riddell |
| <b>IT Support and Web Page</b>   | Kelsey Collins and Greg Thege                                                      |
| <b>Newsletter Editor</b>         | Bob Chalmers                                                                       |
| <b>ANZAC Centenary Committee</b> | Bob Chalmers, John Hills,<br>Elaine Brogan OAM                                     |
| <b>Memory Lane Garden</b>        | Julie Scott                                                                        |

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Life Members

Alex Bragiola	Elaine Brogan OAM	Mary Cahill
Bob Chalmers	Rock Chote (d)	Mary Costigan (d)
George Davison (d)	Lenore Frost	John Grant (d)
Dorothy King (d)	Ron Lambert (d)	Bob McKay
Judy Maddigan	Eve Park	Ted Smith (d)
Peter Willoughby	Zelma Riddell	Marilyn Kenny

President's Report for the Year 2017-2018

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the President's Report for the year ending June 30th 2018. As anticipated, it has been another very busy and challenging year for Essendon Historical Society and, in particular, the members of the Executive Committee, who have been working tirelessly towards the restoration of the Courthouse and our eventual return to our heritage listed headquarters.

The tragedy of the disastrous fire is now two years behind us and the Society is still functioning successfully in most areas.

MEMBERSHIP

We have welcomed twelve new members to the Society in the past twelve months. Unfortunately, three of our members, Deidre Farfor, Margery Burston and Marjorie Conning have passed away during the current year.

Life Memberships have been bestowed on two of our hard working and long serving members – Zelma Riddell (in September) and Marilyn Kenny (in December). As I write this report our Membership stands at 191 Financial Members and 12 Life Members – a total of 203.

COMMITTEE 2017 - 2018

Our Committee which was elected at our Annual General Meeting in July 2017 comprised of the following:

Bob Chalmers	(President)
Kelsey Collins	(Vice President)
Mary Cahill	(Secretary)
Terry Scott	(Treasurer)
Greg Thege	(Committee)
Elaine Brogan OAM	(Committee)
Michelle Laurent	(Committee)

Michelle Laurent, because of pressure of study, resigned early in the year, leaving us with a Committee of Management of six members – three positions short of the full committee as set down in our By-Laws. The Committee met on a monthly basis to plan the activities of the Society and I thank each of them for their contributions over the past year. I also wish to thank Sharon Keppel and the Moonee Valley Council Staff for their support in making meeting rooms available to us at the Moonee Valley Municipal Centre.

In particular, I extend my gratitude again to Mary Cahill, who has continued to complete her responsibilities as Secretary in her usual thorough manner; and to Terry Scott, our Treasurer, who has been called on to operate far more complex tasks in this position than any other in the 48 years of our existence, as well as many other duties. Terry was nominated for a 2017 "Spirit of Moonee Valley" Award in the Arts & Culture Section for his work. The contribution that both Mary and Terry have made in their respective roles, as well as their commitment to the Restoration/Recovery of the Courthouse over the past two years is outstanding.

CATALOGUING COMMITTEE

The Cataloguing Committee have met in the basement of the Niddrie Library each Monday morning and continue to digitise and index parts of our collection. The members of this dedicated team of volunteers comprises: Judy Maddigan (Chairperson), Anna Denham, Anna Maree Malmgren, Rod McLennan and Zelma Riddell.

They have worked together as a team now for a number of years and the work that they do is greatly valued. (See Separate Report)

THE RESTORATION AND RE-ACTIVATION OF THE COURTHOUSE MUSEUM

As I'm sure you will all appreciate, the restoration and recovery of our beloved courthouse continues to take up a great deal of time and commitment as we look to the future, and we have certainly made great progress in this regard since my last Annual Report.

Mary Cahill, Terry Scott and I have worked closely together as a working committee, meeting with architects, contractors, Council Staff and Heritage Victoria facing many challenges along the way.

However, it was very satisfying to see Stage 1 (the replacement of the slate roof and windows of the Courthouse and the re-wiring of the building) reach its completion early in 2018. We have recently signed the Contract for Stage 2 (the Courtroom walls and ceiling, external brickwork and kitchen), to be carried out. It is anticipated that this work will be commenced in mid July and will be completed by the end of the year.

Because of the expectation that our building will have greater exposure to the public and problems brought about by complex insurance issues, we realise that we will need to share our facilities in some form after completion of the work.

With this in mind we are currently involved in discussion with Moonee Valley Council officers as first option. (See Mary Cahill's Report for more detail.)

MONTHLY MEETINGS

We have continued to conduct our General Meetings in the High Marque Room at "Windy Hill Venue" on the fourth Tuesday of each month. This venue has proved to be most adequate and the opportunity of meeting together for a meal at the Bistro prior to our formalities upstairs has been a positive outcome. The attendance at our Meetings has remained fairly constant with attendances fluctuating between 20 (at a time when six or more of our regular attendees were overseas) to 41. We have enjoyed hearing a variety of interesting guest speakers address us over the twelve month period (as listed below)

A highlight of the year was our visit to "Wahgunyah", in Park Street, Moonee Ponds, the Penleigh/Essendon Grammar Junior Girls' Campus, which was organised for us by our Vice President, Kelsey Collins. This was well attended, and the talk by P.E.G.S. Archivist, Brigit Cooper, was well received. Thank you to Elaine Brogan for her work during the year as our "Speaker Seeker".

EHS Annual and General Meetings 2017-2018

DATE	GUEST SPEAKER	TOPIC	No.
JULY 25 th , 2017	Annual General Meeting		28
AUGUST 22 nd , 2017	EHS Dinner Meeting (Major Robert Prewett)	Some Essendon Boys in France in WW1	34
SEPTEMBER 26 th , 2017	Marilyn Kenny (Life Membership Presentation to Zelma Riddell)	Introducing Nurses of Essendon	31
OCTOBER 24 th , 2017	Visit to Penleigh Junior School Brigid Cooper (PEGS Archivist)	A Brief History of "Wahgunyah" and the Penleigh Girls' School.	24
NOVEMBER 28 th , 2017	Open Forum	A Discussion on the Future of the Courthouse	36
DECEMBER 12 th , 2017	Gannawarra Convention Centre (Life Membership Presentation to Marilyn Kenny)	Christmas Break-up Function	39
FEBRUARY 27 th , 2018	Members' Night	Show and Tell and Brief Videos	29
MARCH 27 th , 2018	Eric Panther	Down Memory Lane	24
APRIL 24 th , 2018	Patti Gerkens from Women Caring for Veterans of WW1	Rosemary for Remembrance	20
MAY 22 nd , 2018	Beryl Patullo - family historian, member of the Whittlesea Historical Society	History relating to the Thomastown Area	23
JUNE 26 th , 2018	Dinner Meeting at Windy Hill - Virginia Noonan	Dr. Sam Merrifield and the Merrifield Family	41

EHS WEBSITE

Because we cannot currently operate from the Courthouse we are relying heavily on electronic means to connect with the public. Terry Scott and Kelsey Collins, together with the support of IT specialist, Cliff Tunney, have been updating our website to make it more attractive and more user friendly. This is currently a “work in progress”, but those who have recently viewed it will agree that it has been given a great new look. Julie Scott has recently been appointed as “Publicity Officer” and has been updating the material to keep people in touch with what we are all about.

RESEARCH ENQUIRIES

Research queries that come to us through our Website or via email are managed by our Secretary, Mary Cahill who responds to the query and transfers it to one of a number of our members who undertake the research. For a simple query there is an initial charge of \$25-00 but for one of a more complex nature a suitable fee is negotiated. Research queries now contribute substantially to our annual income and I am grateful for those who assist in this aspect of our work.

MOONEE VALLEY COUNCIL “COMMEMORATION OF THE CENTENARY OF ANZAC” COMMITTEE

This Committee was formed in 2015 to coordinate local activities in connection with the Centenary of Anzac Day. This year, 2018, marks the Centenary of the end of the Great War and activities are planned for celebrations on November 11th, to mark the Centenary of the signing of the Armistice.

We have been represented on this Committee by Elaine Brogan (OAM) John Hills and me. Many activities have been organised over the four year period and memorials and significant events have been funded using both Commonwealth and State Government Grants. Thanks to Elaine and John for your contributions as representatives of EHS.

MEMORY LANE GARDEN

This project was commenced in 2014 with the dual purpose of recognising local residents who are now departed and to raise funds for restoration work on the courthouse. In spite of the inconvenience of a security fence surrounding the property, work on the garden continues, and Julie Scott must be thanked for the outstanding work that she has done, and continues to do, in adding to the garden.

ROVING CURATOR PROGRAM

Late last year EHS and Moonee Valley Council Library Staff (Julia Marshall and Meredith Reidy), applied to be part of the 2018 “Roving Curator Program” made available through Museums Australia (Victoria). The aim of the application was to plan for a celebratory exhibition to mark the opening of the Courthouse in March/April 2019. Our application, put together by Julia, was one of four accepted, and we are in the process of planning the exhibition with the support of Museums Victoria’s Kitty Owens, the Manager, Exhibition Services. Michele Summerton and I are representing the Society in this project in conjunction with the Moonee Valley Library staff.

OUR VISIT TO THE COMMONWEALTH SERUM LABORATORIES

A number of members of EHS accepted an invitation to visit the CSL facilities in Parkville as a follow up to the Centenary of the establishment which began operations in 1917. The visits took place in March and April and those who attended were very impressed by the work that is carried out in this internationally recognised institution. The visits were one of the highlights of our year.

THE AUSTRALIA DAY BREAKFAST

We were very grateful to the Rotary Club of Essendon North who again decided to make Essendon Historical Society the beneficiary of the Australia Day Breakfast. A number of us were in attendance on that day and I was pleased to receive a cheque for \$3,000 to be put towards the Courthouse Restoration. Thank you to the Committee and Members of this organisation for your generous support.

OTHER EHS ACTIVITIES

I am grateful for the support that I have received from our members who assisted in the following activities:

- The Street Stalls held in Puckle Street, Moonee Ponds, just prior to Christmas, which raised \$1,300.
- The Moonee Valley Festival, where we were able to make contact with the public and bring them up to date with the restoration of the courthouse.

- BRITFEST: A function held in the Moonee Ponds Bowls Club in April – organised by the English Speaking Union of Victoria to celebrate British Culture.
- We provided Guest Speakers for a number of local groups. Thank you to Marilyn Kenny for her talk in the Moonee Valley Library – “Slander & Scandal” (Disloyalty in Essendon in WW1) and to Bob Mackay for entertaining Grade 2 children at the St Peters Catholic School in East Keilor.
- I was pleased to lead a Heritage Walk, together with Terry Scott, in Ascot Vale for members of the Deepdene U3A Walking Group in mid July.

As you can see through reading this report, we have just concluded a very busy and rewarding year. I have again found it to be a great pleasure in my position as President of Essendon Historical Society and I thank each and every one of you for your great support. I hope that the coming year will bring us great satisfaction as we return to our Heritage Headquarters and, although we will have to accept the changes that are almost certain to occur, I am sure that we can look to the future with great confidence and will continue to serve the residents of the City of Moonee Valley and fulfil our objectives to foster an interest in the rich history of our local district.

Bob Chalmers
(26 July 2018)

Restoration of the Courthouse Building 2017-2018

Courthouse Restoration

It is now two years since the devastating fire at the courthouse. You will recall that in May 2017 we received a \$1.5 million grant from the *Living Heritage Grants Program* of the Victorian State Government. This major grant, together with previous funding and our EHS fundraising efforts, allowed us to begin the process of restoration of the building in earnest. Once again we wish to acknowledge the efforts of Danny Pearson MP who was an outstanding advocate for EHS in order to secure the grant.

Stage 1

The first stage was completed in March 2018. Since the building had been exposed to wind and rain for nearly eighteen months, we were greatly relieved to see the installation of the slate roof. The Welsh slate was reclaimed from a convent in North Melbourne and is akin to the original. New upper hopper windows which are replicas of the original ones have been installed. The electrical wiring has been replaced throughout the building. So the building is now safe and watertight.

Stage 2

We have appointed Fraser Brown from Quadratum as the architect and SIDA Constructions as the builders for Stage 2. Not only are we repairing the extensive damage from the fire, we are also refurbishing the Courthouse. It has been agreed to use the Ted Smith Room as an

office and the Sam Merrifield Room for storage of the EHS Collection.

We have spent considerable time planning the interior works and the ‘fitting out’ of the rooms. This second stage requires expertise in solid plastering – in particular for the walls and mouldings in the courtroom. Thus, SIDA will use the services of an experienced joiner for the restoration of the courtroom ceiling. Unfortunately, only the decorative timber sections and one ‘bay’ of the original ceiling can be retained, so most of the woodwork in the ceiling will need to be replaced. The kitchen will also be renovated and the other small rooms will be restored.

The exterior work will include repairs to the brickwork, masonry and render with especial attention to the front and Kellaway Avenue sides of the building.

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In November 2017 the members agreed that EHS should undertake negotiations re the possibility of sharing the courthouse with another organisation: Discussions with the MVCC, as a first option, have commenced. It is planned that the building works will be completed by December 2018 and we all look forward to celebrating the re-establishment of the courthouse as the headquarters of EHS in early 2019.

Mary Cahill - June 2018

Cataloguing Committee Report

2017-2018

The Cataloguing Committee, consisting of Judy Maddigan, Rod McLennan, Zelma Riddell, Anna Denham and Anna Maree Malmgren, has been working on the following projects this year:

1. EHS Collections Management Policy

During the course of the year the Cataloguing Committee updated the Collections Management Policy. Key changes to the Policy include:

- a. A new process for acceptance of donated items to the Collection
- b. *Accession Numbers* now referred to as *Registration Numbers*.
- c. All donations - books, correspondence, documents, journals, maps, microfiche, photographs/Images valuation cards and commemorative tiles are to be listed in the database using the same numbering system.

The updated Collections Management Policy was approved by the EHS Committee in the first half of 2018.
COMPLETED

2. InMagic DB TextWorks Combined Catalogue Database – Rod/Judy/Anna Maree/ Zelma

The team continues work on the database: scanning, collating, re-numbering, entering data and continually adding to the database.

To date 734 books, 238 items of correspondence, 3 disks (DVDs), 206 documents, 332 Ephemera, 4 Journals, 235 Maps, 1 Microfiche, 2220 Photographs/Images, 56 valuation cards and 17 commemorative tiles have been included in the database.

The Cataloguing Committee recently discovered a large number of photographs that were not catalogued correctly and are in the process of including these into the database.

All photographs/images and assorted documents and ephemera will have a visual image in the database.

ONGOING

3. EHS Filing System/EHS Computer - Anna

Downloading of information from EHS Committee members' computers onto the Society's computer has been a slow process, with members currently providing small amounts of information into the existing folders.

One of the other outstanding tasks is the relocation of information currently stored in the computer with no proper file name or author (the person who originally put the document into the computer). There needs to be sorting, filing and, where appropriate, deleting of documents not required (many are duplicates or 'working documents.' All files should be stored under the proper Categories/Folders in the system. We can create new categories and folders as required, e.g. RESEARCH (with the researcher's own folder).

With all this data in a central location, and backed up on a regular basis, authorised Society members will be able to access and search secure and up-to-date EHS documents as and when required.

ONGOING

4. City of Essendon Rate Books (1898-1927)

In May 2018 all the Rate books held by EHS were sent to the Public Records Office Victoria (PROV) to be stored and scanned into their system for future availability to the public. Those held by MVCC have also been sent to PROV.

COMPLETED

5. Multimedia Collection - Anna

The EHS collection consists of floppy discs, cassette tapes, VHS & Beta Tapes, CD's and DVD's. A spreadsheet has been prepared and information relating to each piece of the collection is currently being catalogued before approved items are converted into a digital format.

ONGOING

EHS Cataloguing Committee

Prepared by Anna Denham

June 2018

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**EHS Annual Dinner June 2018**



# Memory Lane Garden Report



2017 - 2018

In spite of building restoration work EHS was able to install more tiles in the Memory Lane Garden on the section nearest to the Police Station driveway early in 2018.

A small number of orders had been placed and, late in 2017, after waiting to see if more would eventuate, it was decided to install the tiles on order. The donors had waited patiently for many months and it was only fair to go ahead out of respect for their need to see their tiles in place.

We have recently placed an order for many more tiles which will be installed in the 2018 – 2019 financial year. Some will be added to the section mentioned above. A whole section of tiles will go onto the first block on the path leading to the courthouse.

This has been a significant boost to the Memory Lane Garden as well as contributing to the EHS Courthouse Restoration Fund.

As always, each tile tells a story and confirms the value of the Memory Lane Garden as well as showing locals what wonderful people have gone before them in the area designated as the City of Moonee Valley.

While courthouse re-building work has progressed we have not been able to get to the garden for any watering or maintenance except on a very few occasions. However, the garden is surviving quite nicely and will only look better when we can do regular “clean and trim” sessions.

There has been some progress towards adding the tile information to the EHS database. However, our new volunteer who has kindly agreed to do this task is on Grandmother leave. We hope to have the data entered by this time next year.

Many thanks to everybody who has contributed in any way to the Memory Lane Garden.

It is a community project which honours the people who have contributed in so many ways to our City.

Julie Scott  
Memory Lane Co-ordinator  
June 2018



EHS Member, “Lady Sutherland Smith (aka Lady Eve)” greets ‘guests’  
at Penleigh (PEGS) (formerly *Wahgunyah*)  
EHS October Meeting, 2017



**Slate roof restored December, 2017**



**One step forward – so many more steps to go**

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