

October 2016

Dear members,

The first Bulletin of a new year for our Society sees some changes to our committee. At our recent annual meeting Glenys Phillpot stepped down from the position of president which she took on five years ago. During that time she has been the inspiration and energy behind much of the development which our organization has undergone. Congratulations go to Glenys for the efforts she had made to ensure the future of W&DHS through her initiative and determination in carrying through the establishment of the HeritageWorks building project and subsequent efforts to provide heating, climate control for History House. Her communication with members and with the community in general has lifted the profile of the Society. Be reassured that Glenys has been re-elected as a member of our committee and will continue to work on various aspects of our operations so, most importantly, the supply of ribbon sandwiches is guaranteed for all events in the foreseeable future.

The Annual General Meeting, held on October 25th was well attended and the guest speaker Maggie Black gave a spirited account of her recently released book, *Up Came A Squatter: Niel Black of Glenormiston 1839-1880*. Many people will be familiar with the history of Niel Black & Co, perhaps from having read Margaret Kiddle's seminal work on the settlement of the Western District, *Men Of Yesteryear*, or perhaps from having an ancestor who was one of the 542 known workers of the company employed mainly from Scotland and England, and documented by Kerry Vickers, as a result of his extensive research, in *A Band of Gypsies*. The titles of both these works are derived from Niel Black's letters. Through her extensive research and reading of her great grandfather's correspondence, Maggie has written a balanced and lively account of the pastoral pioneers of our district. Her talk at our meeting was illustrated with early images of Glenormiston, and the people involved in the story.



Regular visitors to HeritageWorks will be pleased to learn that after a two month siege due to relaying of the sewerage system as part of RSL building works, we have been let out of our cage this week. The area in front of History House still resembles a bombsite, however we now have our driveway back, and full access has been restored. It is testament to the determination of those with a burning need to have their historical or genealogical questions answered that during recent weeks when to all appearances our front door was completely barred by plant, equipment and temporary fencing, visitors still made it in the front door.

Earlier this year two grant applications were received favourably, enabling us to purchase some important equipment and embark on installation of climate control in our History House archive. This latter project necessitated some additional excavations in the driveway, at the same time as the new sewerage trenches were being dug. Over the past week, gas fired hydronic heating has been installed in History House, enabling a dryer, more stable temperature environment for the protection of our precious documents, photographs and artefacts stored there. Part of the funding for this has come from two grants from the Warrnambool City Council's Community Development Fund, one to WDHS and one to the Family History Group.



Exterior wall furnace – History House



Interior wall panel – Archive room

We also received a grant of \$5000 from the Isobel and David Jones Family Foundation. This came by way of an application to the Southwest Community Foundation and has been used to purchase an A3 scanner and a digital SLR camera. Both these items have recently arrived and have been pressed into service scanning newly accessioned photos and photographing artefacts, both older and recent acquisitions. Visit our Facebook page to view Mandy's efforts with the new camera.



Warrnambool Art Gallery currently has three historically related exhibitions, so visitors to the WAG are in for a treat:

- ***Dreamhouse, Fashion of the Western District 1900-1960***, features some items from the WDHS collection: The Wilton wedding dress, an evening purse owned by Dame Nellie Melba that was given to a maid who served the diva well during a farewell visit to Warrnambool when she stayed at Lyndoch and a quaint film, *The Birth of a Dress*, which is shown in this exhibition are on loan to the WAG from the W&DHS collection.
- To commemorate the 150th anniversary of the heritage listed Warrnambool Botanic Gardens, the art gallery commissioned a miniature sized oil painting of the Gardens by **Natasha Bienik**. This tiny, glossy painting is best viewed with the aid of a magnifying glass to appreciate the fine detail.
- ***War pictures: Australians at the cinema 1914-1918*** has been created by the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) and the National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA) as a WWI centenary project. It features a selection of shorts, newsreels, propaganda and feature films from the era when the movie industry was in its infancy.

These shows close 20th Nov, 4th Dec and 13th Nov respectively. Admission to WAG is free.



Can you help? W&DHS is planning to run a stall at the Family Fun Day at the Botanic Gardens, 11am – 3pm on Sunday 13th November. We are calling for volunteers from the membership who might be able to spare an hour or two of their time to assist. Please let us know if you are able to help by contacting HeritageWorks.

Janet Macdonald – President (0409 624059 or 5562 4059) Email– janetmac7@bigpond.com
 Rosemary Isaac – Secretary (5562 8403) Email rosemaryisaac@icloud.com
 Committee: Marita Murphy (Vice President). Barbara McLeod (Treasurer) Mandy King, Joanne Laity, Glenys Phillpot, Andrew Suggett, Pat Varley and Eric van der Wal.
 Elizabeth O'Callaghan - Librarian. HeritageWorks - Phone 5561 0283