



**November 2020**

## **NEWSLETTER**

**P.O. Box 180, Fitzroy, 3068**

**www.fitzroyhistorysociety.org.au**

**fitzroyhistorysociety@yahoo.com.au**

President: Peter Woods

Secretary: Simon Armstrong

### **FHS COMMITTEE FOR 2020-21**

The AGM which was held on-line via Zoom on 1 September 2020. The Committee for the coming year is:

President/Convenor:	Peter Woods
Treasurer:	Brendan Mitchell
Secretary:	Simon Armstrong
Memberships:	Andy Larkis
Social Media:	Peter Heading
Terence Nott,	Member City of Yarra Heritage Committee
Members:	Meg Lee, Jennifer McKeagney, Mike Moore, Graeme Pritchard

After the formal meeting Dr. Piper Rodd, Lecturer, School of Education, Deakin University gave an address on *The Heritage Value of Atherton Gardens*. The Atherton Garden towers, which house about 2000 people., were completed in 1971. Dr Rodd supports the heritage listing of the estate and discussed the aspects of the estate that would fit into the selection criteria for the Victorian Heritage Register.

### **ANNUAL DINNER**

Because of COVID-19 we will not have an annual dinner this year. However, there will be an outdoors get-together on Tuesday 1 December from 6.30pm. The venue is the park at Edwards Place, which is on the corner of Michael, Falconer and Scotchmer Streets in North Fitzroy (Melway reference 30, C12). Bring your own food and drink and a chair to sit on. We hope to see you there.

### **LIVES OF HOUSES**

**Be a *Citizen Historian* and research the history of your House**

How old is it?

Who built it and what was it made of?

Who lived in it and for how long?

What occupations did they have?

FHS is launching the project ***Citizen Historian*** where you can be the historian and investigate the life of your house.

#### **Background**

The Society has over several years offered members hands-on workshops on how to research your house. A comprehensive Resource list was developed by Mike Moore for members. The Society works in conjunction with City of Yarra Library Staff and our Local History Resource librarian, Lina Favrin to produce the more accurate and up to date access to areas for answers to your questions.

Many members have attended these workshops and found them valuable.

#### **Collation of information**

Now we are looking to record the results of your research as a *Citizen Historian*. The information you find can be collated in a *Template* found on the FHS website under the 'Research' tab. ( <https://fitzroyhistorysociety.org.au/research/> )

The Society is planning to establish a digital database where your research will be collected for posterity and housed in the City of Yarra Library Local History Collection. We would be delighted to have you contribute to this database. No personal information will be accepted or recorded.

#### **The information**

You may already have some facts you have collected from these early workshops or indeed your own research since attending the workshops. A simple template has been designed for the recording of your findings and any other interesting material related to your house. This will keep the information accessible and show a consistency of information. Of course, given the value of the internet and accessibility to digitised data bases (once you know where to look!) information can be recorded immediately and easily. Our prepared Resource list is a fabulous tool to help you work through for relevant details.

#### **Significance**

Fitzroy has a significant collection of houses that are more than 150 years old. The Burchett Index records houses built in 1863 with approximately 38 still standing. Even if your house is not that old its 'life' is important to us.

Please read in conjunction with the 'Template'

**Charles Johnston and Co. Furniture manufacturers, corner Gertrude and George Streets**

A Sydney Morning Herald article on 20 October 2020 headed "Kennedy in auction hot seat with Speaker's Chair" ( <https://www.smh.com.au/national/kennedy-in-auction-hot-seat-with-speaker-s-chair-20201020-p5666xr.html> ) included the information that the Speaker's Chair for the first Australian Parliament in Melbourne in 1901 was manufactured by Charles Johnston & Co. of Gertrude Street Fitzroy in 1900. (There was a similar article in *The Age* on 21 October, but it did not mention the Fitzroy connection to the chair.)

The furniture business was started by Charles Johnston about 1880 and continued by his son George. The premises occupied by the business changed over time. In 1909 they extended from 166 to 188 Gertrude Street. Later they were from 184 to 196. The company also operated factories in Napier and Little Napier Streets

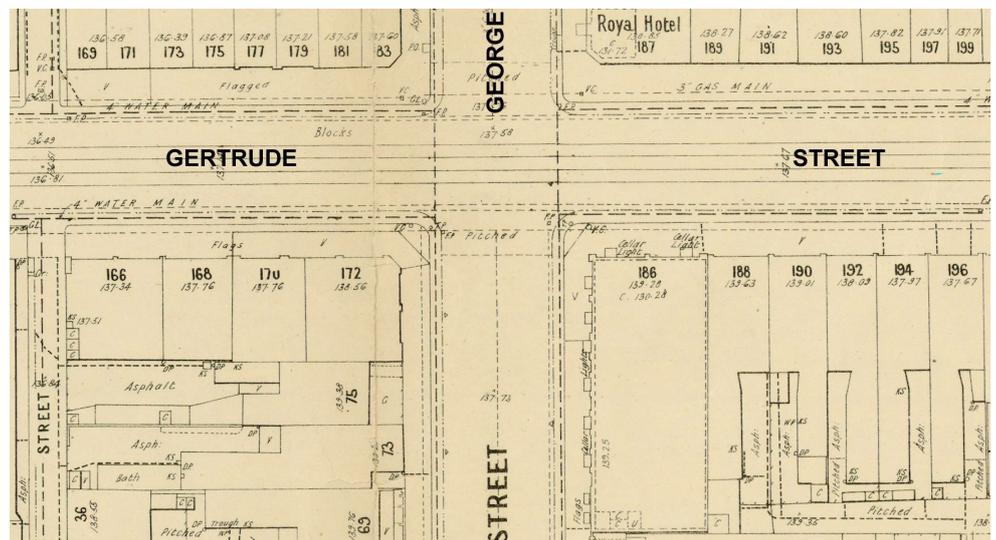
Jill Robertson gives an account of the business in her 2008 book *Gertrude Street Fitzroy*



Johnston's premises stretching along Gertrude St on either side of George St.. From the Collingwood and Fitzroy Illustrated Directory and Handbook, 1905. The top two floors of the 4-storey building were destroyed in a fire in 1963.

**FURNITURE-MAKERS** to the Victorian Government.—We manufacture our own goods. We purchase or exchange anything or everything. We give estimates and designs free. We extend the payments to suit the convenience of our customers. We only charge 10 per cent. interest on cash prices. **Charles Johnston and Co.,** corner of Gertrude and George sts., Fitzroy.

The Argus Sat 22 Oct 1898, p.11.



Part of MMBW Plan 1209 of 1899

## THE MELBOURNE DISTRICT NURSING SOCIETY AND ROYAL TERRACE, NICHOLSON STREET

The Melbourne District Nursing Society was formed in 1885. In May 1904 it moved to 5 Royal Terrace (now 58 Nicholson St) from Leicester St Carlton, where it had been since 1902. The nurses worked in the inner suburbs of Melbourne. The Society had a set of bye-laws which outlined the work conditions for the nurses. Section 111.1 states 'Each nurse shall be ready to go to her district at 9 am. She will be expected to visit urgent cases on Sundays, and will be required to work eight hours on each week day, to wear the special uniform and live in the Home of the Society'.

Melbourne District Nursing Society trained nurses began using bicycles in 1903 enabling the nurses to visit more patients over a wider area. The Maltese cross on their helmets was red. In 1919 during the influenza epidemic they were provided with cars in order to cope with the increased number of patients.

The Society became the Melbourne District Nursing Service, then the Royal District Nursing Service, then in 2015 it merged with a Queensland organisation to become Bolton Clarke.



A 1905 photograph showing Matron, Sister Lee Archer, and her staff of six Trained nurses of the Melbourne District Nursing Society outside their new Nurse's home and Headquarters at 5 Royal Terrace, Nicholson Street, Fitzroy.

The following extracts come from an article on the Society in *Table Talk* of Thurs. 7 June 1907, p.14. A similar article by the same writer was in the Fitzroy City Press of Fri. 3 May 1907, p.3. (but with lesser printing clarity).

### **Melbourne District Nursing Society.**

By W.F.M.

Of all the charitable organisations in Melbourne there are few more deserving of support than that carried on under the above title, Sister Lee Archer being in charge, and the home situated in Royal Terrace, Nicholson-street, Fitzroy. The maimed, the halt and the blind are cared for, and no case of genuine poverty is turned from the doors. Janet Lady Clarke occupies the position of president, and a committee of well-known ladies and gentlemen are responsible for the management of the society—well and capably managed it is, too, on most econ-

omical lines. The principal aim is to afford skilled nursing to those sick poor who, for many reasons, are better left in their own homes than cared for in a hospital, to which place patients are only sent by Sister Lee Archer when the case absolutely demands this course of action. Daily visits are paid to patients, who are washed and made comfortable, the nurses (of whom there are six, divided among Fitzroy, Collingwood, North Melbourne, Brunswick, Richmond, West Melbourne, Carlton and South Melbourne) make beds and apply surgical dressings or administer medical necessities. Some idea of the great work performed by the society may be gathered from the fact that during one year the nurses paid 23,152 visits to 813 cases. Of this number 232

were cured, 277 relieved, 121 sent to various hospitals and charitable institutions, and 77 died, the balance remaining under treatment. The labours of the nursing staff are gratefully appreciated by scores of helpless invalids who are nursed and cared for, and who receive comforts and nourishment from the society which poverty would preclude them procuring for themselves.



Trained Nurses are identified as: L-R back row: Nurses Taylor, Steele, Francis, Young. L-R front row: Isobel Curnow, Annie Roberts, Isabel Hawkes (Sister in Charge), Becker.

## LIVING WITH OUR ANIMALS

Dogs and maybe cats, are our special friends now but can you imagine animal life in Fitzroy between 1870's -1890s. How many animals can we safely and comfortably live with? Collingwood was referred to as a 'barnyard' where humans lived. Fitzroy was not too different. The animal populations give us an idea of the human conditions of these municipalities at the time.

In 1871 Fitzroy inhabitants almost equalled to the number of animals but in Collingwood animals outnumbered humans four to three.

Animals living on domestic blocks were mostly for practical purposes. Chickens, ducks, turkeys, and geese were common. There was one horse for every three inhabitants in Fitzroy in 1871. Cows were made for a ready milk supply. But there was also Sheep, goats, pigs with an ass or mule or two.

In fact, the extent of the animal populations in the past was a concern for hygienic maintenance of the community. There was an outbreak of Cholera in 1866, Smallpox in 1869 and thereafter followed Typhoid fever, Scarlet Fever, Measles and Diphtheria all of which were fatal diseases at the time. Local Councils were forced to act seriously on the removal of the filth created from the complications of living in small, cramped quarters.

Meg Lee

	1871		1891	
	C'wood	Fitzroy	C'wood	Fitzroy
Population	18598	15547	35070	32452
Inhabited Dwellings	4013	3020	7141	6174
<b>LIVESTOCK</b>				
Horses	787	949	1832	1614
Cattle (inc. milch cows)	320	205	290	188
Sheep	482	268	65	4
Pigs	290	69	60	-
Goats	376	209	111	42
Asses, mules	2	2	2	2
Total livestock	2257	1702	2360	1849
<b>POULTRY</b>				
Geese	471	268	281	224
Ducks	3902	2049	3057	1705
Fowls	18195	13461	23723	18008
Turkeys	108	124	136	149
Other	4	12	12	5
Total poultry	22680	15914	27209	20091

Source: Census of Victoria, Land and Livestock, for 1871 (in V.P.P., 1872, Vol. 2) and for 1891 (in V.P.P., 1892-3, Vol. 3). Taken from A.H.B. Barrett, The Making of an Industrial Environment: Collingwood, Victoria 1851-91.

## FITZROY FROM THE TOWN HALL TOWER

Have a look at this 360 degree view of Fitzroy from the tower on the Town Hall. As well as showing the panorama, the video can be manipulated with a mouse button to get a glimpse of the photographer

<https://www.hiddenmelbourne.com.au/fitzroy-from-town-hall-tower/>

## Become a Member

Membership costs just \$20 per person per year.

Memberships fall for renewal on 1 August each year (around the usual date of our AGM).

If you would like to join or renew your membership, please complete the form available on our website [www.fitzroyhistorysociety.org.au](http://www.fitzroyhistorysociety.org.au) and send it to PO Box 180, Fitzroy, 3065 .or via email to [andy.lanskis@gmail.com](mailto:andy.lanskis@gmail.com) The membership fee can be posted with this form, or preferably, paid into our Bendigo Bank account: BSB 633 000, Account Number 1516 20127, Account Name THE FITZROY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.