



NEWSLETTER

PO Box 180, Fitzroy, 3065 - fitzroyhistorysociety@yahoo.com.au

www.fitzroyhistorysociety.org.au

NOVEMBER 2022 -ISSUE 4

ANNUAL MEMBER DINNER

Date: Wednesday, 30 November 2022 at 6.00pm.

Venue: The Terminus Hotel, 492 Queen's Parade, Fitzroy North

Cost: There is no fee to book, but you will need to buy your own meal and drinks on the night

Details: Please book via Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/fitzroy-history-society-annual-dinner-tickets-465317004687>

PLACES ARE LIMITED - PLEASE BOOK EARLY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT

FITZROY PEOPLE - BOOK LAUNCH



Actors introduced by Rose Chong for the Book Launch

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Fitzroy History Society acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and true sovereigns of the land now known as Yarra. We also acknowledge the significant contributions made by other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to life in Yarra. We pay our respects to Elders from all nations - and to their Elders past, present and emerging.

About 50 people attended our launch of the book – Fitzroy people at Bargoonga Nganjin on Wed 19th October.

From the start of the compilation of our Book our coordinator Meg Lee has had an uncanny knack for bringing people together and drawing on a range of expertise to pull together what's turned out to be a great publication. The format for the night was no different. Rather than few of us stand up and read out our stories Meg had the great idea to get help to act out the stories and bring together the costumes and talk of the late 19th century.

This could not have been achieved without the help of Rose Chong. Rose runs the well know costume hire store in Gertrude street. Rose also knows a number of budding young actors. To bring our stories to life we were able to convince 8 actors to assume a character from our stories complete with costume of the day and a few words.



Donna Loveridge, Editor of Fitzroy People at the Book launch - Photo by Simon Armstrong



Beswicke Building c.1970s - National Trust Database

We started with Agnes Telfer, the first restaurateur in Brunswick street. Agnes arrived in Melbourne on the 5th May 1866. Over the next 45 years Agnes ran 4 restaurants with 2 husbands and 6 children. The last of her restaurants was in the Beswicke building. Agnes was brought to life by Rose Chong who came in period costume and a basket of freshly based biscuits. Agnes (Rose) had a chat with Mike Moore who had pulled together the initial research surrounding the Beswicke building and several character that had lived in the building.

For the rest of the night we heard from a number of authors and the accompanying characters including Patrick Conway a master baker and businessman, Ted Whiting a middle weight boxing champion and sly grog controller, Francis Clark - butcher and entrepreneur, Elizabeth Lusher – hotelier, Myrtle Wilson - daughter of drapers and WW1 nurse, Alice Riley – a political activist campaigning for women's rights and Morris Silverman – twice married tailor turned pawnbroker and jeweller.

In addition to these cameo appearances, we also heard stories about William Blanchfield a lamplighter, local grocer, licensee and landlord ably told by his great -great- granddaughter Robyn Stephens. Jo Buckle told the story of Sarah Ann Turner a very successful clairvoyant. To finish Meg told the fascinating story of John David Shawcross who was a cyclist, innovator and creator of the bicycling industry.

FITZROY PEOPLE - NOW AVAILABLE

While many copies of the book 'Fitzroy People' were sold at the book launch, we have copies available if you would like to purchase.

TO PURCHASE:

- Collect cnr Napier/Westgarth St - \$20.00 OR Posted to you - \$30.00
- Transfer the amount applicable to: Fitzroy History Society Inc:
BSB: 633-000 **Account:** 151620127 **Reference:** Book Surname
- Email raxton1@outlook.com a copy of your receipt. If you have paid postage, you will receive the book in approx. 7 days, If you want to collect, please indicate a time and date. You will receive a confirmation.
- Collection only available till end of December 2022.



FITZROY PEOPLE



Fitzroy History Society



FHS - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2022

40 people attended our AGM on the 27th September at the Rose Hotel. Unfortunately current President Peter Woods was ill and Brendan Mitchell was caught overseas so we were a bit light on for the Committee.

Andy Lanskis provided an update on the ever developing website and Rachel Axton talked about the developments on the newsletter.

All committee positions were declared vacant with Brendan Mitchell nominating for President and Peter Woods nominating for Treasurer. Simon Armstrong re nominated as Secretary. Allan Willingham also nominated to join the Committee. All positions were filled as there were no other candidates.

Our guest speaker for the evening was Jo Buckle who shared her journey and story about researching local history figures, including the highs of discovery and the lows when information didn't align. Jo eventually settled on researching an amazing early Chinese resident in Fitzroy, Dr Sue Kee. Dr Kee was a doctor, herbalist and advocate for Chinese Australians and just one of the fascinating stories that you can read in the 'Fitzroy People' publication.



Mike Moore and Jo Buckle



Members - photos by Simon Armstrong

CITIZEN HISTORIAN PROJECT

"THIEPVAL", 445 GEORGE STREET, FITZROY

These two quaint cottages were built between 1910 and 1913 and 445 on the left was first occupied by Joseph and Frederica Robbins who had moved from Richmond.

But, it is not this early story that I want to share, my story is about the Hutchinson family who lived here for 42 years from c.1930 to 1972.

John Norman Cuthill Hutchinson (Norman) was born at Bonnie Doon on 22 May 1890. As many did at the time, he gave away his work as a labourer and enrolled for the 1st World War on 18 August 1914, aged 24 years.

While serving, he was badly injured and was transported to Worsley Hall, Lancaster, which had been converted from stately manor to a War Hospital. While in recovery here he meets Winifred Scholes, whom he marries on 20 March 1918.



Google image - 2019

Over the following two years, Norman is posted to various sites in England and Scotland and also returns to the hospital at times. During this period, Winifred lives sometimes with him at Fleetwood and at other times with her mother and the couple bring two children into the world, Heloise and Leonard.

In March 1920, John secures passages for his family to Australia, but when the day of sailing came near, Winifred advised he should go alone and that she and the children would follow when he had settled, which made sense as

Leonard was only 3 weeks old and unwell.

Norman landed in May 1920 and lived at 72 Gertrude street, part of the Glass Terrace, and wrote advising Winifred that she should now join him.

Norman only received two letters, both shortly after his arrival and did not hear from Winifred again until he received a letter requesting maintenance in March 1921.



Worsley Hall, Lancaster, circa 1800-1950

Norman wrote again to Winifred pleading with her to reunite with him in Australia, that he had a good home and would provide for their passage, but she never responded.

In 1925, Norman filed for divorce. He had moved from the Glass Terrace and was now on Greeves Street, Fitzroy. The divorce papers were served to Winifred in England, but she never responded and the divorce was finally granted in October 1926.

Not long after, Norman married Ceiciley E Longergan on 11 December 1926 in Junee, New South Wales.

The couple make 445 George Street their home in c.1930. They move in with their new baby boy, Ivan Joseph Hutchison who was born on 11 February 1928. Ivan was born in Fitzroy and spent all of his childhood growing up in the area, attending St. Bridget's Primary School, then St Thomas' in Clifton Hill and his final year at Parade College.



*Ivan Joseph Hutchison - Mr Movies
Photo sourced from Wikipedia*

Ivan studied piano and music. At 16 he joined the Victorian State Public Service as a clerk in the Lands Department, but still followed his musical passion, playing regularly at the Malvern Town Hall dances.



*Norman (John) and Ceiciley on their wedding day -
Photo sourced from Rob Wilford, via Ancestry.com*

Ivan was also passionate about movies and in 1960 he combined his passions by working as a pianist with Channel 7's orchestra on a variety of shows.

In 1970, he had been promoted to Musical Director and in the year following proposed a film critic show 'Two on the Aisle'.

When this show ended in 1974 he was asked to host the midday movie, which soon became 'Ivan's Midday Movie' and rated very well throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Personally I still remember days off sick from school would quite often involve watching Ivan and the movie!

Ivan continued working hosting Movie Classics and the Late Night Matinee until a sudden illness forced him to retire in 1994. The movies continued, but they never replaced the host.

Returning to the story of Norman and Ceicily, Norman lives out the rest of his life in Thiepval and

following his passing, Ceiciley remains here until 1972. But why may you ask is the name of this house, called 'Thiepval'?

Unlike many homes that get their name when they are first built, this one was named by Norman prior to 1933 (when it is first referred to in a newspaper advertisement).

'Thiepval' was one of the fortress villages held by the Germans on the Somme front in 1916. It was largely destroyed in the bombardment, except for one part of the chateau.

After the war, the site was chosen as the location for the Memorial to the Missing to commemorate those who died in the Somme before the 20th March 1918 and have no known grave. It is one

of the largest and most imposing of the Memorials to the Missing. The handmade name of this house, most likely made by Norman is undoubtedly his own memorial to those who he knew and lost during that war.



WRITTEN BY RACHEL AXTON

FHS COMMITTEE 2023

President - Brendan Mitchell

Treasurer/Membership - Peter Woods

Secretary - Simon Armstrong

Editor - Rachel Axton

Website Manager - Andy Lanskis

Social - Peter Heading &
Jennifer McKeagney

Members:

Mike Moore, Meg Lee, Lina Favrin and
Allan Willingham

**Inspirational Women of
Coburg Cemetery**

Activists, artists, pioneers, philanthropists, business women and fortune tellers: historic Coburg Cemetery holds the stories of many inspirational Melbourne women.

Join the Friends of Coburg Cemetery for an evening cemetery tour to hear about their fascinating lives.

This tour will include identities not covered in past tours.

7.00 – 8.30pm,
Thursday 1 December 2022

Coburg Pine Ridge Cemetery
Bell Street, Preston.

Cost: \$10

Bookings essential: focc.group@gmail.com
<https://friendsofcoburgcemetery.com>

SUBSCRIPTIONS NOW DUE

Subscriptions became due on 1 August 2022. If you have not already paid your membership, Please submit your fee to keep the Society alive and viable. Individual adults \$20 each, family memberships available.

Fees can be conveniently paid in a variety of ways. Visit our Memberships page - <https://fitzroyhistorysociety.org.au/join-us/membership/>

GAY GERTRUDE STREET

There have been at least nine queer-focussed businesses in Gertrude Street mostly operating during the 1980s and 90s. These have included: Midnight Express, a late night coffee place on the corner Gertrude and Napier Streets from 1986/5 -1987 or later; Shrew Feminist and Lesbian Books, at 37 Gertrude Street in the 1983-90s; It's My World, selling drag & cross-dressing costumes at 197 Gertrude Street; Mama Seka's Key Club disco (formerly the Carlton Club Hotel) at 22 Gertrude Street, 1978-88; Squizzy's, a place for lesbians in the same building, during 1981-83; and Rose Chong, who emigrated from the UK in 1974 with her Australian-Chinese mathematician husband Min Chong, the outrageous costumier of 218 Gertrude Street, from 1980-. Ms Chong purchased all the fabulous costumes from Pokey's the drag institution that ran from 1977-92 at the Prince of Wales Hotel, Fitzroy Street St Kilda.

The Builder's Arms, 211 Gertrude Street, was very gay friendly and hosted Q & A (Queer and Alternative) nights on Thursdays in the 1990s. Amazingly, since they were known as two of the roughest pubs in Melbourne, the Rob Roy Hotel (now the Workers Club, 51 Brunswick Street) and the Champion Hotel, both on diagonally opposite corners of Brunswick and Gertrude Streets, have both hosted drag performances. There are no gay venues now in Gertrude Street, though Rose Chong still flourishes.

WRITTEN BY RICHARD PETERSON



*The Builders Arms Hotel, Gertrude Street, c.1970-1974.
Photo held by the State Library*

FOLLOW US

Fitzroy History Society is on Facebook and Instagram, so for more great information about the history of Fitzroy, follow us!

Facebook: **Fitzroy History Society**

Instagram: **@fitzroyhistorysociety**

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

We are happy to share community announcements that align with the preservation of Fitzroy and its history.