



Feb 2010

www.fitzroyhistorysociety.org.au

P.O Box 180, Fitzroy 3065

Welcome to the 150th Year for North Fitzroy.

We are planning a series of events focusing on North Fitzroy throughout the year.

Join us for the beginning of a year of celebrations

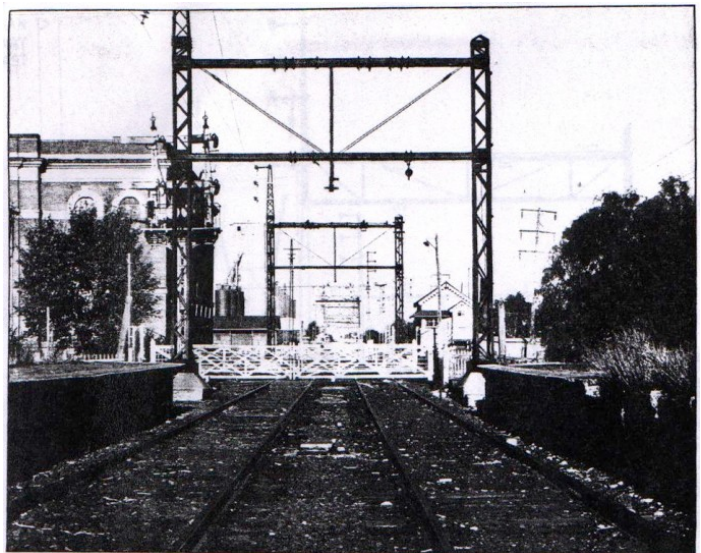
Inner Circle Railway North Fitzroy walk Sunday 14 March at 10.00am

conducted by Terence Nott, local architect and principal of Nott Architecture with practices in North Fitzroy and Bass Coast.

Walk begins at the site of the old North Fitzroy station.

on the west side of Rae Street just north of Park Street.

The walk proceeds east and end in the Edinburgh Gardens (Fitzroy Goods) near the site of the old footbridge.



Rae Street level crossing, eastern direction, circa 1963.

Alan Jungwirth photograph



Having departed North Fitzroy, B79 crosses Park Street with a short train destined for Fitzroy Goods. Unseen behind the locomotive is an employee protecting the level crossing with a red flag. 23.12.80.

Steve Bucton photograph

Research - You never know what you'll find out

On purchasing our house in Napier St we were told it had been built in the early 1850's. Keen to confirm the age of the building and possibly find out who had originally lived there. I printed out "How to Research your house" from the FHS website.

Armed with the guide and under the excellent tutelage of Mike Moore I started researching the history of our house in the local history room at the Fitzroy Library.

The room is a great source of references.

We started with the Sands and Macdougall street directories. Interestingly the street numbers change over time. We checked and cross checked by counting back from street corners and known buildings whose use had not changed over the last 150 years. The many pubs of Fitzroy are great reference points. Our house is 3 blocks down from Little Victoria St between Victoria Pde and Gertrude St, so we always had a fairly reliable point to guide us.

Safe in the knowledge that we had the correct house number Mike produced a one off record kept in the Local history room. The Nov 1854 "List of properties" is a survey of all the properties of the Fitzroy Ward, it showed that counting back from the corner no 9 (now no 21) here was "enclosed piece of land 16-4 frontage to Napier St by a depth of 102ft" owned by Edward Gillett.

So I had an owner and a date of the block of land. A search of the Burchett 'Index of the Notice to build' records showed that Edward built a house in May 1855. Naturally I wanted to know more about Edward Gillett.

Onto the internet and also a search of the Births Marriages and Death records held on CD's.

Edward's first recorded appearance in the colony was in recorded in the Melbourne Argus as purchasing land in Portland in January 1848

Gillett married Eliza Hemsley in 1863, but before that they had Henry in 1856, James in 1859, then followed by Alice in 1864. Eliza must have had other children as she's recorded as being the mother of 9 children.

Then searches through the Argus newspaper this event in the history of the house;
The Argus Saturday 18 July 1874

An inquest was held by Dr. Youl on Thursday, at Fitzroy, on the body of Eliza Gillett, aged 52 years, wife of Edward Gillett, living in Fitzroy. The deceased was the mother of nine children. About six months ago a daughter died, and the deceased had not been herself since. She had been a little light-headed for the last month, but never attempted to injure herself. On Monday and Tuesday she was suffering from hysterical mania. On Wednesday morning, a little before 8 o'clock, she went into her son's room, said it was time for him to get up, and looked about the table and chest of drawers. Her son asked her what she wanted, and she said, "Nothing," and went out. Her son did not see that she took anything out of the room. He got up, and after he had dressed heard a fall in his mother's room. On going in he found the deceased lying upon the floor dead, with her throat cut. There was blood about, and a razor was lying on the floor.

This razor was the son's, and was in his room on the night before. From there being blood upon a looking-glass and a chest of drawers on which it stood, it appeared that the deceased had stood opposite the glass and cut her throat. The wound was on the left side, and was such as could have been self-inflicted.

The jury found that the deceased cut her throat with a razor when of unsound mind.

Edward apparently did not remarry; he died in 1886 at the age of 77, described as a gentleman with his probate documents showing he had a long list of furniture and a thousand pounds in cash in the servants room.

I wandered about the house thinking of poor Eliza, her mind grief crazed and desperate. Eliza's ghost has never appeared, but there is a very dark stain on the Baltic pineboards...

Kym Ortenburg

Visit

www.fitzroyhistorysociety.org.au

You can access many resources of the history society, the Fitzroy Library and keep up to date through the new Fitzroy History website.

Fitzroy at Shoalhaven

Arthur Boyd, one of Australia's finest artists, and his wife Yvonne began their life together in 1944 in Henry Street, Fitzroy.

While they lived there Yvonne painted , *Children, Fitzroy* 1944.

The daughter of a banker, Yvonne (nee Lennie) Boyd enjoyed a typical middle-class Melbourne childhood, but grew up determined to become an artist. She attended the Royal Academy (later Victorian College of the Arts) and became a talented painter. Yvonne met Arthur Boyd in 1941 at life drawing classes.

They married in 1943, The couple had three children, Polly, Jamie and Lucy.

The painting is part of the Bundanon Trust collection and is displayed at Bundanon Trust property, on the Shoalhaven River, NSW.



We welcome your suggestions and feedback.

Your committee is; Meg Lee Convenor, Graeme Pritchard Treasurer, Catherine Pugsley Secretary (both Membership and General)

Other members of the Committee are Trudie Fraser, Sue Bradshaw, Chris Friday, Tim Gatehouse and Kym Ortenburg.

The committee meets the last Tuesday of every month.

Would you like to save paper and time? You can have the newsletter emailed to you.

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Please forward your Comments, Feedback, Suggestions for future activities

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