



July 2005

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Date for Your Diary

Our Annual General Meeting

As previously notified, **our AGM will be on 17th August** at the Mary of the Cross Centre (formerly Dodgshun House), at 7 Brunswick Street Fitzroy **at 7.30pm**. Please pencil this date in your diary. At **8pm**, our guest speakers will be Mary Sheehan and Sonia Jennings who will speak on their recent historical research on St Vincent's nurses and their impact on Fitzroy, and their recent book on this subject. We have included a very interesting preview article overleaf. It promises to be a most interesting evening – don't miss it!

Our Recent Activities

Visit to the Public Record Office of Victoria (PROV) on 25th June

A group of 27 of our members visited the PROV on this Saturday morning. For those who have not yet seen this marvellous new building, it is fair to say that we were all impressed by the facility, its layout and particularly the small but relevant sample of its contents that we were able to see. Mike Moore and Tim Gatehouse had selected a range of Fitzroy-related documents that were on display for our viewing on our arrival. They included such items as original Fitzroy Rate Books for 1859 onwards, Licensing Court registers from 1859, records of Fitzroy churches, accounts related to Fitzroy Primary School and others.

It is really difficult to choose the highlights in this selection. However one box, which did not look particularly promising at first glance, (VPRS 3182, P0000, Unit 46) was a 100-page document that listed all the properties in Fitzroy in 1854, detailing house descriptions, rights of way and dimensions.

As part of his research on the history of Howe Street, North Fitzroy, Tim Gatehouse obtained the Health Department file on the Presbyterian Church on the corner of McKean Street and Michael Street. He found the correspondence between the Church Committee and his grandfather, the Secretary of the Health Department in the 1930s, in which he had threatened to prosecute the Church Committee for opening the extensions to the church without his consent.

A smaller group was lucky enough to be taken on a tour of the facility including its extensive climate-controlled bulk storage area. Many of the items were visibly displayed, though most were enclosed on the miles of shelving. We saw, among other items, records of births and deaths, historic furniture, maps, stored glass plate negatives and a comprehensive display of the stamps of Victoria.

FHS Show and Tell

Our 'Show and Tell' meeting was held at the Fitzroy Library on Wednesday 20th July with an attendance of 17 members.

Here is a sample of the items that were brought along. Mike Moore showed us a small oval wooden table from the *Labour in Vain Hotel* from around 1875 (when his great-grandfather was the publican there). He also played us a record with some 1920s music from the Christian Israelite tradition.



The F.A Harris Pottery Garden Edge

David Higgins had a terra cotta Garden Edge piece made in Fitzroy at the F.A. Harris Pottery: he'd like to know where that was and when it prospered! Jill Robertson played us a record from 1961 with MacRobertson's radio commercials called *Stars in MacRobertson Land* including ones by Australians Lionel Long, Ted Hamilton and Mark Winter and visitors Chubby Checker and Bobby Rydell. Tim Gatehouse had some architectural books (of the 1830s) that belonged to Alexander Davidson, the architect of the Cable Tram Engine House (1880) on the corner of Gertrude and Nicholson St.

Peter Yewers had some family photos from North Fitzroy in the early 1920s, including a photo of Scouts at St Luke's, and another of Miller Street Primary School in that period. Mike O'Brien had two reference books: the Index Volume to Volumes 1-12 of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* which lists people by place of birth (and other criteria) and *Australian Furniture: Pictorial History and Dictionary 1788-1938* which is a very good reference to the many furniture makers in Fitzroy and North Fitzroy. We heard of how the Court House, Police Station and Barracks were seriously damaged by a policeman when a fire had been made in a fireplace with a blocked flue. We saw an 1883 pocket watch and chain given to a Fitzroy Councillor and Mayor. We heard of Thomas Gamble, a convict transported in 1833 and freed in Tasmania in 1840, who settled in Newtown as a brick maker in the 1840s.

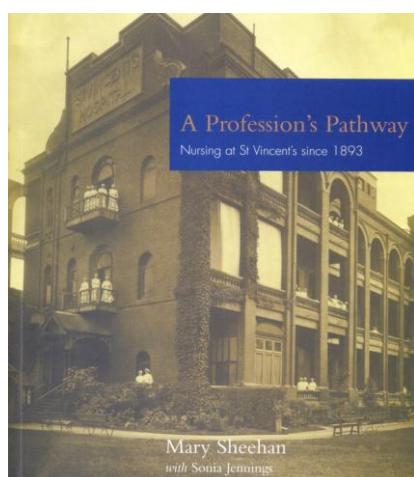
It was also a great chance for Lina Favrin to show us the riches of the Local History Collection held in the Library. She showed us a photocopy of the 1889 publication *Our Local Men of the Times: Biographical Sketches of the Prominent Citizens of Collingwood and Fitzroy*, which has biographies of 32 important men, predominantly JPs and Councillors. There was the unique *City of Fitzroy: Official Record of Chairmen, Mayors and Councillors with its Assessments, Population and Revenue since its Separation from the City of Melbourne in 1858*. This showed that the first council meeting was held in the school at the corner of George and Greeves St on Tuesday 28th September 1858. One of the Councillors was Hugh Templeton, who owned the school! She also showed us the *Historical and Statistical Record of the Town of Fitzroy*, issued when the memorial stone for Fitzroy Town Hall was laid. This broadsheet was dated 8th July 1873. There were also some very colourful plans of buildings - some were built, but others only planned.

Fitzroy's Nurses

Ever since Alma, an eighteen year old tailoress, was admitted with typhoid fever, St Vincent's nurses have cared for the district's residents.

The recent publication *A Profession's Pathway, Nursing at St Vincent's since 1893* tells the stories of Fitzroy's devoted nurses and their progress from menial workers to well-paid clinicians with a wide range of skills and vital role to play in modern health-care.

Authors Mary Sheehan and Sonia Jennings will talk about *A Profession's Pathway, Nursing at St Vincent's since 1893* at our AGM on 17th August. They will discuss their research discoveries, share oral history accounts and illustrate their talk liberally with some of the exceptional images held by the hospital archives. Copies of the book will also be available for sale on the night for \$39.



Biographical information

Mary Sheehan is a professional historian and member of the Living Histories team. Formerly a registered nurse, Mary completed a BA (Hons) and MA in history at Monash University and is now a research fellow in the Department of History at Melbourne University. Mary has a wide knowledge of Australian history and is experienced in writing histories. She has undertaken research on a large variety of subjects and has written multiple unpublished history reports, including a major work for the Shire of

Colac-Otway in Victoria. Other work includes *Faint Traces: Chinese in Hawthorn* (with Dianne Nicholas), *Victories in Camberwell*, the history of a Catholic parish. She is a contributor to *Carlton: A History* and the on-line publication *Our House: Histories of Australian Homes*, as well as the forthcoming *Encyclopaedia of Melbourne*. Mary has undertaken many oral history projects, including work for Woodside Energy and the City of Prahran. Her most recent publication is *A Profession's Pathway: Nursing at St Vincent's since 1893*.

Sonia Jennings is also a professional historian and Living Histories' partner. Sonia has a BA (Hons) from Melbourne and an MA in Public History from Monash. She recently assisted Jill Barnard with *Welcome & Farewell: The Story of Station Pier*. Her other works include a Centenary of Federation cultural history for the City of Boroondara Library Service: *Telling Lives: locating and mapping the cultural heritage of Boroondara* (with Jill Barnard). Sonia contributed to the recently published *Carlton: A History* with a section on the sporting clubs of Carlton. Her work has also included cultural history, sports history, heritage studies and oral history projects. Sonia assisted Mary Sheehan with the recently published *A Profession's Pathway: Nursing at St Vincent's since 1893*.

Your Committee for 2004-2005

Convenor:	Mike Moore (9416 1446)
Secretary:	vacant
Treasurer:	Harold Mackrell
Membership records:	John Senyard
Minute secretary :	Keith Ross
Newsletter editor:	Mike O'Brien

Committee members:	
Sue Bradshaw,	Peter Coyle,
Lina Favrin,	Chris Friday,
Tim Gatehouse,	Heather McRae,
Tom O'Brien,	June Senyard.