

# The Fitzroy History Society Inc. Newsletter

## November 2001

### Oral history project

The City of Yarra has just completed a project documenting the unique stories of people with a long-time association with Fitzroy. The Society assisted the researchers by providing names of people. The result is a book of stories and photographs which will be on display at the Fitzroy Library from Sunday 25 November until Sunday 9 December. Come along and join in the launch at 12.30 pm on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

### Apology

As many of you will have discovered, the date for our November walk was incorrectly advertised. It was in fact November 18 not 22. We apologise to anyone who missed out.

### Two calls for help

▪ Gwenda Spendlove writes asking for information about two hotels. In the Cole Hotel Records, Benjamin Pink was named the licensee of the Park Hotel (Nicholson and Vere streets, Abbotsford) in 1881 and the West of England Hotel (64 Kerr and Fitzroy streets, Fitzroy) from 1883 to 1885. If you know anything about these hotels or where to locate photographs of them please contact Gwenda by email or write. Email: [gwenbob@dezzanet.net.au](mailto:gwenbob@dezzanet.net.au) or write 2/22 Cypress Avenue Boronia Vic 3155.

▪ Dr Ken Edwards from the Queensland University of Technology is researching traditional games and pastimes of the indigenous people of Australia and the Torres Strait Islands. He writes asking if there are any references or sources of information from our area that may contain information relating to pastimes such as swimming, ball games, wrestling etc. The result will be an Indigenous Games Package for schools. To contact him, email on [kd.edwards@qut.edu.au](mailto:kd.edwards@qut.edu.au) or write to the university at Victoria Park Road, Kelvin Grove Qld, 4059.

### Local History Forum

The Local History Forum is an association of community-based history societies in the municipalities of Yarra and Melbourne, together with representatives from state organisations including the State Library of Victoria and the Royal Historical Society of Victoria.

The forum has been very active this year. A major initiative has been the proposal for the appointment of a funded local field historian to coordinate the identification of material within the municipalities. The proposal will shortly be submitted to the funding body.

The forum is also helping to coordinate a joint event for next year's Heritage Week. Societies will be developing displays for the theme: Beyond the Big Smoke.

### Leisure in Fitzroy in the 1850s

In November 1840 the Travellers' Rest Hotel, a straggling weatherboard structure of four or five rooms, was situated in Nicholson Street, facing Faraday Street. The Travellers' Rest was for many years a popular refreshment stall for people indulging in strolls out of town, and it had, as an annual fixture, a billy-goat race with competitors dressed in jockey uniform.

Edmund Finn's *Chronicles of early Melbourne, 1835-1852*. (on page 762) records that for Boxing Day 1851:

'Henry Conway at Travellers' Rest invites all lovers of fun and frolic to a

GOAT RACE, with eight thoroughbred billygoats ridden by boys over half mile course with hurdle leaps, Newmarket style;

CLIMBING THE GREASY POLE, prize a Silver Watch;

TWO HUNDRED PIGEONS will be shot at;

THE RAT HUNT follows, in which three hundred trained rats will figure;

THE PIG WITH THE GREASY TALE and many other OLD ENGLISH GAMES will wind up the day.'

*Editor's note: I'm not nostalgic for the 'old days' but I would dearly love to have been there and witnessed the rat hunt!!!!*

### Plans for 2002

The committee has planned an exciting year for the Society with a mix of walks, talks and displays. A brochure—which will also include our membership form—will be included in the first newsletter for the year, due out at the end of January.

### Date for your diary

Meanwhile, pencil in the date for our first event:

- Sunday 24 February
- 10.30 am
- Nicholson Street Walk

### New website

Log on to [www.history.vic.gov.au](http://www.history.vic.gov.au)—a new website dedicated to Victoria's history.

### Heritage Review

The Yarra City Council is currently reviewing the heritage areas that have been identified within its boundaries.

Our Society is currently looking at these 'heritage overlays' and checking the sites and buildings that are included. This is an important task as it has implications for the city's planning processes. For example, since the last review was done Brunswick Street has been identified as an area of significance.

### History courses

The University of New England is offering an Advanced Diploma in Local and Applied History, designed for those who have never done any university study and a Graduate Diploma for those with a first degree. Visit their website at [www.une.edu.au/arts/History/localhistory](http://www.une.edu.au/arts/History/localhistory) if you are interested.

### Executive Committee —2001-2002

Convenor: Annabel Barbara (9419 6186)  
Treasurer: Harold Mackrell  
Editor: Jill Robertson (9419 8868)

# End of the Year Celebration

Join us at the **Himalayan Dhaba Indian Restaurant**  
85 Johnston Street, Collingwood

**When:** Friday 7 December 2001

**Time:** 7.00 pm for drinks  
7.30 pm eat!!!

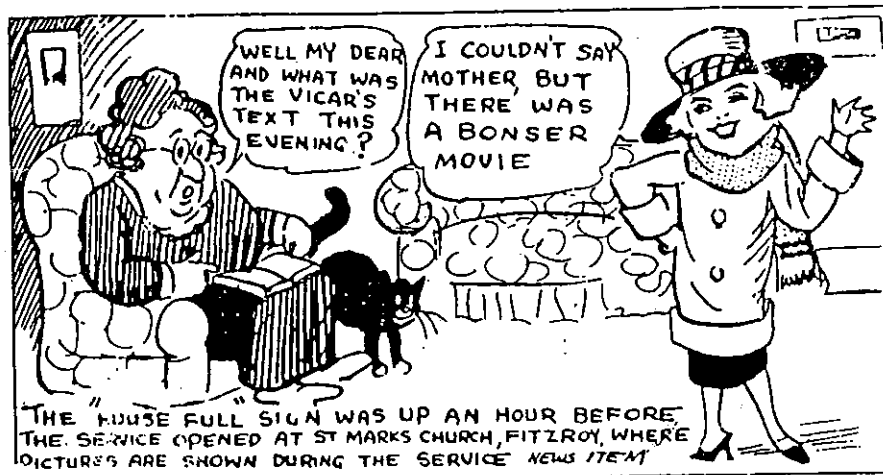
**Food:** Northern Indian  
Try the tempting tastes of samosas, beef vindaloo, palat lamb, makhani chicken, fish, Tandoori chicken, rice, breads, raitas, salads and much more.

**Cost:** Mains around \$10-\$15  
Set menus for \$18.50 and \$22.50

**Drink:** The restaurant is licensed but you can also bring your own drinks.

## To book

- For reservations and enquiries please call Annabel Barbara on 9419 6186.
- To assist with catering, reservations should be made no later than Wednesday 5 December 2001.



From early this century religious denominations in Australia made intermittent attempts to use the motion picture medium for more uplifting purposes than those pursued by the commercial cinema. Whether screening films in churches had the desired results is another matter.

This cartoon appears on page 189 in the book *Hollywood Down Under: Australians at the Movies, 1896 to the Present Day* by Diane Collins, Angus & Robertson, 1987, in a chapter called 'Critics and Critics'. The source is not cited.