



## Quiz Night - Thursday, 29 July 2004

7.30pm at the Purple Turtle Pub

166 Johnston Street, corner of Napier Street



- Come for the entertainment
- Test your knowledge of Fitzroy and its history
- Tables of up to 6 – bring your friends, or join a table on the night
- Devise an imaginative name for your team / table
- Prizes, donated by Bradstreet Books and Steve Robertson
- Entry \$5 per person

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Please rsvp to **Annabel**      **9419 6186** or **annabel@bigpond.net.au**  
                  **or Jill**                **9419 8868**  
                  **or Mike**                **9416 1446** or **m.moore@bigpond.com**



Thursday, 12 August at Mary of the Cross Centre

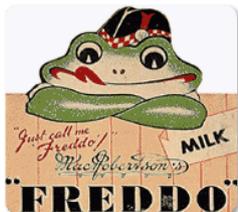
(formerly Dodgshun House)

7 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy

7.30pm - Annual General Meeting

8pm - Guest Speaker: Jill Robertson on

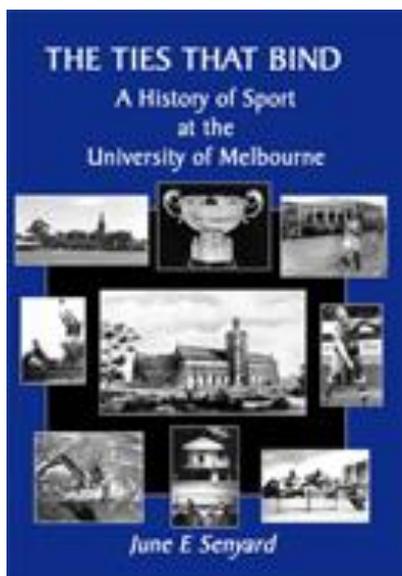
### *“MacRobertson, The Chocolate King”*



Macpherson Robertson first made boiled sweets in the bathroom of his cottage in Argyle Street. Soon his Fitzroy confectionery works were making 700 different items at the rate of several tons per day.

Come and hear the story of the man and his lollies, and Jill's experience in researching, writing and publishing this aspect of Fitzroy's history.

## Two books from FHS members – and a book launch invitation for 22 July 2004



Congratulations to June Senyard on the recent publication of her book ***The Ties That Bind: A History of Sport at the University of Melbourne***. The university itself is celebrating its 150<sup>th</sup>, and June's book covers from the gentleman's game of cricket in 1856 to modern day extreme sports and yoga. Olympic Gold Medal athlete Ralph Doubell launched the book during May, and the Foreword was written by another Olympic alumnus, John Landy, now Governor of Victoria.



***MacRobertson: The Chocolate King***, written by Jill Robertson and published by Lothian Books, is being launched this month. Jill has spent the past six years researching and documenting the life of Macpherson Robertson of Cherry Ripe and Freddo Frog fame -- a man who figures prominently in Fitzroy's history.

Jill invites us all to come and share her excitement at the launch at the Fitzroy Library on Thursday, 22 July at 6.30pm. Some members of the original Robertson family will be there, copies of the book will be on sale, and chocolates will be provided.

Then at the FHS Annual General Meeting on 12 August 2004, Jill will be our Guest Speaker, telling us the inside story of her historical researching, writing the book, and then the realities of publishing.

### Some Local Fitzroy History

From time to time, we get an occasional request for information on life or people in the Fitzroy of old. When preparing a reply, it is often possible to find relevant information on the Internet, or in our local history reference ***Fitzroy: Melbourne's First Suburb***.

A recent request sought information on Nathaniel Kinsman, who had married the writer's forebears. Our history book had no reference, but a Google search revealed the following.

Kinsman was "a Fitzroy second-hand dealer who had a lucrative business in 'quick and cheap weddings.' "

Between 1858 and 1862 services were held in a schoolroom "near the Collingwood baths". A layman, Nathaniel Kinsman, who was a Fitzroy second-hand furniture dealer, conducted these. When the Church of England decided to appoint an ordained minister to East Collingwood in 1862, Kinsman and his congregation objected to the appointment. They seceded and erected this church nearby. According to census reports there were 111 members of this new congregation in 1871 and about half that number ten years later.

Kinsman's church became part of a denomination known as the Victorian Free Church of England and Ireland or The Episcopal Free Church. This church lasted for 20 years until 1907. In 1895 it was known locally as the Victorian Free Church and in 1902 as the Victorian Free Church Mission Hall.

A check of the Sands & McDougall directories indicated that it was located at 224 Moor Street (just west of Smith Street), and a block of apartments now occupies the site.

### Fitzroy's Municipal History

The Borough of Fitzroy was created in 1858 and our wonderful Town Hall built in the 1870s and 1880s. But ten years ago the City of Fitzroy was subsumed into the enlarged new City of Yarra and our Town Hall was closed.

Over recent years the wards covering Fitzroy were named after the 19<sup>th</sup> century identities Nicholson and McKillop. Now, after a review by the Victorian Electoral Commission, we are to have three different wards in the City of Yarra, two of which will cover Fitzroy:

- a north ward: Nicholls, "after Pastor Sir Doug Nicholls, the revered sportsman, Aboriginal community leader and statesman who was associated with Fitzroy for many years;"
  - a central ward: Langridge, "after George David Langridge, a prominent 19th century mayor of Collingwood, Member of Parliament, Acting Premier and housing developer, after whom Langridge Street is named;" (we also have Langridge House at 132 Nicholson Street, Fitzroy where Langridge's daughter lived when she married Robert Best in 1881)
- After the Town Hall's decade of closure and recent years of heritage restoration, we welcome its impending re-opening for use by community groups such as FHS.

## Local History and the Fitzroy Library

Our meeting on 11 May was held at the Fitzroy Library when Kynan Gentry and Lena Favrin told us of the Local History project at the Library. Kynan, with his experience in local history librarianship in New Zealand, was engaged for several months to upgrade the recording of local history. We heard of his progress to date, the large amount of Fitzroy's history held at other institutions, and his plans for a system to identify and record this history.

Kynan's contract and task was to end in June, Lina Favrin, the Fitzroy Library's local history librarian, will be able to implement his work and they recently issued the following press release to solicit new information and records of Fitzroy's history from the broad community.

### Fitzroy : It's your history too!

That box under the bed, who knows what treasures lie within. What do you have hidden away in drawers and cupboards- documents, old photographs, souvenirs? If so, the Fitzroy Public Library wants to hear from you!

Recently, a bequest from the Thomas, Samuel and George Ewing Trust has seen the appointment of Kynan Gentry, Field Historian, to the Fitzroy Public Library. Charged with the task of developing a database recording all historical records, photographs and information about Fitzroy, Melbourne's oldest suburb, the past few months have seen Kynan delving through library and archival collections throughout Melbourne.

"We've uncovered some fascinating things, and in some rather odd places, such as a collection of papers in a stable, and some film clips from the early 1970s." Kynan said. "What's surprised me most however, is the volume of material that exists pertaining to Fitzroy."

"People often forget that they've got great grandma's old photo album, or great granddad's journals and letters hidden away in a drawer.

"We aren't expecting people to give these documents to us, we primarily want to review them and record them so researchers, historians and anyone with an interest in our rich and diverse history know where to find information," Mr Gentry said. "Record it for posterity so history is not lost."

Local businesses and organisations are also being encouraged to search their archives as well for old documents such as reports, board papers and meeting minutes, as they contain valuable historical information.

We would like to hear from you if you have old documents such as papers, photographs, letters, reports or you know old stories which could contribute to this important resource. If you have information/material you would like to donate to the Fitzroy Public Library's Local History Collection:

- write to Fitzroy History Project, Fitzroy Public Library, 128 Moor Street, Fitzroy Vic 3065;
- email [fitzroyhistoryproject@yarranet.net.au](mailto:fitzroyhistoryproject@yarranet.net.au)
- or contact Lina Favrin at 9201 1540 (after her return from annual leave on 19 July).

## Living in the Kulin Nations - Snapshots of Indigenous History in Fitzroy

Our June event for members was held at the Fitzroy Town Hall on 2 June, as part of Reconciliation Week and organised jointly with the City of Yarra and ANTaR (Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation).

Fitzroy has a special significance for the aboriginal families who came to Melbourne 70 years ago from the country areas such as Lake Tyers and Framlingham. Fitzroy and Collingwood became the central meeting point for all Victorian Indigenous communities as it was here, during the 1940s and 1950s, that Indigenous families first lived when they moved from country Victoria to Melbourne. This means that Indigenous Australian people have strong family connections to the area even though their tribal links may be elsewhere.

The guest speakers Lisa Thorpe and Esme Bamblett told us of the early boarding houses in Gertrude Street and Gore Street, the meeting places at the Builders' Arms Hotel, the old peppercorn tree at Gore & Webb Streets, and the Fitzroy Stars and Fitzroy Gym in Gertrude Street. Pastor Doug Nicholls established the Aboriginal Church of Christ in 1943 at 258 Gore Street.

Many aboriginal organisations were established in Fitzroy: the Australian Aborigines' League at Victoria Parade in 1928; the Aboriginal Advancement League in 1958; the Elders' Council in Smith Street in 1957; the Legal Service in 1972 and the Health Service in Gertrude Street in 1973.

More information is readily available at

<http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au>

Then drill down to > Our Neighbourhood  
> Arts & Culture > Snapshots of Aboriginal Fitzroy  
where you will find over 30 pages of interesting information on Indigenous history in Fitzroy, including:



This former church at 258 Gore Street is remembered by Alick Jackomos as the place where "the contemporary or modern Aboriginal movement all started". The property was given to Pastor Doug Nicholls in 1943 by the Church of Christ to establish the Aboriginal Church of Christ.

### Your Committee for 2003-20/04 includes

|                    |                                                              |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Convenor:          | Annabel Barbara 9419 6186                                    |
| Treasurer:         | Harold Mackrell                                              |
| Membership records | John Senyard                                                 |
| Secretary & Editor | Mike Moore 9416 1446                                         |
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