



Newsletter

March 2007

Dear members and Friends,

Welcome to the Museum's first quarterly Newsletter for 2007. We have returned after a long hot dry summer to continue our work on local history and heritage.

Some people didn't take a break and a number of Committee Members and the Work for the Dole teams worked through January to re-arrange the Visitor Centre and office space.

This work was initiated and carried out by our Acting President, Libby McKinnon, who stepped into the position following the resignation of our President, Michelle MacDonald, due to an overload of work and other commitments. Libby was given a good deal of help by the Acting Treasurer, Aneeta Krishna, Alarna Gray, Mark Armstrong-Roper, Lenore Frost, Chris Laskowski and the Work for the Dole Team.



Brett Hosie helping re-arrange the office in January.

NEW LOGO

This is just one of a number of steps toward greater efficiencies and a higher profile. Sub-committees have gone into action from early February and already the Marketing Sub-Committee has put forward a new logo which has been put in place.

You will notice that the new logo reminds you of something, yes it is the shape of the roof of the large bluestone building. The logo is both abstract, simple and geometrical yet actually does relate to the place. Congratulations to the designer, Kerrie Poliness, for coming up with the concept.

POBBLEBONK TOUR

This move is part of greater attention to marketing generally this year. Parks Victoria and Melbourne Water have co-funded a re-print of the exhibition, 'Pobblebonk', which is planned to tour all the Parks Victoria centres in the Macedon Ranges region, and five major libraries in the western suburbs. We have calculated that the exhibition will reach an audience of about 80,000 from this tour alone.



This little Spotted Marsh Frog, from Pipemakers Park wetlands, features in the exhibition Pobblebonk

INTERACTIVE WEBSITE

This important marketing step will be complemented by the development of an interactive web site about the issues addressed in 'Pobblebonk' by a new partnership project this year with the Education Department of Victoria University. Two third year students, Jenny Albanese and Gemma Trimboli, are working at the Museum every Tuesday to develop the web site as part of the University's Researching Innovative Partners in Education Program, usually referred to as the RIPE Project.



Gemma and Jenny working on the web site.

BRAYBROOK HISTORY

We also had good news for funding early in the year. The Museum received a grant of \$8,000 from the Local History Grants program to research the social history of Braybrook since the Second world War. The project is titled 'Beautiful Braybrook'. Researcher and Historian, Damian Veltri, grew up in the area and has already carried out some important research in a much neglected neighbourhood.

Star Tuesday, 16 January, 2007, Page 5

Suburb's voices heard

BY KRISTY ROSS

A MARIYRONONG historian is patiently waiting to immortalise a collection of stories belonging to those hearts and souls woven into one of Melbourne's oldest Housing Commission estates.

Damian Veltri, through the Victorian Government, recently received a local history grant of \$10,000 to undertake a five-year study into a 20-year period, titled *Braybrook 1945-2005: The Many Voices of a Victorian Housing Commission Estate*.

Mr Veltri, who was born in Argentina, said Braybrook was coincided a transition area in the period after World War II.

He said Braybrook used to be a migrant's first stop because there was substantial government housing in which they could initially settle.

Families eventually saved enough to move out of the largely industrialised suburb to somewhere quieter, and less serious.

It is this migration that propelled Mr Veltri into acting fast, to try to ensure where this aging group is living, before their stories are lost forever.

"I want to act before we lose that,



History finds a home ... Local historian Damian Veltri is undertaking a local oral history project on Braybrook Housing Commission Estate from 1945 to 2005. Picture: LEN WILLIAMS.

Newspaper article about the Braybrook history research project..

UPGRADING THE COLLECTION

The Museum also received funding of \$15,000 from Heritage Victoria to digitise more of its audio tape collection, namely interviews with Angliss Meat workers, people talking about George Seelaf and more munitions workers. This has become a new challenge for the Museum, to plan for the upgrading of our ever growing collection. The Resource Centre has always been considered the 'engine' of the Museum and now we must think more long term about how to sustain this engine while constantly demanding more of it.



George Seelaf, former Secretary of the Meatworkers Association, had an impact on the lives of many

NEWMARKET

Meanwhile work goes on planning for projects and events. Once again we supported the Newmarket Saleyard Re-union in February with exhibition material. This ongoing relationship between the Museum and the workers from the Saleyards is one of the most remarkable outcomes of the ecomuseum principle in action. And the video of the Saleyards we made in 1985 is still selling copies at this reunion every year. Now the Re-union organisers are talking to the Museum about helping them to produce a small book.

THE GATHERING PLACE

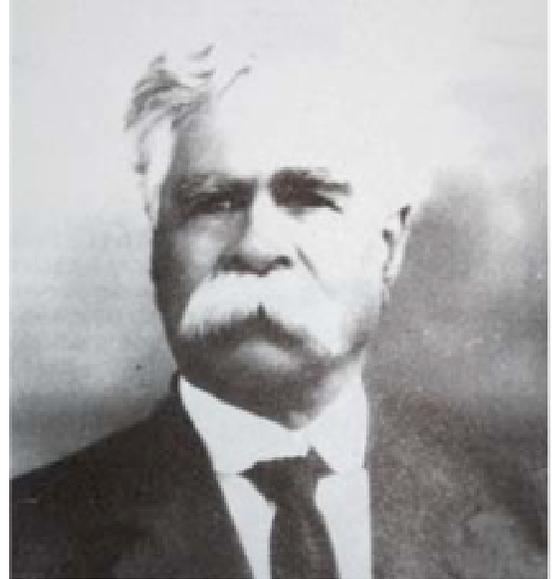
Another ongoing long term relationship is with the local Aboriginal Community and this year we are continuing to support the community in a number of ways. One simple way is to provide space for the elders art work classes organised by the Gathering Place.



*Aboriginal Elders Art Class
in the Bluestone Building*

The Museum will also be working with the Gathering Place on the William Cooper walk in May to commemorate the Referendum in 1967 where 90.7% of Australia's population voted yes to give Aborigines the vote. The walk will start at noon on Sunday June 3rd at the Living Museum in Pipemakers Park. The walk will then travel a short distance down the river bank to the foot bridge over the Maribyrnong river. Walkers will turn left and walk down the path way to Fairbairn park and walk across the oval to the pavilion where the walk will finish with a free barbeque and fun filled activities.

*Aboriginal activist, William Cooper,
held many meetings and discussion
groups in Footscray in the years*



CULTURAL PLAN FOR MARIBYRNONG

This year the Museum is already working with a number of groups and organisations in a wide range of relationships, some where we are simply asked for input and others where we are all working hard to bring about some new positive outcomes for local heritage, history and culture.

A very interesting process has been a new 'Cultural Plan' being developed by the City of Maribyrnong. Museum staff have contributed to this process and the Museum has been called one of the 'pillars' of local culture in the City of Maribyrnong.

The Director, Peter Haffenden, is also on the City of Maribyrnong's 'Heritage Committee' which is a Committee set up to look at ways of being pro-active in the protection and integration of heritage in the future development of the city.

THE BROWNIES

Gavin Somerville has been further developing environmental projects with local community groups and earlier this year held a special session for our local Brownies. He has also been developing new ways, such as games, to convey ideas about local heritage to younger groups

Currently Gavin has been giving most of the talks at the Museum and feedback in the Visitor Book shows people are very inspired by the interesting information they are hearing about. He has also been the stalwart volunteer that keeps the Museum open on Sundays and public holidays.



Brownies participating in art workshops





Bus tour from Croydon visits the Museum

WESTERN REGION AND WEST BOURKE

In February the Living Museum hosted a quarterly meeting of the Western Group of Historical Societies. It was great to catch up with all the local detail about the work so many of us are doing.

The Individual historical societies associated with West Bourke were invited to the Museum in the month of March to exhibit a panel of information to present to the public. The Association has plans to develop the presentation on a wider basis in the Spring to include an open day on a Sunday.



Museum Operations Manager, Janine Hill and West Bourke President, Lenore Frost at a display about the history of North Melbourne.

THE BIG BOOK

Dario VaCirca, creative Director of Well Theatre, has been industrious in the Bluestone building . He has a band of merry men and women reconfiguring his library of books in preparation for an installation at Federation Square. The public interactive performance piece will then be shipped to Macau for a three month performance season.



Dario Va Circa's Big Book

TOURING

Hobson Bay Libraries have utilised the Museum's exhibition 'Still Here' for the municipalities Harmony Day Celebrations in late March. Rita Hardy, Community Languages Librarian, was extremely pleased with the response from the community.



'Still Here' at Hobson's Bay Library

THE DOLPHINS

Maribyrnong City Council, on the other hand, have been talking to the Museum about placing the Dolphin sculpture from the Nicholson Street Mall at Pipemakers Park. A new design for the CBD in Footscray does not include the Dolphin sculpture/fountain. Following talks with Parks Victoria we have chosen a spot on a trail near the History of the Land Trail. The Dolphin will aid environment tours and issues by raising questions about Dolphins in the Maribyrnong River.



The Dolphin Sculpture in its current location in the Nicholson Street Mall, Footscray

THE FABULOUS FIRE SALE

The bluestone building continues to be in demand for a range of things we couldn't have expected. In fact it is often sought after by groups who have more limited resources than ourselves so we are able to supportive to other community groups and functions. For example on Sunday April 1st, the Museum hosted a charity auction to raise funds for the artist community whose works were destroyed in a fire in the early hours of the New Year. The auction was well supported by the public and arts community alike. Organiser of the event, Phillipa Willison was extremely pleased with the result.



Auction of art works in the Bluestone Building at the Fabulous Fire Sale

WFD

Our very good working relationship with Parks Victoria has been enhanced with a scheme to involve Work for the Dole crews on a range of projects supervised by Brett Hosie, who has an overview of the park's environmental profile. Currently we have two WFD teams working in Pipemakers Park, which involves about 40 people. The WFD schemes are sponsored by Spirit West Services, a working arm of the Western Bulldogs. General Manager of Spirit West, David Haynes has visited the Museum recently to talk about the work the groups are doing in the park.



Work for the Dole crew working at Pipemakers Park to maintain heritage sites

FRIENDS OF PIPEMAKERS

The Friends of Pipemakers Park group are back in action too after a summer break and will meet on the first Sunday of each month from April to November. On Sunday April 1st, seven friends were engaged in weeding of north west corner of Gardens. It should be noted that several of the friends come regularly during the week as well and often work alongside the WFD teams. We thank the Friends group for their continual contribution to the park that is part of the tours given by the Living Museum to explain many of the features of this particular ecomuseum of the western region of Melbourne.



The Friends Group back in action.

AND FURTHERMORE

The Museum has been developing a project to look at issues affecting heritage where the city is expanding into the country at places like Tarneit and Truganina. After witnessing the onslaught of the suburbs to the west of Melbourne during a reconnaissance trip researching this project the Director, Peter Haffenden, and his family have retreated to the relative safety of a local volcano for a picnic break.



Melbourne's Living Museum of the West Inc.

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**ARTS
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