

Founded in 1974 to promote interest in the history of Prahran and to foster appreciation of Australia's national heritage of history, the environment, architecture and the arts.

Patron
Mr P. S. Isaacson AM DFC AFC DFM

President: Gabriel Hermes
Secretary: Rose Sciardis
Treasurer: Andrew Turner



Member of the
Royal Historical Society
of Victoria Inc.

PO Box 8649
Armadale VIC 3143
Australia
Telephone: 9529 7442

A0021770T

Email: pahranhistoricalsociety@yahoo.com.au
Website: <http://phas.org.au/>

SPECIAL SOUVENIR EDITION



This is our one year anniversary since we moved in Grattan Gardens Community Centre on 28 November 2011.

Front row: PHAS Former Secretary Janet Irwin, President Gabriel Hermes, Councillor Melina Sehr JP, Chris Gahan OAM JP, Committee Member Beverly Whipp, Treasurer Andrew Turner.

Back row: Life Member Phillippe Batters, Committee Member Nobby Seymour, Vice President Chris Michalopoulos.

Warm welcome to our new members

A. Turnbull, E. Anastakis, S. DeSouza

We give a warm welcome to our renewed member for 2013

S. Subramaniam

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Individual \$13 Family \$20 Pensioners \$5 Student \$9 Life \$100 Donations



Any member who has an email address please let us know pahranhistoricalsociety@yahoo.com.au
We can then forward newsletters and other correspondence directly to your email.
Don't forget to renew your membership for the year 2013!



Stonnington Community Financial Services Ltd
Branch No: 9194
111 Chapel Street, Windsor VIC 3181
+61 3 9521 1732 / 0414 240 953
windsorcommunity@our.own.net.au



We would like to thank the Windsor Branch of the Bendigo Bank for their Sponsorship of the printing of this newsletter.

ADDRESS BY MR. GABRIEL HERMES UPON RECEIVING THE KEY TO THE NEW PRAHRAN HISTORICAL AND ARTS SOCIETY OFFICE ON 28TH NOVEMBER 2011.

The Prahran Historical and Arts Society is very happy to receive the key to our new shared office in Grattan Gardens Community Centre here in the heart of Prahran, and we thank the Mayor Melina Sehr, for this key opens the door to a new beginning for our Society and recently elected Committee.

This was a dream that began in 1973 by citizens who had a vision. Prahran Councillors Drever and Dane, with approval of the Council of the day, were keen to promote interest in the history of the original Prahran district and adjacent areas, and the arts in general through publications, lecturers and excursions.



Chris Gahan OAM JP Committee member & Ninnetta Innocca,
Recreation Co-Ordinator City of Stonnington.

This dream became a reality by electing the first President, well known artist Vernon Jones, and as Vice President Cr. Bill Dane, Miss Edna Hayes as Secretary and the Town Clerk J. A. Lucas became the Treasurer. Town Clerks Lucas and later David Jesson acted as Treasurer for many years until the mantel was assumed by Andrew Turner who still holds that position to this day.

Over the years there were many volunteers and enthusiastic committee members who put a lot of effort and time into the Society, with special thanks to Jenny Cassinada and Win Vears OAM.



Judiann Leggetts CA OES, PHAS Committee Member with
Australian TV and movie actor Terry Donovan

There was another dream that became a reality when Cr. Dane, under a gentleman's agreement with the Premier of Victoria, Rupert Hamer, was able to provide us with the Old Prahran Courthouse, to be used as a Museum. From 1985 to 1993 the Museum was a beehive of activity, with newsletter, historic excursions and riveting guest speakers.

Eventually though, the Committee needed rejuvenation as members left due to illness or age and no doubt the membership declined as a result of a changing demographic.

The Committee continued to persevere and keep the Museum open whenever possible. By 1990 the winds of change blew bleakly for the Society. The Council required more office space and the then Commissioners came on the scene with the amalgamation of Prahran and Malvern to form the current Stonnington City Council.

The Prahran Historical and Arts Society decided to maintain its identity and continued to operate from the R.S.L. rooms with considerable difficulties which eventually saw the office bearers storing documents and artefacts in a garden shed, in spare rooms, in the passage or even under the bed!

In closing on behalf of the Committee and Members, I wish to express our gratitude to Ninnetta Innoca, the Recreation and Services Director and Tony Oulton, Manager for Recreation and Libraries, without whose assistance and co-ordination this happy event would not have come to pass.

Let us now go forward.



Connie Gibbons, General Manager Social Development
City of Stonnington with
Gabriel Hermes, President of PHAS.

NOTES OF THE SPEECH BY THE MAYOR OF STONNINGTON CR. MELINA SEHR J.P ON 28TH NOVEMBER 2011 AT THE GRATTAN GARDENS COMMUNITY CENTRE.

- On behalf of the City of Stonnington, I'd like to thank the Prahran Historical and Arts Society for the invitation to speak today.
- The area of Prahran has a long and fascinating history back to the 1830's.
- Over many years, it has evolved to become one of Victoria's premier shopping and tourist destinations and entertainment areas.
- It is a place that many people, including myself, like to call home.
- It has fantastic selection of retail shops, cafes and restaurants, as well as a lovely community atmosphere and vibrancy that is hard to find anywhere else in Melbourne.



Gabriel Hermes, President and Cr Melina Sehr JP Mayor of Stonnington



Phillippe Batters and Andrew Turner, Treasurer

- The Society has produced a number of books and has many documents and artefacts in its possession.
- I'm sure that many of these items would have disappeared if it wasn't for the work undertaken by the Society.
- Over the years, there has been Committee changes as well as changes to the location of the Society's headquarters.
- Today, I'm pleased to welcome the Prahran Historical and Arts Society to its new home here at Grattan Gardens Community Centre.
- Council is committed to ensuring that we continue to support local groups and organisations such as the Prahran Historical and Arts Society.
- It plays a valuable role in our community and all of the Committee members should be proud of the good work they have achieved.
- Welcome to your new home and I hope that you can now continue preserving the history of Prahran for future generations.
- Thank you.

- Prahran truly is a gem.
- Since its inception in 1973, the Prahran Historical and Arts Society has played an important role in our City by collecting, recording, preserving and exhibiting material relating to the history of Prahran.
- The Society was formed to promote the interest in the history of Prahran and its founders wanted the history to encompass more than just its commercial and political development.
- Run by a dedicated Committee, the Prahran Historical and Arts Society have worked hard to keep the history of Prahran alive and available to the Community.



Ellen Porter Stonnington History Centre, David Tuck Stonnington History Centre, Tim McKenna Prahran Mechanics Institute.

FUTURE EVENTS

SATURDAY MARCH 23rd: 2pm - 4pm

Guest speaker: Richard Balsillie will give a presentation on Kings Arcade in Armadale.

Location: Grattan Gardens Community Centre in the activity room.

Our guest speaker Richard Balsillie will take us back to the 50's and 60's in presenting a fascinating insight to the Kings Arcade, Armadale, with a DVD he produced to record his childhood memories.

The visitors will be able to both interact and share stories and memoirs with our guest speaker.

Afterwards light refreshment will be served.

Come along and bring a friend.

To reserve a seat contact Gabriel on 95297442 and leave a message.



SATURDAY 18th MAY: 2pm

Guest speaker: Ralph Stavley, former policeman and historian

Location: Grattan Gardens Community Centre, Grattan Street, Prahran.

“VICTORIA POLICE – HISTORY”

Mr. Ralph Stavley will speak on aspects of the History of Victoria Police. Ralph served Victoria Police for many years, is a founding member of the Victoria Police Historical Society and co-author of Policeman's Paradise. This will be a captivating presentation.

More information will be available in our next Newsletter.

SATURDAY 17th AUGUST: 2pm till 3pm

Outing at the “Shrine” on St Kilda Road.

For bookings call Gabriel on 9529 7442.

Gold coin donation.

SUNDAY 6th OCTOBER - ‘SPRING INTO GARDENING’

Volunteers required, please call Gabriel on 9529 7442

WEDNESDAY 23rd OCTOBER: 7pm

AGM for the Prahran Historical Art Society

Location: Grattan Garden Community Centre in the activity room.

Light supper supplied, for catering purposes, please RSVP to Gabriel on 9529 7442

FRIDAY 22nd NOVEMBER: 6.30pm

End of year dinner. New venue to be announced.

AUGHTERSONS INSURANCE BROKERS

For all your insurance information call Mr. D. Colins W 9879 7699

Kings Arcade

In 1892 Frederick Phillips, a Malvern manufacturer and agent, purchased vacant land in Armadale between the Federal Bank building on the corner of High Street and Kooyong Road, and a coach factory at 962 High Street, operated by the Duke Bros. A laneway led from the rear of the land to the Armadale Railway Station. Phillips commissioned architect William Lawrence to design three double-storey shops with residences at 968-976 High Street (now 974 & 976), which were connected by a central archway that opened onto the laneway. In 1894 the shops were bought by James Paterson, a successful coal merchant and former mayor of Melbourne. He updated the buildings by adding baths, laundries and lavatories.

In 1917, greengrocer Frederick Alfred King and his wife Margaret moved into the seven-room brick shop and residence at 976 High Street. Initially tenants, in 1919 the Kings began to acquire shops in the Arcade, including the one they occupied. From 1921 to 1924 they built further shops at the rear, all one-roomed brick, believed to be designed by architect John William Hardy. In 1922 Margaret was noted as the owner of 968, 970, 976 and 978 High Street, and a couple of small shops at the rear. In 1924 the Prahran rate book lists the Kings as owning ten of these small shops in addition to those fronting the street. It became known as Railway Arcade, and the family – which included two children, Gordon and Beatrice – lived there until 1938, before moving to 85 St Georges Road, Toorak.

Frederick King passed away in 1944. The following year, Gordon, a builder, refurbished the Arcade, which was now known as Kings Arcade. The King family undertook significant refurbishment of the Arcade again in the 1980s, when the glass roof was added. Recognised by the National Trust of Victoria as ‘an unusual surviving example of a suburban shopping arcade’ next to a railway station, it remains in the King family to this day. A website on the Arcade can be found at www.kingsarcade.com.au.

This photograph of Kings Arcade dates from c1942, and was taken by Standish Dillon Cameron Cox, a copy of which was kindly donated to the Stonnington History Centre by a member of the Cox family. Standish Cox owned Filmpro Film Service Co. which operated in the Kings Arcade from 1936 to 1956. Cox’s photo laboratory comprised all of the first floor rooms to the left of the arcade entrance. ‘Armadale Railway Station’ is written in metal in the border above the original ‘Kings Arcade’ sign.



Sources:

Kings Arcade traders' website at www.kingsarcade.com.au.

Australian Dictionary of Biography (James Paterson entry)

Prahran rate books

Sands & McDougall postal directories

National Trust of Victoria Heritage Register database at

http://vhd.heritage.vic.gov.au/search/natrust_result_detail/66593.

Excerpt from the book of Re-Connections and Recollections

Rhiannon Wapling resources Administration Officer of Connection Uniting Care, gave us a wonderful presentation which included a visual display of old images and artefacts from Melbourne inner city during the time of the depression. It was all started by a man Frederick Oswald Barnett (1883-1972) deep in Christian faith and ongoing concern for those who were disadvantaged, himself came from working class, then a teacher later qualifying as an accountant setting up his own successful business.

In 1920s Barnett went to visit a slum mission, he was so deeply moved by the contrast between the ragged band of children he saw and his own family. He wrote in his personal recollection “When I got home, and saw my two youngest daughters asleep in our bed with their arms around each other’s necks I could have burst into tears. As I pictured the squalid circumstances under which many slums children were condemned to live, I felt it wasn’t fair and should be stopped.”

He begun fundraising with the help of the Men’s Section of the Methodist church Laymen’s Missionary Movement finally they raised £4,000 to purchase land at 12 Copelen Street South Yarra which also included the cost of building and the running cost of The Methodist Babies Home.

It was opened on the 7th of December 1929 with a massive crowd of 8000 people attending. During the next 40 years babies and toddlers were adopted, 3123 children were cared for, 23 students were being trained in Mothercraft Nursing. This was ceased by 1973 by which time nearly 700 nursed had been trained; new state laws came into effect regarding stringent adoptions and so fostering of babies and toddlers prior to adoption commenced.

Mr. Frederick Oswald Barnett passion and drive for the disadvantaged people continued by gathering together a group of 40 people to study the removal of slums and rehousing of residents, it was known as the ‘Barnett Slum Study Group’. With a series of articles and publication convinced then Premier Albert Dunstan to tour with his cabinet the slums of Melbourne. The Government under pressure no longer could ignore the problem of housing shortages, excessive high rent, and the issue of poverty, so it appointed a ‘Slum Abolition and Housing Commission’ with Barnett as Deputy Commissioner.

The Housing Act of 1937 was introduced in Parliament which enabled the Development of the Housing Commission of Victoria in 1938 with Barnett served as a Commissioner until 1948.



The social changes in our society with newer suburbs being created in Melbourne. The Copelen Methodist home was sold in 1990 to enable on wider focus on the needs of families in the growth corridors of Melbourne.

Vice President of the Malvern Historical Society, Jane Nigro; Resources Administration Officer, Rhiannon Wapling; and President of the Prahran Historical Society, Gabriel Hermes.