



HOTHAM HISTORY PROJECT Inc.

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Newsletter November 2006

Dear friends and supporters of the Hotham History Project,

What an extremely busy year it has been, with two books published and others reprinted.

HOTHAM HISTORY PUBLICATIONS IN 2006

Bill Hannan's history of the North Melbourne Town Hall, *Pride of Hotham: a tale of North Melbourne and a red-headed architect* was launched by Barry Jones in the Town Hall on 27 June, the 130th anniversary of the opening ball. Three months later, Bill launched Local History Librarian, Heather McKay's, *Men of Hotham: Municipal Government in North Melbourne 1859–1905* following our Annual General Meeting on 23 September. Both launches were extremely successful social events that brought our community together, and also included guests from outside our area. *Men of Hotham*, a biographical dictionary of Hotham councillors, was the inaugural volume in a new series – *People and Places in North and West Melbourne*. It was also our first wholly digital production. Our appreciation and congratulations to both authors and to our Chair, Lorna Hannan, who was responsible for guiding both books through the printing process. We appreciate all her hard work on our behalf.

During the year the Hotham History Project reprinted our first publication, *The Melbourne Benevolent Asylum: Hotham's Premier Building* and a limited number of copies of *R-Rated Real Estate Belonging to North & West Melbourne*. There has also been an Italian translation of *Sammarchesi*, our joint publication with the San Marco in Lamis Club.

The Hotham History Project has produced ten publications since 1998. Most of these are still available. Enquiries can be made through info@hothamhistory.org.au. They can also be purchased from the North Melbourne Library.

OTHER ACTIVITIES IN 2006

There were four walks conducted during the year – a West Melbourne Discovery Walk, a walk conducted by Lorraine Siska based on her book *R Rated Real Estate Belonging to North & West Melbourne*, and two walks by Lorna Hannan around Hotham Hill to coincide with *The Town of North Melbourne 1905*

Exhibition at the Victorian Archives Centre in Shiel Street. Lorna also conducted a workshop on 'How to produce a local history book' in conjunction with this exhibition.

Committee members staffed Hotham History Project stalls at the Victorian Association of Family History Organisations Fair in August, the West Bourke Heritage Association Fair and the Spring Fling in October. These stalls are a useful way of making contact with other like-minded groups and meeting people who have a past connection to North & West Melbourne. They are also useful for promoting and selling our publications.

It was great to catch up with old friends and meet new residents to the area at this year's Spring Fling.

Thank you to all those who completed our questionnaire. It seems that people want and enjoy walks and guided tours around the area and we will therefore plan to develop more of them in the future.

Please let us know what particular walks or buildings you would like to learn more about.

Congratulations to Spring Fling Quiz Prize Winner – Francis McMahon.

Thanks also to all those who entered our quiz at the Spring Fling. Our prizewinner, Francis McMahon, has lived in North & West Melbourne most of his life. Francis will receive a book voucher for Hotham History publications to the value of \$45.

Quiz answers

1. Buncle & Fogarty Streets were named after former mayors of Hotham/North Melbourne.
2. Hotham was a Governor of the colony of Victoria.
3. Mayor Thomas Henderson gave the drinking fountain to the people of North Melbourne in 1877. It originally stood in the Errol & Queensberry Streets intersection. It has been moved twice, in 1882 and 1973.
4. The bluestone building beside the Town Hall was the Lalla Rookh Hotel, opened 1853, relocated to the bluestone building in 1862, closed 1925.
5. Trams did not run down Queensberry Street.
6. The Benevolent Asylum was demolished in 1911. Victoria Street was extended and houses, a picture theatre, shops and 2 factories constructed on the site, 1914 to 1930s.

7. The 4 government schools in North Melbourne were Queensberry, Errol & King Streets schools and Boundary Road school. The 2 Catholic schools were St Mary's and St Michaels.
8. The Town Hall is an Arts House. Many buildings have been converted to apartments, including the Cable Tram Engine House, British Hotel, Bulla Cream, The Imperial Theatre and The Café Hotel. The building on the south-east corner of Queensberry & Curzon Streets was the King's Arms Hotel, 1855-1939, later the Avalon boarding house.
9. George Johnson Lane was named after the architect of the Town Hall, library and adjacent shops.

Award for Excellence to Heather McKay

The Hotham History Project wishes to congratulate Heather on the 2006 NWMA Award for Excellence for her outstanding contribution to the community as North Melbourne Local History Librarian. Heather has been a longstanding member of the Hotham History Project Committee and acts as our minute secretary. The Local History Collection is an extremely valuable resource and this award recognises its importance to the community. Heather has been responsible for developing and expanding the collection immeasurably in the ten years she has been at the library. North & West Melbourne are extremely fortunate to have such an excellent Local History Librarian. The Hotham History Project is also fortunate to have Heather's expertise and support on the committee. We thoroughly endorse the NWMA award.

MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES FOR 2007

Hotham History Project Committee meetings and activities will continue to be held on the 4th Tuesday of the month at the North Melbourne Library. Committee meetings for 2007 will be on 23 January, 27 March, 22 May, 24 July, 25 September and 27 November at 7.30pm.

Some activities proposed for next year include:

Tuesday 27 February at 6.00pm

Twilight walk around St Michael's parish, Hotham Hill, to commemorate the centenary of St Michael's church. Details to be notified.

Tuesday 24 April at 8.00pm

Talk by Gary Presland on the area now known as North & West Melbourne.

Gary Presland is an archaeologist and historian who has published widely and spoken frequently about pre-European Aboriginal life in the Melbourne area. His best known work on this subject is *Aboriginal Melbourne*, which was originally published in 1985 as *Land of the Kulin*. Gary's most recent studies have focused on reconstructing the natural history of Melbourne at the time of European arrival, for which

he was awarded a PhD at The University of Melbourne.

Tuesday 26 June at 8.00pm

Presentation on North Melbourne in the 1850's, to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the establishment of Mattingley's school in Errol Street, the forerunner of the Errol Street Primary School. Our favourite Thespian, Jim Brady, (who appeared as "The Vagabond" at the Beat the Bounds of the Benevolent Asylum 150th celebration, November 2000, and as "John Buncle", Buncle Day, Hotham History Project AGM, September 2005) will present excerpts from Albert Mattingley's address to the Royal Historical Society of Victoria in 1915 on the early history of North Melbourne.

Please keep this newsletter until you are able to enter the dates in your 2007 calendar

CONTINUING PROJECTS

People's History of West Melbourne

We are still collecting information and photographs and are interested in hearing from anyone who would like to be involved, either to help with the project or to share their memories and lend us their photographs for copying.

Contacts:

Mary Kehoe (mekehoe@iprimus.com.au, 9329 5814) or Lorraine Siska (lsiska@bigpond.com 9328 1621)

St Michaels' Centenary Project

Contacts:

Lorna Hannan: blhannan@netspace.net.au, 9328 3211 or Rae Nicholls raenicholls@optusnet.com.au, 9816 9720.

City of Melbourne Bowls Club

Work is still proceeding. As with many of these projects, it is very difficult to find the time to bring them to fruition.

Contact:

Madeleine Scully on 9326 9402(h), 9637 2024(w) or scully.madeleine.I@edumail.gov.au.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Thank you to all those who have renewed their membership and a reminder to those who would still like to be involved in our activities but have yet to pay their subscriptions. If you are unsure whether you are financial, please contact the Secretary, Mary Kehoe (mekehoe@iprimus.com.au or 9329 5814).

There are others on our emailing list who like to hear about our activities but do not want to join and we are happy to continue emailing our notices and newsletters. **However if you do not want to receive our notices, please ask the Secretary to remove you from the mailing list.**

We would like to wish you all a very happy festive season. We look forward to meeting you at some of our meetings and events in 2007.