

February 2015

www.fitzroyhistorysociety.org.au

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NEWSLETTER

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

FITZROY RAILWAY WALK

Sunday 22 February 2015, 10am to 12 noon.

FHS has produced a brochure for a self-guided walk of the Inner Circle railway line. The publication will be launched on Sunday morning 22 February 2015, with a walk of the route, commencing at 10.00am.



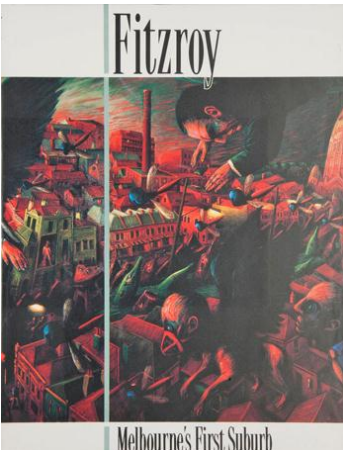
Please meet at 10.00am at the corner of Nicholson Street and the site of the railway (immediately north of Park Street).

The walk will be led by, Terry Nott, local Architect, member of the Fitzroy History Society and key researcher for the project.

FHS gratefully acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government and Public Record Office Victoria for making this project possible.

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF *FITZROY: MELBOURNE'S FIRST SUBURB*

It is 25 years since the publication of *Fitzroy: Melbourne's First Suburb*



Come along to celebrate and meet with the authors at:

Bad Frankie's Bar

141 Greeves Street Fitzroy

On Sunday 8 March, 2015, 2.30pm – 4.30pm

\$10 Entry fee

The Fitzroy History Society is also sponsoring this event.

The book has been a valuable reference for the History of Fitzroy. It was produced by the Cutten History Committee of the Fitzroy History Society.

The first edition was published in 1989 by Hyland House Publishing Pty Limited and a reprint in 1991 was published by Melbourne University Press.

As announced in the previous Newsletter, the book was reprinted by Yarra Libraries in 2014, and is available for purchase from the Yarra Libraries for \$55.

HONOURING FITZROY VOLUNTEERS IN THE GREAT WAR

FHS has a database, largely compiled by Mike O'Brien with some additions by Mike Moore and Peter Woods, of about 3000 men and women who enlisted in the Services during WWI, and who have a connection with Fitzroy. On **Sunday 24 May**, as our contribution to the National Trust Heritage Festival, there will be a walk from the Edinburgh Gardens to the Fitzroy Town Hall during which the stories of some service people will be told as we pass their former homes. The walk will commence at the memorial bandstand at 10.30 am and then move to the memorial pergola that was erected in 1919 by the Edinburgh Gardens sporting clubs. The original location of this memorial, on a path between the western grandstand (now gone) and the bowling club, can be seen circled in the aerial photo on the next page. It is now against the back wall of the re-built bowling club building and is no longer a walk-through structure.

On Monday 17 November, 1919, the day after the memorial was opened, *The Argus* reported on page 5:

SPORTSMEN'S MEMORIAL AT FITZROY.

On Sunday afternoon Brigadier-General Lloyd, in the absence through illness of Brigadier-General H. E. Elliott, dedicated a cenotaph erected by the members of the Fitzroy Cricket, Football, Bowling, Tennis, and Baseball clubs to perpetuate the

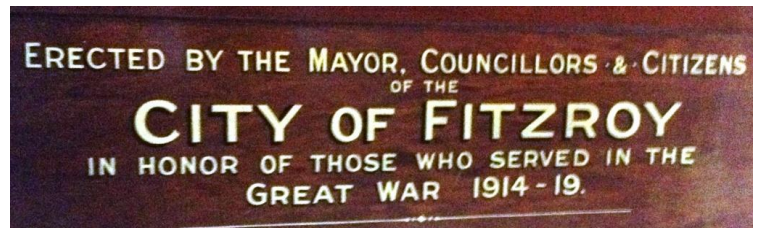
memory of members who fell in the war. The Last Post was sounded by the bugle band, area No. 60 A and Ba. An honour board containing the names of those who enlisted for active service from the combined Fitzroy sporting clubs was unveiled by the mayor (Councillor Miller) and Mr. J. W. Billson, M.L.A. The names of 38 fallen comrades were engraved on bronze tablets fixed to the pillars of the cenotaph, which is close to the entrance to the ground.



Fitzroy sporting clubs' war memorial at Edinburgh Gardens



The walk will conclude at the Fitzroy Town Hall, where the extensive Honour Boards will be viewed.



REPORTS ON EVENTS IN OCTOBER 2014

FITZROY 1853 – REMAINING HOUSES AND VANISHED STREETS

Clement Hodgkinson's recently re-discovered map of early Fitzroy was the basis of a walk on Sunday, 26 Oct 2014. His detailed map, dated 29 Nov 1853, showed the streets and individual houses then existing. Prior to 1854, Gore, George & Napier Streets did not continue north beyond Webb St, and Moor St did not continue east of Young St. The theme for this walk was to identify the many houses still standing, and to locate the position and evidence of the earlier narrow streets.

We began in Napier St, where the two stone houses at Nos. 17 and 19 had been built in 1851 for William Grave, and nearby the brick house at No. 23 had been built in 1853 for Edward Gillett. Further along at the Gertrude St corner we compared Jane Cannan's 1853 drawing with the hotel now there. Further north, the two houses at Nos. 112 and 116 looked old and were shown on the early map.

Eastwards along Webb St, then south along George St where No. 138 retains its original frontage, and No. 139, opposite, has its original roof line together with a newer façade from the late 1800s. Closer to Gertrude St, the 1853 map showed three houses where Nos. 88 and 94 still remain, but No. 92, the birthplace of Alfred Deakin, has been replaced by a recent house from the 1970s.

Along Gertrude St and, at the Gore St corner, the map identified that there was a reference mark ('benchmark') "On stone over cellar grating of east front of the Builders Arms Hotel" that by reference to the map legend, gave the height "above low water of a tide whose rise was 3ft. 5½ in. at a tide gauge set up

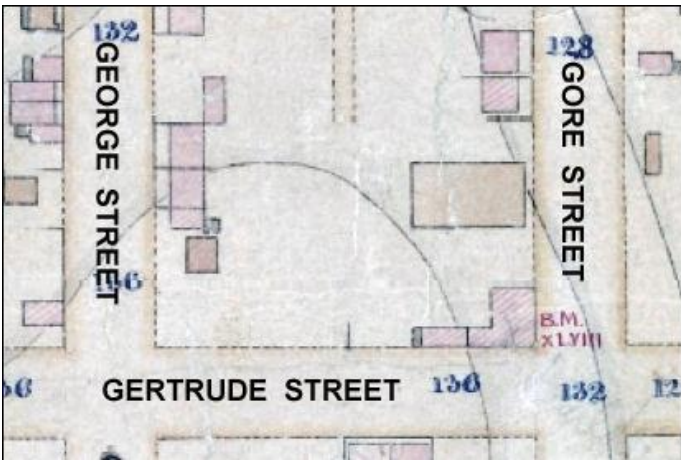
below the wharf." The hotel had been rebuilt since then, the stone and benchmark were gone, but the cellar entry was still there on the footpath and east wall.

North along Gore St, Nos. 93 & 95 had been built in 1850 for Thomas Higginbotham by Thomas Bready. Further north and turning left, we noted 80 Webb St which Thomas Bready had built for himself in 1852. At the north-east corner of Gore and Webb, the existing Union Club Hotel had been rebuilt on the site of the earlier Collingwood Hotel. This hotel was also on the 1853 map, and it too had had a benchmark on the pillar of its original doorway.

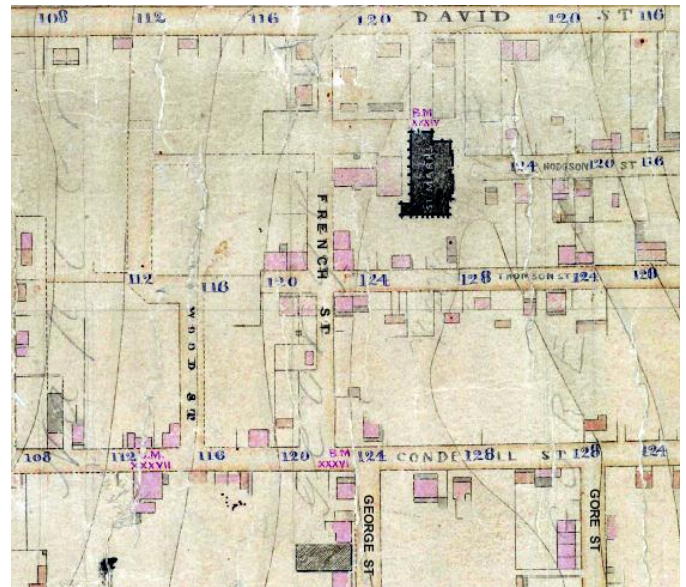
The wide Gore Street, northwards from Webb to Condell, replaced an earlier narrow Henry St which was on our map. Further west, a narrow Albert Street from Webb to Condell had been replaced by the existing width of George Street. George Street now continues north from Condell, replacing an earlier narrow French Street. Early photos of St Marks Church show the large school rooms in front of the church before the street was widened.

Then we walked east along the widened Moor Street, where we saw from the map that it had replaced an earlier narrow Thomson Street. The walk concluded in Gore Street just south from Greeves Street where we were on the site of David Young's 'Montgomery Villa' and his large land holding.

In 1854, the Fitzroy Ward Improvement Act provided funds and authorisation for the wide streets that we have today. When the land for Gore Street was resumed, Young was compensated £50 for part of his house, plus the garden and vineyard extending from Greeves St to St David St.



Above: Part of Hodgkinson's 1853 map. Benchmark XLVIII at Builders Arms Hotel at NW corner of Gertrude & Gore Streets.



Right: Part of Hodgkinson's 1853 map showing George and French Sts. before French St was widened and aligned with George St. The dark building is St Mark's (with a benchmark on its NW corner).

SOCIAL JUSTICE HISTORY WALK DURING ANTI-POVERTY WEEK 2014

On Friday morning 17th October a large number of people gathered outside the Coolibah Centre in Brunswick Street to participate in the walk organised by the Brotherhood of St Laurence and the Fitzroy History Society and led by Brian Stagoll and Barry Pullen.

The Brotherhood of St Laurence was founded by Father Gerard Tucker in 1930 and in 1933 moved from NSW to St Mary's Mission in Fitzroy Street, Fitzroy to help the poor in the area. Young men who wished to serve others came together to live as a community at St Mary's. To expand his work in the slums and to gain access to the main Fitzroy thoroughfare, Father Tucker wanted 2 two-storey shops with dwellings, a wood yard and a two storey shop and dwelling in poor condition in Brunswick Street. After many appeals for donations he was successful in purchasing the shops in 1936 for £3000.

The Coolibah Centre, which was established in 1946, was the first senior citizen's centre in Australia. The centre now offers a community based program that provides activities, knowledge and skills for socially and financially disadvantaged older adults and people with disabilities. In 1984 St Mary's Mission House was converted into a rooming house for 22 people and renamed Millot House. The lane beside Millot House was given to the Brotherhood by the City of Fitzroy and the many bluestone blocks used in the gardens come from this lane. The lane opposite, Dead Man's Lane, and Marion and Hanover Streets were populated by sly grog shops and brothels in the early 20th century and many underworld shootouts happened here. Jessica Millot, the manager of the Coolibah Centre and long time volunteer said she checked every day to see if "one of her men" was lying drunk or dead in Dead Man's Lane.

The Atherton Gardens high-rise estate was built between the mid 1960's and 1971 and replaced an entire neighbourhood made up of over 250 buildings spread across eight streets. This neighbourhood was located between Brunswick, Gertrude, Napier, King William and Condell Streets. About 180 homes lined the streets, most inhabited since the 19th century. The

locals were mainly struggling families, including European migrants and Aboriginal people. About 50 shops were clustered along Brunswick, Gertrude, Webb and Condell Streets. A Methodist church provided a place of worship, and a range of industries were squeezed in beside houses and businesses. Local community resistance to further clearances in the 1970s brought an end to the high-rise program.

The new Connie Benn Centre on the corner of Brunswick and King William Streets is named for one of Victoria's most significant social innovators and policy reformers. Her work at the Brotherhood's Family Centre changed community development and welfare models of social work across Australia and became part of an anti-poverty experiment which showed that given the right resources, supports and opportunities, there is capacity in everyone to build a good life.

Hanover Welfare Services was founded in 1964 on the corner of Hanover and Brunswick Streets with a primary focus on support for homeless men in the inner city. It was one of the first specialist homeless support agencies in Melbourne. One of Hanover's founders, social researcher Alan Jordan. Photographed many of its clients.

After a 7 year community campaign to redirect Commonwealth Government funding away from hospitals to community control, the Fitzroy Community Health Association was formed in 1983. A new building was opened in 1987 at 75 Brunswick Street in conjunction with the Brotherhood, at the old cottage where Community Aid Abroad had been established in 1962. Later amalgamations with Carlton Community Health Centre in 1993 created North Yarra Community Health, a major provider of social and health services in our community.

A brochure for a self-guided walk can be downloaded from the FHS website. It may be found from the Walks tab.

Details of the work of the Brotherhood of St Laurence can be found on its website: www.bsl.org.au

— C. Friday

FITZROY'S ORAL HISTORY PROJECT UPDATE

The Fitzroy History Society is well underway in preparing to record the memories and stories of long term residents of Fitzroy to depict the 'Life and Times of living in Fitzroy'. The Project will create a public archive of audio recordings and perhaps transcriptions that will be housed in the Local History Collection of the Fitzroy Branch of the City of Yarra Library.

The members of the FHS Oral History Working Group (Marijana Vanevski, Marion Glanville-Hearst, Rosa Simonelli, Peter Woods, Hilary McPhee, Alison Hart, Mary Lewis, Meryl Hyde and Meg Lee) have been meeting over January to organise and implement the Project. If you are interested in Oral History in Fitzroy you are welcome to come to the next meeting on 20 February at 1pm at the Fitzroy Library Meeting Room. If you know our long term residents we are interested to know them also.