

# The Fitzroy History Society Inc. Newsletter

## March 2003

### Helen Macpherson Smith

Osborne House at 40 Nicholson St. was the girlhood home of Helen Macpherson Smith, who lived most of her life in Europe and left a philanthropic bequest for the people of Victoria.

At our last FHS function on 5 March, 34 members joined our evening walk which was followed by a meal at the Pumphouse Hotel. But first we gathered at the heights of Nauru House where Darvell Hutchinson told us of Helen's life, her forebears, her very generous bequest, and some of the many grants given to Victorian recipients.

Guests for the evening were Jim Davidson, Sue Dance and Peter Lovell who, 24 years earlier, had worked to save Osborne House when it was under threat of demolition.

In the 1852-1880 era, Helen's father, Robert Smith and his brothers, had a very successful timber yard in East Melbourne, between the ICI building and the Eastern Hill Fire Station. We walked through the site, with the timber theme well presented by the timber trucks then protesting at Parliament House.

### St Mark's 150th Anniversary

Tuesday, 1st July 2003 will be the 150th anniversary of the founding of St Mark's Church.

At 7pm, there will be a Solemn Mass, in the presence of the Archbishop, followed by supper.

Fr Tony Noble, the vicar, has written to the Fitzroy History Society inviting all of our members to be present.

Over the period 23 June to 23 November 2003, they have a program of events planned, including religious services, concerts, an exhibition and a dinner. Copies of the program are available from Fr Tony Noble, or on the internet at [www.stmarksfitzroy.com](http://www.stmarksfitzroy.com)

### Nth Fitzroy Primary School, the first 125 years

North Fitzroy Primary has celebrated 125 years of educating the children of the area. A 200 page book has been produced, full of photos, names and stories - and all thoroughly researched and well produced. Copies are available from Doris Pearse there, or call her on 9481 5860.

### Fitzroy Heritage Walk

Yarra Council produced a colourful brochure on a local heritage walk, starting at the Fitzroy Town Hall. The full walk is about 4km in length, or you can do it in shorter segments. A copy of the brochure is enclosed.

### Internet for History Societies

We are affiliated with the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, and we regularly receive their newsletter, HistoryNews. You can readily see a copy at [www.historyvictoria.com.au](http://www.historyvictoria.com.au)

This latest March issue describes their externally funded initiative for a MyConnectedCommunity project.

Using new technology and the internet, they will develop improved two-way communications for members and affiliated societies.

RHSV also reports that the Port Phillip Herald, over the period 1840 to 1900, has been digitised and is available on-line. Find it at [www.paperofrecord.com](http://www.paperofrecord.com)

Try an 'advanced search' over 1880-84, for 'gertrude street' and you get 185 hits. But to view the pages you must pay \$11 over the internet for 7 days open access to the system!

**Welcome** to new member Christine Gamble.

### A date for your diary

On Thursday, 12 June, we are planning an evening of nostalgic Fitzroy films/videos, together with wine and cheese. More details later.

#### Committee contacts — 2002/03

Convenor: Annabel Barbara 9419 6186  
Treasurer: Harold Mackrell  
Secretary Mike Moore 9416 1446  
& Editor: [m.moore@bigpond.com](mailto:m.moore@bigpond.com)

## Fitzroy History Society

## Membership Renewal / Membership Application

Name(s)

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Telephone

.....

Address

.....

E-mail

.....

Subscription  
\$5 per person, per year

Cash Cheque

Please forward your Comments, Feedback, Suggestions for future activities

MELBOURNE'S HERITAGE SHOPFRONTS & SHOPFITTINGS - SEE HOW THEY'RE MADE

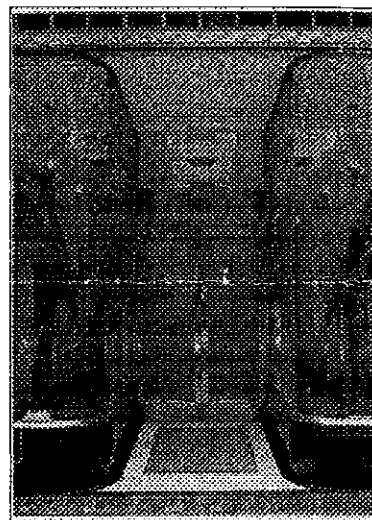
**10.30am, Sunday, 6 April 2003**

**JOIN US IN A VISIT TO ECONOMIC INDUSTRIES**  
53 Gertrude Street (near Fitzroy Street)

Steve Healy will show us behind the scenes, and tell us about:

- restoration of copper & brass moulded shopfronts  
such as at Block Court Arcade
- copper & brass display cases and counters
- restorations at the Princess Theatre & Athenaeum Theatre

All done here at Fitzroy since 1930.



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**7.30pm, Wednesday, 7 May 2003**

***WAS THEIR LABOUR IN VAIN?  
FITZROY'S FEMALE PUBLICANS***

A talk by Clare Wright

at The Old Colonial Inn, 127 Brunswick Street Fitzroy

Clare Wright was a recipient of the 2002 inaugural Geoffrey Serle Award for the best contribution to Australian history in a postgraduate thesis. Clare's PhD thesis, 'Beyond the Ladies Lounge', a history of female publicans in Victoria, 1875-1945, debunks the myth of the Australian pub as a male domain by documenting the role that women have traditionally played as hotel licensees. Clare is now Executive Officer of the History Council of Victoria, working to promote history in schools and the community.

To set the scene, we will meet at the Old Colonial Inn: join us there from 7.30, then at 8 pm discover a new perspective on Australian pubs, including female publicans of Fitzroy.

Drinks and coffee available at bar prices.

Any inquiries, please contact Heather on 9486 9643