



NEWSLETTER

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www.fitzroyhistorysociety.org.au

DECEMBER 2023 - ISSUE 5

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our Annual General Meeting was held at the Lord Newry Hotel in North Fitzroy on Wednesday 15th November.

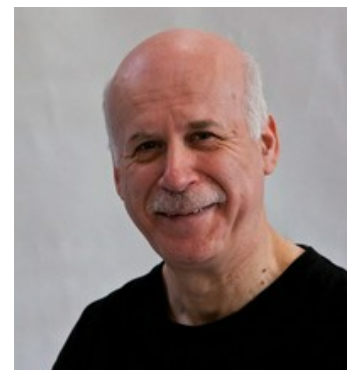
President Brendan Mitchel thanked all the committee members who had served during the year particularly the secretary Simon Armstrong who is leaving Melbourne for the coming year. He briefly summarised the activities from the year and presented the planned activities for the coming year including the preparation of a second edition of Fitzroy People which had proved so popular. He announced that our bank balance stood at \$10,330.41. Copy of the Presidents Report and full Treasures Report will be included on our web site in the next few days.

Brendan announced the committee for the coming year will be as per the last year with the exception of the Secretary. A new Secretary has been appointed by the committee and is Taylor Fitzgerald, a new member of the Society.

Following the AGM the guest speaker Chris Bennett entertained us with stories from his childhood in Fitzroy as contained in his recently published book Roy Boy. His parents immigrated from northern Greece and owned a fish-and-chip shop on Brunswick Street. He had many adventures including run-ins with the police. As he said "...if you lived as a child in Fitzroy you got into mischief.."



*Christopher Bennett,
Author, Roy Boy
presenting to the
Fitzroy History
Society AGM*



Christopher Bennett

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.

FITZROY PEOPLE #2

WANT TO BE PART OF OUR NEXT BOOK?

WRITTEN BY JENNIFER MCKEAGNEY

The launch of the Fitzroy History Society's (FHS) most recent publication, 'Fitzroy People' in October 2022 received a great response from members of the Society and others interested in the early history of our suburbs. On the basis of this interest and, as we have only really scratched the surface of research into interesting former residents of Fitzroy and Fitzroy North, the Committee has agreed that we will commence a second project to research the lives of more 'Fitzroy People'.

We are interested in finding and documenting past people of Fitzroy and Fitzroy North from the beginnings of each suburb up until the 1970s.

Any member of the Society may nominate a person or persons to be researched to help illustrate the diversity of people who lived and/or worked in Fitzroy and their circumstances. Ideally, we are looking for stories about individuals whose lives have not been documented previously, as we do not wish to repeat information found in other places.

Members are invited to nominate persons for research and may choose to undertake the research and write up the person's story themselves or, alternatively, forward suggestions to the working group for others to research.

We plan to produce our own publication both in hard copy and in digital format for inclusion on the FHS website.



Images from the cover of Fitzroy People #1

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUGGEST A PERSON OR PERSONS FOR RESEARCH, PLEASE EMAIL FHS AT

info@fitzroyhistorysociety.org.au

Please also tell us if you are interested in joining the research working group.

The 'Fitzroy People 2' Working Group will meet monthly from February 2024 and will establish a database of all suggestions, confirm manageable numbers of subjects, guide the project and publish our findings.

We plan to undertake the research over the course of six or so months concluding with a FHS event to celebrate the lives of the people we have researched.

We look forward to hearing your suggestions with a brief rationale.

In addition to 'Fitzroy People', this project is an extension to previous research projects:

·'Brunswick Street Lost and Found' (2012)

·'Half Drowned or Half Baked' (2017) -essays on Fitzroy North

UXBRIDGE HOUSE NOW CAIRO FLATS

90 NICHOLSON STREET, FITZROY

WRITTEN BY MEG LEE

Recently FHS received a request for membership cancellation as he was no longer able to participate in events. The member was one hundred and one years old! The Society immediately acted to grant 'centenarian' members free membership. Bill Mackie is the first member in this category. It therefore

seems appropriate to report on the history of the site of 90 Nicholson Street as he is a descendant of one of the owners. The site is now the location of the Cairo Flats. You may recognise the remaining brick fence which runs along the Hanover Street axis.



http://www.picturevictoria.vic.gov.au/site/yarra_melbourne/Fitzroy/18184.html

Bill's great-grandfather was Hon. William Bates MLA, who was Minister for Public Works and served Fitzroy and Collingwood during the period of Victoria's' great economic development.

He says that at his wedding in 1949, in the Congregational Church in Collins Street, he had the pleasure of signing the Registry in the vestry with a huge portrait of William Bates looking down on him!

Uxbridge House was the home of William Bates, MLA, born Feb 26, 1826, in Uxbridge, Middlesex, England. He came to Australia in 1850. From 1852 he lived and traded as a merchant and grocer in Bendigo for four years before moving to Melbourne to conduct business as a merchant and wholesale grocer. He remained, from 1862 until his death on Jan 12, 1891, at 'Uxbridge House'.

William's son Edward Albert Bates was born at Uxbridge House in 1865, and subsequently became an Architect and Partner in the firm, Bates, Peebles & Smart from 1908 to 1931. The practice is now known simply as Bates Smart, architects.

Keith Feeney, architect and partner at Bates Smart, was living in one of the Cairo units in 2013.

The 'Uxbridge' site is on the highest land in Lot 70, the closest to early central Melbourne. Thomas Walker was the original owner having purchased all 28 acres of Lot 70. The house was probably built by R S Webb before May 1845. The Melbourne City Council Valuation Records, dated 9 May 1845, state R S Webb, gentleman, as the owner & occupant of a 'brick house, 6 rooms, garden, yard, outhouse, &c.'

It is of interest to note that in the Collingwood (Fitzroy) area there were 306 properties valued, with 270 valued at less than £20. The highest valuations included Webb's house valued at £60

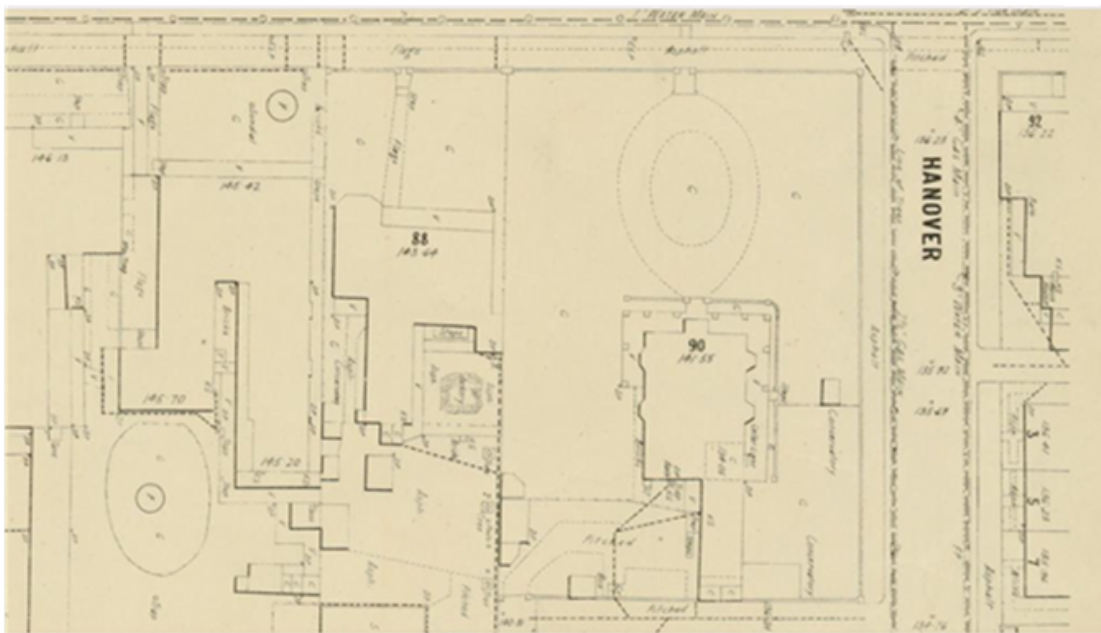
In March 1847 Jas Stewart was the occupant as R. S. Webb remained the owner.

By December 1854 Edward Grimes became the owner. Edward was variously a Commissioner on the Customs Board of Inquiry[1], an Immigration Agent[2], Officer of the Melbourne City Council Finance Committee[3] and was appointed to Executive Council on 13 January 1859. He was reported absent from the colony. He sold the house and land in late 1857 before returning to London in early 1858.

Following the death of William Bates in 1891, the family moved to a new Uxbridge House at 12 Grandview Grove, East Hawthorn. The new Uxbridge house was built in 1889-90 by Huddlestone and Brown and its gate carries the bronze nameplate, "Uxbridge House" brought from the Fitzroy home.

By 1895[4] Uxbridge House was being used as a private hospital and remained so until 1936[5].

It was reported that in 1934[6], "Two nurses at Uxbridge House, a private hospital in Fitzroy, overpowered two men in the hospital grounds



MMBW map of 1899!

[1] *Argus (Melbourne, Vic.: 1848 - 1957)*, Friday 14 March 1856, p.4

[2] *Argus (Melbourne, Vic.: 1848 - 1957)*, Thursday 8 September 1853, p.5

[3] *Argus (Melbourne, Vic.: 1848 - 1957)*, Wednesday 25 July 1855, p.7

[4] *Mercury and Weekly Courier (Vic.: 1878 - 1903)*, Thursday 27 June 1895, p.2

[5] *Prahran Chronicle (Vic.: 1894 - 1906; 1914 - 1918)*, Saturday 1 June 1901, p.3

[6] *Argus (Melbourne, Vic.: 1848 - 1957)*, Friday 13 April 1934, p.9

last night and, assisted by other members of the medical staff detained them until the police arrived”.

Private Hospital.

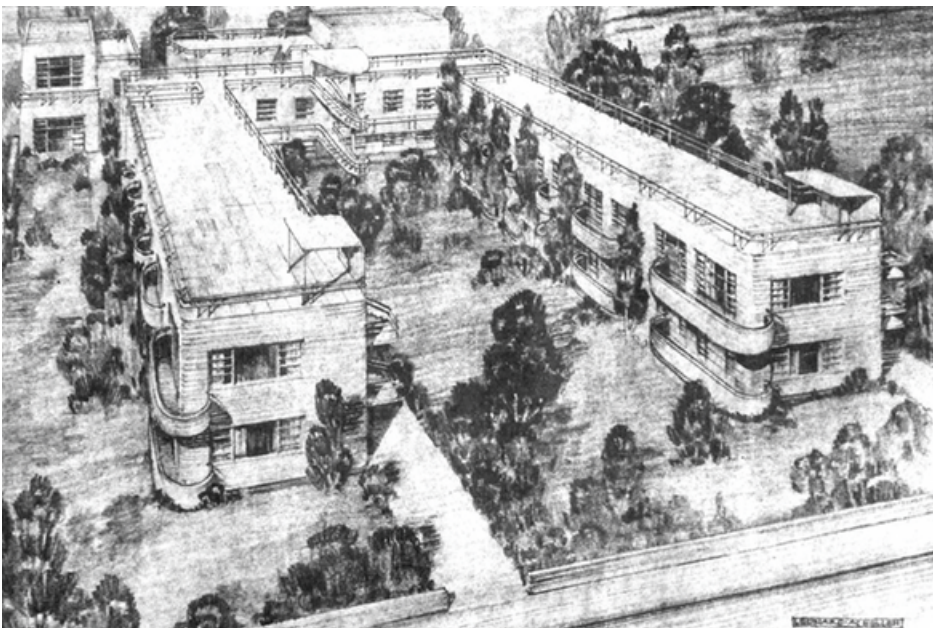
Mrs. Madden's Private Hospital, "Uxbridge House," in Nicholson-street, Fitzroy, opposite the Exhibition Gardens, is one of the most pleasantly situated institutions in or around Melbourne. The situation being high makes it a perfect place from a health point of view, while the pleasant surroundings in the midst of the spacious garden, planted with fine old health giving trees and beautiful shrubs, make it an ideal home for the treatment of patients. The management is all that could be desired, Mrs Madden, the principal, being herself a trained nurse of high qualifications, as well as a splendid manageress. The institution has none of the elements which pertain to an ordinary hospital, and the conduct of it is such as to give it the "tone" of a private home rather than a nursing establishment. At the same time the accessories are complete in every way, and include appliances of the most modern and scientific description. The charges are strictly moderate, the advertisement on another column showing that they range from three guineas per week to five, the latter price being for private rooms.



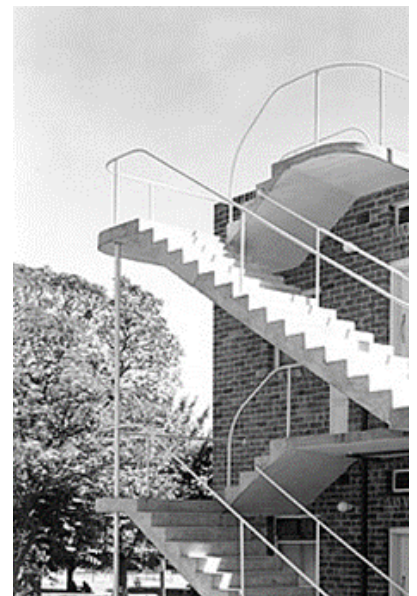
1934 <http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/pictoria/gid/slv-pic-aab72712>

Today the site houses the Cairo Flats built in 1936. Cairo Flats is a heritage-listed apartment building in the Melbourne inner city suburb of Fitzroy. The building was designed in 1935 by architect Acheson Best Overend and built in 1936.

It is a U-shaped, two-story building comprising 28 apartments, mostly studio flats. Overend was influenced by modernist architect Wells Coates and the "minimum flat concept". Each apartment was designed to "provide maximum amenity in minimum space for minimum rent". The building's cantilevered external concrete stairs was noted as an unusual innovation. Also of interest is the fact that Chris Womersley has written a novel called 'Cairo'. It remains a mystery as to why the building is named Cairo.



The image above is a perspective sketch titled 'Proposed apartment house Fitzroy'. By Leonard A Bullen. Aerial view of building from north-west. Undated. Courtesy State Library of Victoria.



Circa 1936. Photographer unknown. Courtesy Tronn Overend.

FITZROY FOOTBALL



Looking along Newry St, towards Napier St- Photo: Denise Arthur - circa 1960s

These two amazing photos were sent to me recently by Denise Arthur. Her parents had owned the Morning Star Hotel in the 1960s. These two photos are taken from the top corner window, showing the careful arrangement of cars. The owners of which are enjoying the footy at the Brunswick Oval.

The Morning Star is now 'One Trick Pony, cnr Newry St and St Georges Rd



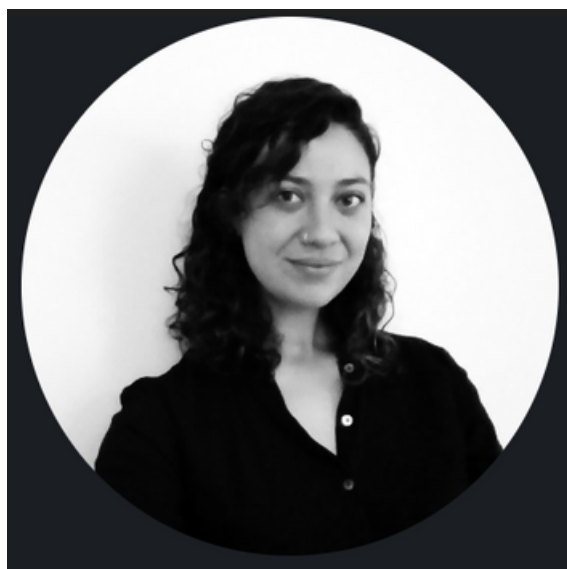
Looking north on St Georges Road - Photo: Denise Arthur - circa 1960s

FITZROY HISTORY SOCIETY

YOUR NEW COMMITTEE

At the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 15 December the new Committee was elected. As per our cover story, we were very sad to see Secretary Simon Armstrong leave,

Thankfully, we had a number of applicants for the role and have appointed Taylor Fitzgerald to the position.



Taylor Fitzgerald

Taylor is a resident of Fitzroy and has a passion for telling meaningful stories through objects, archives and oral histories to facilitate a greater understanding and appreciation of different cultures, perspectives and ideas.

In addition to Taylor, we are also very happy to be joined by Jason Bradley.

FHS COMMITTEE 2024

President (Membership) - Brendan Mitchell

Treasurer - Peter Woods

Secretary - Taylor Fitzgerald

Non-office bearers:

Editor - Rachel Axton

Website Manager - Andy Lanskis

Social - Peter Heading &

Jennifer McKeagney

Members:

Mike Moore, Meg Lee, Terry Nott, Lina Favrin,
Allan Willingham and Jason Bradley

WRITTEN BY RACHEL AXTON

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.

MONTGOMERY COTTAGE: NOW 269 GORE STREET, FITZROY

WRITTEN BY MIKE MOORE



269 Gore St, in 2023

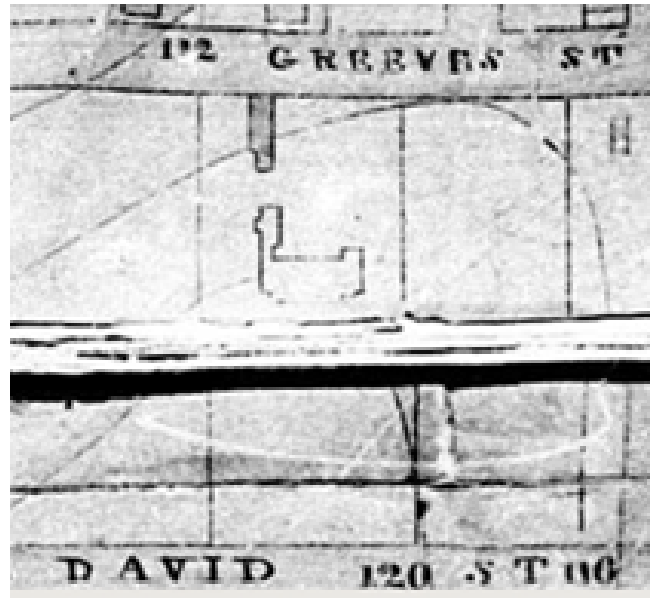
The first sale of land in Fitzroy was in 1839, and by 1840 James Montgomery, the first Crown Solicitor, was living here at his Erin Cottage. His eight acres of land on the south side of Greeves Street included a grass paddock, a garden and vineyard “commanding a fine view of the windings of the Yarra, the Plenty and the Dandenong Hills.”

By 1850 David Young was the owner and resident at what was then known as Montgomery Cottage, Montgomery Place or Montgomery Villa. In the mid-1850s Gore Street was extended northwards from Webb Street and £50 compensation was paid

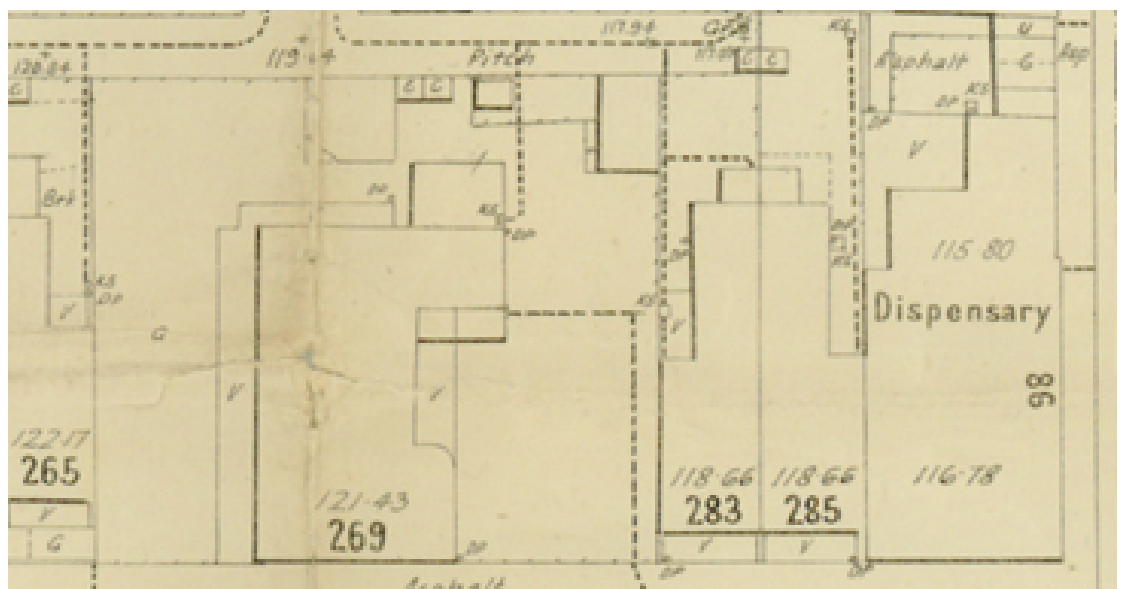
to Young for the 66 ft strip of Gore Street and a small portion of his house. Young lived at the house until his death in 1877, by when he had subdivided and sold the sites along St David St and Gore St.

From 1886 to 1900, the owner and occupant was Cheok Hong Cheong (1853-1928), a leader in the Chinese community.

By the 1960s, the original house had been replaced by the current block of six flats at 269 Gore St.



Hodgkinson map, 1853



MMBW plan, 1900