

ESSENDON HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.  
ANNUAL REPORT  
JULY 2024 - JUNE 2025



# **Essendon Historical Society Inc.**

## **Annual Report 2024-2025**

Presented to the Annual General Meeting  
on Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> August 2025  
at the Moonee Ponds Court House Museum  
768-770 Mt Alexander Road, Moonee Ponds

### **Committee of Management**

<b>President</b>	Cate Hutchings
<b>Vice-President</b>	Kelsey Collins
<b>Secretary</b>	Hayden Williams
<b>Treasurer</b>	Amanda Watson

<b>Committee</b>	Darryn Hartnett, Bob Chalmers, Lyndall Byrne, Terry Scott, Bob Mackay
<b>Cataloguing Sub-Committee</b>	Rod McLennan, Bob Chalmers, Anna Denham, Anne Hillier, Anna Maree Malmgren, Stephanie Tamburrino
<b>IT Support</b>	Hayden Williams, Kelsey Collins
<b>Newsletter Editor</b>	Vacant Position
<b>Memory Lane Garden</b>	Julie Scott

### **Life Members**

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

## President's Report – Year Ending 30 June 2025

It gives me great pleasure to present to you the President's Report for the 2024-2025 Year.

### HIGHLIGHTS

The two Court House exhibitions, "*Our Sporting Legacy*" and "*Anything Goes, An Exhibition inspired by the 1920s*" were outstanding and a credit to the curator, Lyndall Byrne, and very popular.

In October 2024, Bob Chalmers was presented with a Royal Historical Society of Victoria Award of Merit for exceptional service to history in Victoria.



*Bob Chalmers receives the award from RHSV's Elizabeth Jackson  
(photo: Emma Thege)*

The Annual General Meeting was held in the Court House on 27 August 2024, attended by twenty-one members. Members in attendance were given a copy of the EHS Annual Report covering the 2023-24 year prepared by Terry and Julie Scott.

Thank you, Julie, and Terry, for compiling this for us.

Kelsey Collins led two highly successful Aberfeldie Heritage Walks in May 2025.

EHS enabled the digitisation of the *Essendon Gazette* from 1919 to 1931 to supplement our previous Trove projects.

Finally, this successful year would not be possible without our many volunteers on our open days and volunteer members of our sub-committees. I have been so very well supported by the wonderful and talented people on the EHS Committee, without whose contribution we would not be able to continue to meet the EHS objectives.

I would like to thank all of you for your contribution.

### ELECTION OF THE 2024-2025 COMMITTEE

The Annual General Meeting was held on 27 August 2024. Nominations were received from all retiring members of the previous committee. As the nominations received equalled the number of vacant positions no elections were required, and the positions were filled as follows: -

**PRESIDENT** – Cate Hutchings  
**VICE-PRESIDENT** - Kelsey Collins  
**SECRETARY** - Hayden Williams  
**TREASURER** - Amanda Watson  
**COMMITTEE** - Lyndall Byrne,  
Bob Chalmers, Darryn Hartnett and  
Terry Scott.

On 18 November 2024, the Committee appointed Robert Mackay to fill a position on the Committee that was created by Consumer Affairs Victoria approval of revised EHS Rules of Incorporation.

## FINANCES

Our new Treasurer is Amanda Watson, and I would like to thank her for managing our finances. I also need to express our appreciation to Terry Scott for his many years of tireless service as Treasurer as well as for his ongoing support of Amanda during the transition period.

Terry joined the EHS Committee in 2012 and took up the position of Treasurer in 2013. He has been an EHS Life Member since 2019. Terry was very active on the Committee for 13 years and spent many, many, hours on the restoration process and we are very grateful for his contribution to EHS in various roles and he has well earned his retirement from the EHS Committee.

EHS was fortunate in receiving grants from Moonee Valley City Council (\$6,000) and the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (\$49,279) during the year.

EHS is also very appreciative of Angelo Pratt who acts as “auditor” of EHS.

## GENERAL MEETINGS

Ten General Meetings were held during the past year, and our Guest Speakers were as follows:

23 JULY

John Birt who also launched the “*Our Sporting Legacy*” Exhibition.

27 AUGUST

Rom Kucera (Backyard Beekeepers)

24 SEPTEMBER

Robert Furlan, ESU @ ES&A Bank

22 OCTOBER

Annual Dinner – Gary Presland & RHSV Award Presentation

26 NOVEMBER

Bob Mackay (Women of the Gates, Level Crossings & Gatekeepers)

25 FEBRUARY

Members Show & Tell

Launch of “*Anything Goes, An Exhibition inspired by the 1920s*”.

24 MARCH

Lance Pritchard (Hume & Hovell)

22 APRIL

Tina & Duncan Rolley (Artifact)

27 MAY

Margaret Anderson (Odd Jobs of the Past)

24 JUNE

Nina Fromhold (Memory Lane Life Stories)

The average attendance at the nine General Meetings over the past 12 months was 22.



*Duncan Rolley, Artifact Conservation  
receives the EHS gift from  
Amanda Watson*

## COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Eleven formal meetings were held as well as a Planning Meeting on 13 January 2025. Thank you to Kelsey Collins for taking the Minutes each month. I would like to thank the members of the Committee for their continued support during what has been another very busy year.

## MEMBERSHIP

Our membership at the end of the financial year is 163, including 12 Life Members and we were pleased to welcome 26 new members during the year. We are grateful to all our members who continued to support us throughout the challenging years.

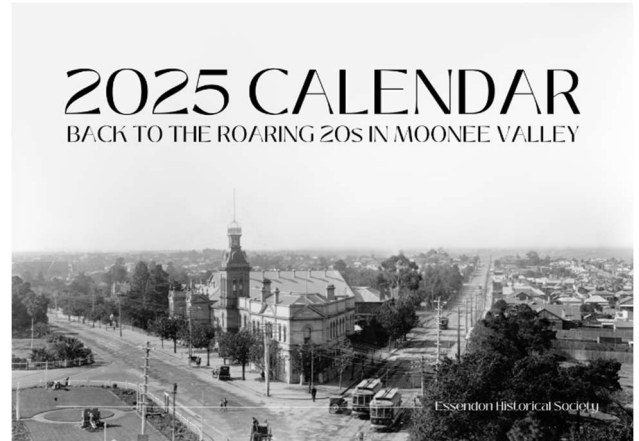
Twenty six new members joined or rejoined, during 2024-25: Suzane Becker, Alexandra Burns, Russell Byard, Assoc. Prof. Arun Chandu, Patricia Culliver, Tianna De Silva, Andrew Gurney, Cr Hamish Jones, Rob Jung, Lisa and Roderick Laidlaw, Warren Lang, David Mac, Claudia & Mark O'Leary, Andrina Otteraa, James Pennell, Madeleine Piscopo, Meriti Ryan, Anne-Maree Sawyer, Trudy Smith, Joy Spence, Stephanie Tamburrino, Kathleen Toal, John Watson.

## ANNUAL DINNER

[Cate Hutchings & Lyndall Byrne]  
The Annual Dinner was held in October 2024, at the Gannawarra Convention Centre, Keilor Road, North Essendon.  
Attended by forty-three members and friends, Elaine Brogan OAM acted as the MC. The evening featured the Award of Merit presentation to Bob Chalmers followed by our Guest Speaker, Dr Gary Presland.

## CALENDAR

Kelsey Collins produced a 1920s themed calendar to accompany the similar exhibition at the Court House.



## CATALOGUING SUB-COMMITTEE

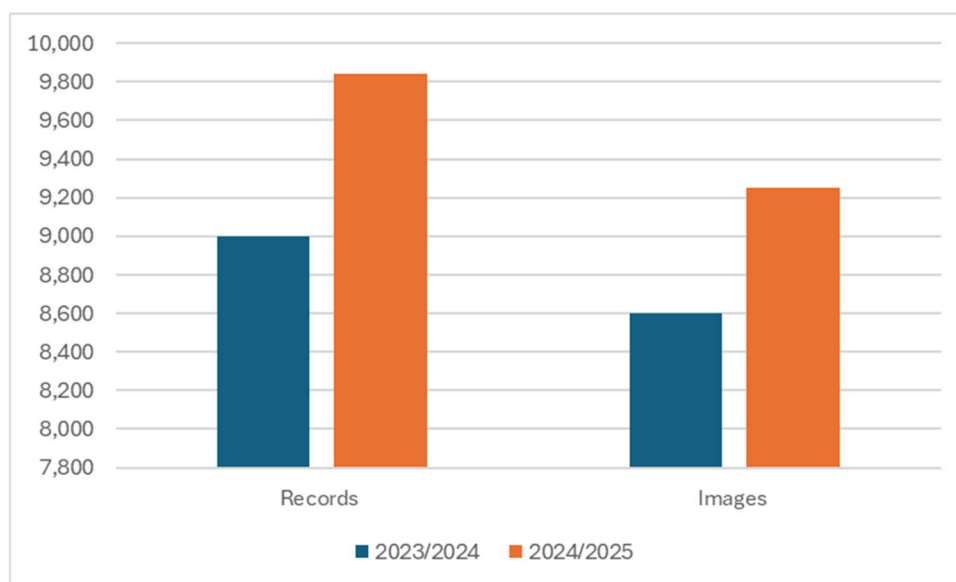
Thank you to Anna Denham, Anne Hillier, Anna Maree Malmgren, Rod McLennan, Stephanie Tamburrino and Bob Chalmers, for their work each Monday morning. The task is essential for EHS and our collection. Anna Maree and Stephanie have been going through the filing cabinets in the Sam Merrifield Room, checking their contents and position in drawer, giving them a catalogue number, and adding each file to eHive, with a description of the contents. Communication, clarity and consistency across all EHS users is important and Anna, Anna Maree, Anne and Rod have been working on a one-page document, *eHive Cataloguing User Basic Guidelines* and have also been updating the *Cataloguing Standards*.

Alex Bragiola and Lyndall Byrne have assisted with the cataloguing of house photos, house plans, costumes and framed photos and plans. Anna and Lyndall have simplified room location names in the eHive 'location' pick list.

Anna Maree also reviews the relevancy of items in the EHS Collection. Alex and Bob have purchased a Plustext scanner for slides, negatives & microfilm.



The Catalogue grew substantially in the year.



## COMMUNITY & SCHOOL TALKS

EHS provided the following talks:

July: Boomerang Network/Mindworks  
(Hayden Williams & Cate Hutchings).

- 
- August: St Monica's Primary School  
(Bob Chalmers & Hayden Williams).
- 
- November: St Mary's Catholic Primary School  
(Hayden Williams & Lyndall Byrne).

• January: Probus Club (Bob Chalmers)

- 
- February: St Vincent De Paul Primary School  
(Bob Chalmers & Hayden Williams).
- 

• June: PEGS Junior School  
(Hayden Williams)

- 
- June: Essendon U3A Local History  
(Bob Chalmers).

## COURTROOM EXHIBITIONS

[Lyndall Byrne]



*L-R Lyndall Byrne, John Birt and Darryn Hartnett  
at the launch of "Our Sporting Legacy"*

There were two exhibitions in the Court House over the past twelve months, each of approximately six month's duration. The two Court House exhibitions "*Our Sporting Legacy*" 23 July to 15 December 2024 and "*Anything Goes, An Exhibition inspired by the 1920s*" from 2 February to 29 June 2025. Special thanks to Lyndall Byrne, her helpers and to the clubs and individuals who loaned exhibits. Their work has been greatly appreciated by all who have viewed the display and has been largely responsible for our weekly visitor numbers.

## COURT HOUSE MAINTENANCE

[Terry Scott and Hayden Williams]

A Security Fence was installed at the rear of the Court House and the vandalised letterbox replaced.

Trudy Rickard, architect and heritage consultant, was engaged in November 2024 to assist EHS with repair of some of the Court House walls.

In May 2025, EHS signed a funding agreement with the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action for a Voluntary CoM Asset Upgrade Program grant of \$54,755.

We also committed to a contract with SIDA Constructions Pty Ltd for \$74,085.



*Jeremy Scott, SIDA Constructions  
repointing the north wall.*

## COURT HOUSE VISITORS

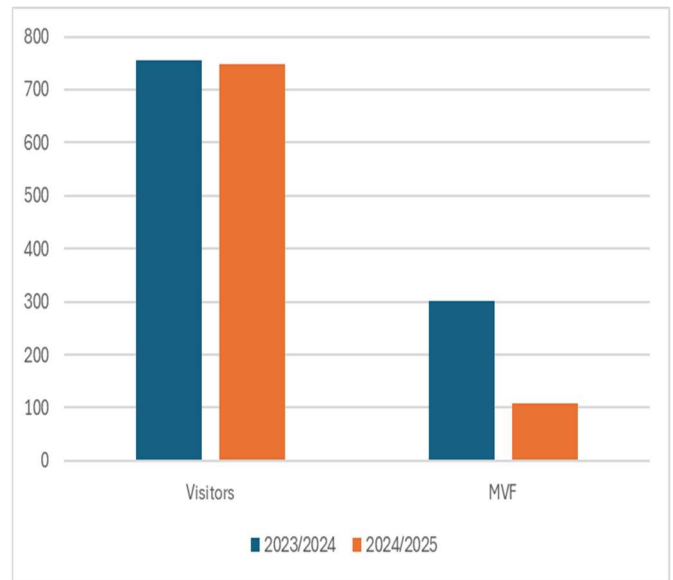
[Kelsey Collins, keeper of the roster]

The Court House was open for 49 Sundays including extended hours on one day in July 2024 for Open House Melbourne (60 visitors). It also opened on a Saturday in February 2025 for the Moonee Valley Festival (107 visitors).

The total number of Sunday visitors was 747, or an average of 15.2 people per Sunday.

If the Moonee Valley Festival (MVF) is included, the visitor total was 854.

### Sunday and Moonee Valley Festival Visitors



## ESSENDON GAZETTE TROVE PROJECT

[Hayden Williams & Bob Chalmers]

The next stage of digitising the *Essendon Gazette* was from 1 January 1919 to 25 June 1931 and was completed in May 2025.

Funding was provided by EHS (\$3,742) and a City of Moonee Valley Community Grant of \$6,000. EHS is also grateful to the State Library of Victoria for loan of the microfilm masters, and Moonee Valley Libraries whose support led to a cost 'discount', and the National Library of Australia.

Note that the paper was named the "*The Essendon Gazette and Keilor, Bulla and Broadmeadows Reporter*" from Jan 1919 to 2 Oct 1924.

From 9 Oct 1924, it was titled "*The Essendon Gazette and Flemington Spectator. Keilor, Bulla and Broadmeadows Reporter*".

## HERITAGE PROTECTION

Hayden Williams participated in the Niddrie and North Essendon Activity Centres' Community Reference Group.



*Kelsey Collins and some of the Aberfeldie Heritage Walk attendees.*

## HERITAGE WALKS

- October 2024: Bob Mackay and Alex Bragiola conducted the Puckle Street Heritage Walk as part of the Victorian Seniors Festival.



- May 2025: Kelsey Collins did two Aberfeldie Heritage Walks as part of the Australian Heritage Festival.

- In November 2024, twelve EHS members toured the Incinerator Gallery.



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*Tour leader John Barcham talks to EHS members about the history of the Incinerator site.*

## **ITALIAN COMMUNITY HISTORY PROJECT.**

Cate Hutchings, Sue Becker and Alexandra Burns are working on this project.

## **MOONEE VALLEY CITY COUNCIL**

In February, the Mayor and Councillors met with the Committee for a preview of *Anything Goes* exhibition and to introduce EHS and our activities.

The Court House Sub-Committee met in March to discuss building works, EHS activities, the licence, the MVCC Reconciliation Action Plan.

EHS was successful in obtaining a \$6,000 MVCC Community Grant for the *Essendon Gazette* Trove project.

Moonee Valley Libraries supported our exhibitions by including an EHS slide in their presentations.

## **NEWSLETTERS**

Bob Chalmers produced two twelve-page EHS newsletters during the past year which were Issues 269 and 270. Bob has resigned as Newsletter Editor and EHS owes a debt of gratitude to Bob who produced high quality newsletters over 15 years.

EHS is seeking a new editor – we have plenty of material to go into the newsletters and there would be ability for the new editor to either use the same template or change things around.

Thank you to Anna Maree Malmgren for proof-reading the Newsletter copy before it went to print, and to Anna Denham for maintaining the subject index.

## ONLINE SHOP

The delivery fee has been adjusted, and all deliveries or postage now incur a \$15 fee.

## PUCKLE STREET STALL

Kelsey Collins managed a stall on 7 December 2024 and thanks to those that volunteered their time.

## PUBLICITY

Cate Hutchings provided an interview and information for *Inner Northwest Press*.

## REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

Consumer Affairs Victoria approved revised Rules of Incorporation in October 2024. The ACNC Annual Information Statement was submitted in October 2024.

## RESEARCH

[Alex Bragiola, Bob Chambers and Hayden Williams]

Over 100 requests were received with the major categories being property or streets 60, and businesses 20.

The standard research fee was increased to a minimum of \$50.

## RHSV AWARD FOR EXTRAORDINARY SERVICE

Bob Chalmers was presented with a Royal Historical Society of Victoria (RHSV) Award of Merit for exceptional service to history in Victoria.

Elisabeth Jackson, Fellow of the RHSV, made the presentation to Bob at our Annual Dinner.

Bob joined EHS in 1979 and has been a Member of the EHS Committee since 1998, occupying every role.

Bob has been an EHS Life Member since 2011.

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## VIP VISITOR



EHS committee members Hayden Williams, Bob Chalmers, Cate Hutchings and Darryn Hartnett with Jo Briskey, MP (second from right). Jo Briskey, MP, met with the Committee in June.

Jo Briskey's office will print and post the EHS Newsletters.

# ESSENDON HISTORICAL SOCIETY COURT HOUSE DISPLAY

THEME: **SPORT**

DATE: July – December 2024

It was suggested that we prepare a “Sport” display concentrating on the history of sport in our district. To do this we needed the support of members, friends and outside sporting organisations as there was only a small amount of sporting items in the Essendon Historical Society’s collection.

An email was sent to many local organisations but only one reply from the Essendon Rowing Club was received. The Essendon Football Club, the Ascot Vale Trugo Club and the Essendon Croquet Club were personally approached and were very happy to help us.

Using the same format as previous displays, items were displayed as follows: -

## **Entrance foyer:**

A welcome sign was prepared showing posters of many different sports. It should be noted that due to the cold weather the posters printed on plain paper buckled a bit. Thought should be given as to better quality backing for posters in the future.

## **Entrance foyer display cabinet:**

This cabinet was used to display items from the Essendon Rowing Club as well as items relating to local Bowls clubs. The oar we had on loan from the Rowing Club was too big to display here so it was hung above the fireplace.

A Blazer from the Doutta Galla Bowls Club was shown on one of the mannequins.

Storyboards about the history of these Clubs were also included with the display. This display was very effective when the lights were turned on, picking up the shiny silver of the trophies in the cabinet.

## **Ramp entrance:**

A display promoting the Essendon Croquet Club was shown here. It looked very effective when entering the Court House via the ramp entrance. The ramp entrance needs something interesting to catch visitor’s attention as it can often be missed when people use that door to come in.

## **Low display cases in Courtroom:**

As 2024 was an Olympic Year it was decided to use this as the theme for the low display cases. In one case, items in our collection were displayed. These items concentrated on memorabilia from the Melbourne Olympic Games of 1956.

In the second case items from the Sydney Olympics of 2000, as well as Commonwealth Games, were displayed. One special item was an Olympic Torch used in the 2000 Olympic Torch Relay.

## **In between low display cases:**

We were very lucky to have items from the Ascot Vale Trugo Club to display. A history of Trugo was prepared and equipment was displayed. The items were quite colourful and hopefully draw attention to this truly unique Victorian sport.

## North Lobby Door:

Three sports blazers were displayed here from the EHS collection as well as an Essendon Football Club Cheer Squad member's duffle coat which was covered in cloth stickers supporting Essendon player, Terry Daniher. The duffle coat was a highlight of the exhibition.

## Tall display case in Court Room:

The wonderful items on display in this cabinet were from the Essendon Football Club Archives. They included framed photos, a silver tea service, silver trophies, booklets, as well as the Cheer Squad member's duffle coat standing next to the cabinet. Extra items were included in this cabinet which included commemorative medals, member tickets and a storyboard about the beginnings of the Essendon Football Club.



## Fireplace:

Cricket memorabilia were displayed in the fireplace area using photos, cricket equipment, trophies and booklets relating to cricket. To display these items at multi levels, cardboard boxes of different heights were painted black and used to display the cricket memorabilia.

## Above fireplace:

Hanging from the picture rail was the very large oar on loan from the Essendon Rowing Club. On the mantelpiece, football and cricket memorabilia were displayed.

## Finally:

A tennis dress was displayed in the witness stand together with old tennis racquets. Pictures of sports people were hung from the picture rails on the south and west walls.

The Sport Display was officially launched on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> July. The guest speaker for the night was John Birt, former Essendon Football Club Player and Coach.

Lyndall Byrne,

with thanks to Elaine Brogan and Liz Benton.

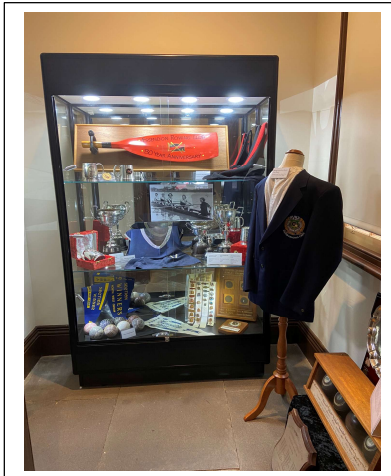




## PHOTOS FROM THE EXHIBITION:



**Entrance**



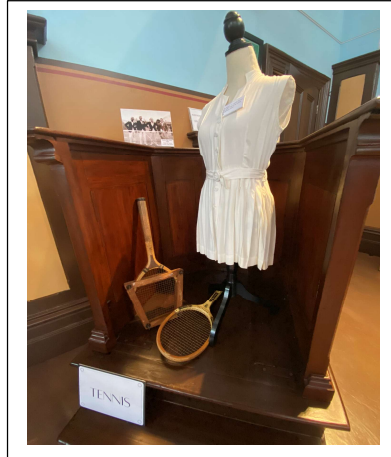
**Rowing & Bowline**



**Trugo**



**Football**



**Tennis**



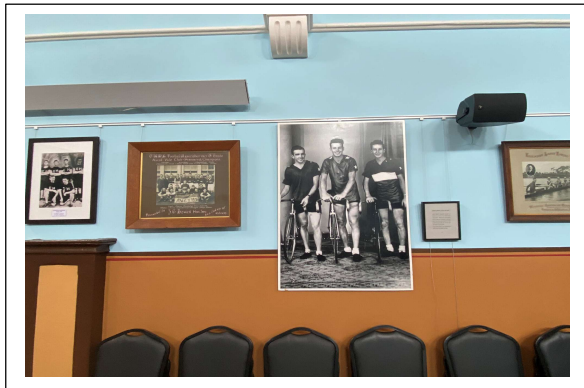
**Boxing**

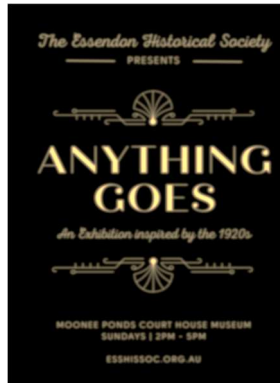


**Olympic Games**



**Club Blazers**



**THEME: ANYTHING GOES - AN EXHIBITION INSPIRED BY THE 1920s****DATE: SUNDAY 2 FEBRUARY – SUNDAY 29 JUNE 2025**

The idea for a display centring around the 1920s came about when objects and costumes from the North Lobby were being catalogued. It became obvious that many objects were dated around that time, therefore, the idea was to display what we had in our collection to members and the public. When this idea was mentioned, many offers of extra items were received, helping to add interest to what we had in mind. The exhibition was broken up into sections –

- Greeting posters
- Wedding section
- Kitchen section
- Formal wear display
- Accessories and small personal items
- Pottery and glassware
- Tools used during the twenties
- Jewellery display
- Reading area
- Medical section



Greeting Posters were prepared by Kelsey. The posters were pinned to the black folding board in the main entrance foyer and posters were organised by Hayden for the sandwich board which is put outside the Court House when open.

► Wedding Section -

Two wedding dresses and accessories from the Essendon Historical Society's collection were put on display in the large glass cabinet in the main foyer.

► Kitchen Section -

Once again, we were able to borrow dresses from Peter Bottomley from Castlemaine.

An everyday dress was put on our large mannequin which stood near a borrowed tea trolley showing items used in the kitchen in the twenties. Behind the mannequin, everyday items were displayed on portable shelving. Most of these items came from our collection but we also included a few items we were able to borrow.

► Formal Wear Display –

A beautiful black evening gown, also borrowed from Peter Bottomley, was displayed on one mannequin and a gentleman's formal dinner suit, donated by Mr Bob Chalmers, was displayed on the other mannequin.

► Accessories and Small Personal Items. Most of the objects displayed in two low cabinets were from our collection. They included dressing table sets, shaving equipment, personal items, cameras and writing implements.

► Pottery and Glass Ware Display – A very impressive display of Australian Pottery, Carnival Ware, Depression Glass and precious items from the twenties was included in the large display cabinet in the Courtroom. Most of the items were borrowed and looked very effective when the lights were turned on.

► Tools Section – We used the space in the fireplace to display tools used in the twenties. We had to borrow most of the tools for this display. Many thanks to Bob Chalmers and Greg Thege.

► Jewellery Display – The cube display cabinet was emptied, and many fine pieces of jewellery were displayed there, as well as beaded evening bags and a beaded face mask. The jewellery idea was popular, but we had to borrow most of the items. Many thanks to the members who helped.



► Reading Area - The idea for a reading area came about from a similar idea seen visiting country Korumburra. We borrowed some shelving from Darren Hartnett, used the leather chairs from the Courtroom and put out the word for books read in the twenties. Members were very quick in bringing in their precious books. A smoking stand was included to finish the look of a comfortable reading area.

► Medical Section- We needed something interesting for the ramp entrance foyer to catch visitors' attention. As we had recently received a donation of medical equipment from Graeme Dennerstein, we decided to use some of this, and by adding what we had in our collection, plus dentists' tools borrowed from Liz Benton, the entrance foyer became our Medical Section.

Finally, advertising posters from the twenties were prepared, framed and hung on the west wall. Large, framed photographs from the EHS collection were hung on the south wall completing the exhibition.



Court House Entrance and Wedding Display









## ***Memory Lane Garden***

*EHS received no new orders this financial year.*

*(Julie Scott MLG Convenor)*



**Essendon Historical Society**

**August 2025**

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**EHS 2025**

**Editor – Julie Scott**