

KANGAROO GROUND

CHRONICLE

ISBN 1324-6437

Newsletter of the
Andrew Ross Museum INC

School House, Kangaroo Ground, 3097

Volume 10 No 1
Autumn 2004



Nillumbik Council Mayor Lex de Man, Fiona Salmon, and Wenda Fleming at Andrew Ross Museum Accreditation Ceremony
December 3rd 2003

IN THIS ISSUE

- So that our members and readers can share in the good things that gaining accreditation has brought to the Andrew Ross Museum, we have included extracts from three of the talks given at last December's Accreditation Ceremony.

Page 1, Bruce Nixon's talk, *Ten Quid For a Pulpit (Chapel Schools)*

Page 3, Fiona Salmon's talk, *The Museum Accreditation Program*, and

Page 5, May Leckey's talk, *Museum Of the Future*.

- In his *High Achievers of Kangaroo Ground* series, Dick Austin writes on the early adult years of Arthur Calwell, on Page 7.
- On Page 10, Mick Woiwod describes how Cup Day 2003 was celebrated at *Pigeon Bank*.
- Every grave can tell a story. The story of the so-called "Lone Grave" at the Kangaroo Ground Cemetery is told on Page 14.
- Since accreditation, the Museum Treasurer has been busy banking generous donations and additional funding, as acknowledged on Page 16.
- From time to time we write up one or other of the wining and dining places around Kangaroo Ground. See where the Woiwods have been on Page 17.
- Why aren't Diana Bassett's Smith's *Chatterbox* and the Kangaroo Ground Store open? See the last page.

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TEN QUID FOR A PULPIT (CHAPEL SCHOOLS)

1851 was a colourful year in the history of Victoria. The Port Phillip District became independent from New South Wales and was called “Victoria”. The first parliament commenced and passed a number of important Acts.

Gold was discovered at Clunes, Black Thursday devastated Victoria, and Australia’s first Governor General, Fitz Roy arrived in Sydney. Sir Thomas Mitchell survived a duel with Stuart Donaldson MP (who I think owned land west of Kangaroo Ground and must not be confused with the Kangaroo Ground Donaldsons).

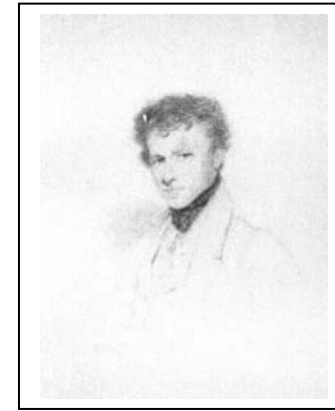
In 1851 La Trobe was appointed Lieutenant Governor after being Superintendent for 12 years. His salary went from £800 to £1500 and soon after the Gold Rush rose to £2000.

Passing through the tiny town of Kangaroo Ground, La Trobe gave William Bell of *Hitchbill* (nowadays the property on the hill above Eltham College) £10 towards the building of a new school under Andrew Ross. £10 was a small fortune, equivalent to perhaps £5000 today.

Why would a Governor passing a small town offer a third of his weekly wage to a minor school? We would need to go back fifteen years to the West Indies for an explanation. La Trobe, who came from a Moravian family, was chosen to write a report on the education of the newly released slaves in the West Indies.

Reporting back to Lord Glenelg, he suggested turning the newly erected West Indian schools into places of Worship on Sundays. He may have invented the term “Chapel-School”. Lord Glenelg and the House of Commons were impressed by this notion.

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Governor La Trobe

It is interesting to note that Andrew Ross slept in the pulpit of his new Kangaroo Ground School, and it is my contention that La Trobe probably offered £10 to William Bell for the construction of a pulpit in the Chapel-School.

Governor Gipps reprimanded La Trobe for his free personal giving to schools and churches, and we should not be surprised that the first Victorian Parliament set aside £30,000 for new church buildings (Act XXVIII, 18th January 1853).

It is my contention that La Trobe arrived in Melbourne with a mixed agenda, part of which was to evangelize, or put in place religious institutions to Christianize the aboriginals and the colony. No doubt James Bruce Donaldson (who had already given the land for the Chapel-School at Kangaroo Ground) donated more for its erection, but we cannot overlook La Trobe’s generous gift and the motive to erect another ‘chapel-school’.

- extracted from a talk given at the Andrew Ross Museum, 3rd December 2003, by the Museum’s Patron, Bruce Nixon.

THE MUSEUM ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

Fiona Salmon, MAP Co-Manager, has kindly provided an account of accreditation from the point of view of those responsible for the program.

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The Museum Accreditation Program (MAP) provides a framework to help Victorian museums build sustainability and innovation in management, governance and operations, and it fosters and promotes professional museum standards across the sector. Operating under the auspices of Museums Australia (Victoria), the program is funded by Arts Victoria.

There are currently 70 museums involved in the program, 35 of which have been fully accredited. The Andrew Ross Museum is the most recently accredited organization.

As a tool designed to assist museums measure and improve standards of operation to meet professional and public expectations, undertaking the process of Accreditation is not easy.

In the first instance interested museums must complete registration papers, which indicate whether or not a particular museum is ready for the Accreditation process. If accepted into the program, the museum is then required to complete the MAP Kit, a comprehensive self-assessment questionnaire covering areas of museum management, collection management, preventive conservation, public programs, visitor service, marketing and public relations.

Completing the Kit is hard work and demands high-level commitment from museum management, the ability to work as a team as well as a desire to learn and apply new skills and knowledge. In undertaking the program, volunteer staff of the Andrew Ross Museum clearly pulled together as a strong and cohesive group maintaining focus and demonstrating both the will and ability to improve standards where necessary.

Completing the Kit is only part of the Accreditation process. Following its submission, a site-visit is conducted at the museum with a panel of experts from the museum sector. On these visits close attention is paid to how exhibitions are prepared and presented, how conservation standards are maintained and how health and safety standards are met.

Following the visit and taking the written submission into account, a report is prepared for the MAP committee, comprising nine museum professionals, which makes the ultimate recommendation regarding accreditation. Accreditation was granted to the Andrew Ross Museum in August 2003.

As an Accredited museum stakeholders can be confident that museum operations are robust. Moreover, the museum can enjoy increased peer respect and recognition of professionalism from government and community. This can be beneficial when seeking financial and in-kind support for projects. Moreover, Accreditation facilitates opportunities for museums to make links with arts and heritage organizations, extending opportunities for cooperative promotions and increased visitor numbers.

- Fiona Salmon

MUSEUM OF THE FUTURE

The role, purpose and place of museums has changed much in the last ten years. The museum of today is evolving away from the archaic model of museums as a sacred place for a selected few. Nowadays museums are places for ideas and learning, debate and dialogue about what is important in communities. Like all museums we must be accountable to the community in which we exist.

The accreditation process was useful as it encouraged us to reflect on our operation and achievements over the past few years. We intend to draw on our strengths but will continue to reflect and evaluate to ensure that we have a purposeful and relevant place in the community. Through our education and exhibition policies we have endeavoured to provoke ideas and issues that go way beyond a ‘show and tell’ approach that was common in museums in the past. We like to encourage curiosity and wonderment about how things were.

For example questions such as “how did our predecessors organize themselves for subsistence, safety and entertainment?” can provide a basis for historical inquiry. We are inspired by the qualities such as endurance, tenacity, resourcefulness and interdependence that were evident in the lives of our forbearers. The early settlers of Kangaroo Ground could not have survived without the support of a close-knit community. A sense of community is one of the bigger themes that endures in the stories of the Kangaroo Ground people and has ongoing relevance to our lives today.

At the Andrew Ross Museum we value the stories of the people who came before us, some of which have inspired

our most memorable community events in recent times. For example *The Busbranger Night* and *The Alan Marshall Celebration* were popular and enjoyable occasions that involved many local people in their production. These special events have brought people together to celebrate our local history in ways that capitalize on the talents of individuals.

One of our aims is to increase interest in local history and heritage in our children. The museum is seen as a valuable resource for local schools. Requests for talks to school groups are on the increase and this often entails museum board members going out into schools as well as students coming to the museum. The Andrew Ross Museum will continue to be a catalyst for learning about history for people of all ages.

Our museum of the future will continue to be mindful of the diversity of our changing community and of the changing landscape. Today our hills are blessed with vineyards and olive groves, a new use for the land. It is important that we document and record the changes to the environment for future generations.

The use of new technology can assist us in many ways in recording and communicating our history. There is already a valuable database of the histories of many families in the area. We have much to learn, however, about how to further apply technology in creative and productive ways to make our museum interactive. Therefore we welcome new ideas and expertise from members of our community to help us achieve a museum of the future that we can be proud of.

- May Leckey
Faculty of Education
University of Melbourne

HIGH ACHIEVERS OF KANGAROO GROUND

Arthur Calwell

In Part One of this article, Dick Austin sketched Arthur Calwell's family background and his early years up to the death of his mother. Here, in Part Two, he outlines his career up to 1939.

Early Adulthood (1913-1939)

Arthur worked at the Victorian Department of Agriculture from 1913 to 1923 and then moved to the Victorian Treasury Department, working in the Treasury Building next to Parliament House, where he worked until elected to parliament in 1940.

As soon as he began working, Arthur joined the Melbourne branch of the Australian Labor Party, and he was Branch Secretary by the time he was 18 years old. He had a remarkably successful rise through the ALP: he was a member of the Victorian Executive from 1926 to 1949, becoming President of the Victorian Branch at the age of 34 (the youngest man ever to hold this position), and he was a member of the Federal Executive from 1930 to 1951. Calwell, with the help of John Wren, boldly conceived and executed the creation of the Victorian Country Party/ALP coalition Dunstan Government, which remained in office for 8 years.

In 1915 Arthur applied for a commission in the Australian Military Forces but was rejected as too young and because of his poor eyesight. In 1916, now 20, Arthur moved with his family to 14 Lee St, Flemington and he was to live in Flemington for the rest of his life.

1916 was also the year of the Irish Rebellion. The suppression of the uprising by the British led Irish Australians to see England's war against Germany as now also a war against Ireland. Three of Arthur's grandparents were Irish or of Irish descent, and he had been educated by Irish Christian Brothers, so he was already steeped in the injustice of English rule in Ireland. Now the Easter Rebellion awoke in him a strong sense of injustice and of his own Irishness, and he became a leader of the Melbourne Irish community, which almost led to his imprisonment in 1918. He came to see Irish Australians as people who had already been driven out of Ireland by English misrule, only to come to a country where they were further victimised by the descendants of their former enemy. He was determined to lead his people out of their ghetto status, to have them participate fully in the Australian community. Arthur learned to speak Gaelic and in 1933 he co-launched the Irish Review newspaper, the official organ of the Victorian Irish Association.

Arthur was a member of the North Melbourne Football Club, serving as president from 1928 to 1934, and he was later given the status of No.1 Life Member. He was also appointed an MCG Trustee in 1931 and remained one for life, becoming chairman in 1952. It was he who initiated the building of the Southern Grandstand in 1937.

Arthur lived with his family in Flemington until he married Margaret Murphy of Moonee Ponds in 1932 at the age of 36. Tragically, she died soon afterwards, leaving him shattered. This was the second premature death of a close family member, and he was later to suffer a third. Arthur later married Elizabeth Marren, a Gaelic speaking Irish

woman from Ulster, and they were to have two children, Mary Elizabeth and Arthur (Art) Andrew.

The second radicalising event for Arthur was the 1930s depression, where 30% of the Australian workforce was unemployed. The depression left him with a strong generosity, but also a desire to replace the system that he believed had caused it. At a personal level, Arthur did what he could for the unemployed, often giving them money and trying to find them work, and this generosity never left him – he died with only his house and parliamentary pension. At a political level, Calwell grew to believe that a new order must be built on the ruins of capitalism, a system based on moral values that would produce expansion and growth rather than suffering and injustice.



The penultimate chapter in Arthur's early adulthood was the death of his father in 1938 at the age of 69. As a result, Arthur inherited the 246 acre Kangaroo Ground property.

The final event during this period was his election to Melbourne City Council in 1939, and he remained in this position until 1945, by which time he was one of the most important politicians in the country.

(to be continued)

CUP DAY AT PIGEON BANK



The sun shone again after days of flooding rain leaving the track a little on the slow side for the big event. As we turned into the drive and swept through the carefully prepared grounds, *Pigeon Bank* was a delight to behold. Flags and pennants, banners and balloons fluttered most everywhere in a late spring breeze. Surely this couldn't be Kangaroo Ground!

Marg and I were courteously guided into the Member's Car Park by venue attendant, Peter Crookes in livery. After parking our carriage in the shade of a tree, Peter escorted us with aplomb to the Pigeon Bank Hunters and Shooters pavilion, there to be presented to the President and First Lady of the Pigeon Bank Sporting Club, the ever popular Ron and Susan James.

The crowds were beginning to gather so, not being accustomed to racetrack procedure, we did what we believed

everyone did; we mingled then strolled down to the Ornamental Lake to admire a flock of geese gracefully gliding its calm waters. Alongside in the Betting Ring stood reigning club bookie, Geoff Darby, who'd travelled up from Geelong specially to make a killing and, sure enough, he was — the money flowing as if it were mere paper on each race in turn, especially on the big one after three.



Next came 'Fashions on the Field' stage-managed by the lovely Susan, her assistants in the judging department, the fashion experts, Nola Anderson, Allison Raynor and Deb Crookes attended by much barracking from

their beaus in the Paddock. The accent here was on hats and there were some beauties among (and beneath) them, although it has to be said that there was also the odd unbroken bush filly —one agreed to be a real brumby who happily failed to win a place. None though topped the dazzling Helen Muir who won out in one of her own creations. And it wasn't just the hats that were over the top; the 'Most Colourful Footwear' competition brought out some real museum exhibits and as for the 'Loudest Shirt', among the ankle-biters: there were screamers!

On the track above the Flat the races were now in progress under the eagle eye of Clerk of Course, the aptly named Simon Steer. Entries for the 'Egg-and-Spoon' were particularly brisk, requiring elimination heats be run and when even these failed to call up a winner the decision made to dispense with the spoon altogether and to move the eggs around instead in ever-increasing loops. Local boy, K.G.'s own Ashley Muir proved himself to be the best egg 'chucka & catcha', closely followed by the colts Tommuir & Leoversteegen with filly Debcrookes coming in a close fourth. In the Bird-cage the popping of champagne corks drowned out the commentary!

The highlight of the day was the ever-popular wagers in the Betting Ring, the only currency accepted being *Pigeon Bank's* specially printed bank notes able to be had at a remarkably low price: \$20 Australian buying \$1,000 *PigeonBank*; Bookie Geoff even offering anyone down on their luck good odds down to 5th and 6th place. All went well until late in the day when he made a run for the car-park and had to be brought down in a tackle. David Raynor in charge of the trophies had *his* problems too when it was found that the judges had been spending too much time at the bar



between races and couldn't quite agree as to who'd won what and had to be rescued by our own Warwick Leeson who with some quick thinking, and equally fast footwork, arranged for everyone to become a winner.

As the sun set slowly in the west, Club President Ron James, who'd been required to wear tails throughout

the heat of the day, wrapped up a very successful day by calling *Pigeon Bank's* very own 'Flea Steeplechase'. The crowd around him as he made the call was so thick that only those in front could see the runners — their names though will live on in the hearts and minds of all true racing fans to the end of their days.

The Andrew Ross Museum congratulates Susan and Ron James on a wonderful day and thanks them for the \$400 that flowed into museum coffers; another \$400 going to the Kangaroo Ground Fire Brigade. It looks forward to the next first Tuesday in November for a rerun of the big national event.

Susan James and Mick Woiwod (above).

– Mick Woiwod

THE LONE GRAVE

In recent years the Kangaroo Ground Cemetery has become one of the most picturesque, carefully tended and improved sites in the district. Stroll along the grass, read the headstones that evoke the district's history, and you'll enjoy a strangely enlivening experience.

There is one headstone that draws attention. Because it stands well away from other graves, and because it marks a single grave, it is sometimes called "the lone grave". The headstone, one of the oldest in the cemetery, marks the grave of Anne Oldfield who died in 1863.

Mick Woiwod thinks the irregular location of "the lone grave" is a story in itself. It dates from a time soon after the cemetery was established. Andrew Ross, as secretary of the Cemetery Trust, recorded in the minutes the fact that unauthorized burials were occurring. No matter how well the fences were maintained, there was evidence that bodies were brought to the cemetery after dark and interred there without the Trust's approval. Anne Oldfield's burial might have been one such. Certainly, its exact date was not recorded in the Burial Register.

So who was Anne Oldfield? Why is the grieving husband, mentioned on the modest headstone, not buried with her? What is their story?

Anne Wright emigrated from Cornwall in 1853, as a general servant. Richard Oldfield, a miner, emigrated from Bedfordshire at about the same time. Their marriage occurred five years later at the Congregational Church, Lonsdale Street, Melbourne. Anne and Richard each signed the register with a cross.



Drawing by Veronica Holland.

Nothing is known of their six year married life, except that it was childless. They were residing at Diamond Creek when Anne died from tuberculosis in April 1864, aged 30.

What became of the “grieving husband” and why was he not interred in his wife’s grave? His story ended eleven years later. In 1875 Richard Oldfield was admitted to the Kew Lunatic Asylum. He died soon after, leaving no information about his past life. After an inquest he was buried in the Melbourne General Cemetery.

- John Austin

ACCREDITATION CONSEQUENCES

The best news issuing from the Andrew Ross Museum in recent times is the fact that accreditation has been granted. Many of the articles in this *Chronicle* edition refer to that major event.

Helping to celebrate this achievement, the Museum’s Patron, and its former Chairman, Bruce Nixon, sent a cheque to the Museum’s Treasurer for \$3,000, referring to it as “an expression of my gratitude”.

Further good news was received recently.

Last October the Andrew Ross Museum applied for and obtained funding of almost \$1,100 for the following items:

- a panel wall heater for our Kitchen and Workroom
- a variety of archival boxes, and
- improved shelving to store these boxes.

These are now in place and the benefits and improvements are being appreciated already.

The application was made to Small Infrastructure Grants, a program set up as an initiative of Museums Australia (Victoria) and funded through the State Department, Arts Victoria. Grants are intended to offer financial assistance to regional museums undertaking small projects as they move towards recognised museum standards.

As Museum members know, hard work is required to raise funds for meeting ongoing expenses. Receiving this grant has thus lessened the pressure of money raising, and represents a further accreditation benefit.

- John Austin

WINING AND DINING

Although described as a blink-and-you'll-miss-it hamlet in the Melbourne *Age* last November, Kangaroo Ground nevertheless boasts many wineries, restaurants, and other stopping places where good coffee and extensive views can be enjoyed.

A recent addition is the Samson Hill Estate, 360 Eltham-Yarra Glen Road. Pago and Steven Samson established their winery here, in the shadow of the Memorial Tower, in 1998, and three months ago they began welcoming guests for wine tasting and casual dining.

Local historians Mick and Marg Woiwod, with daughter Louise, taking a break from preparing the Andrew Ross Diary for publication, wined and dined somewhat al fresco here recently. Melbourne and the Westgate Bridge could be seen in the distance, and on the table was a chilled bottle of excellent wine labelled "product of Kangaroo Ground's rich black volcanic soil". Supporting the table at its centre was a sturdy oaken wine barrel.

Amongst the various "special offers" provided here in January and February was a lavish Sunday breakfast comprising a sumptuous grill, thick toast, coffee, croissants, jam and cream. A breakfast like this would surely provide enough energy for running up and down the stairs of the nearby Memorial Tower six or seven times afterwards.

- John Austin



CHATTERBOX CLOSURE

Readers will not find Museum Secretary Diana Bassett-Smith's regular *Chatterbox* feature in this issue of the *Chronicle*. Sadly, Diana has thought the time ripe to relinquish her role as Honorary Secretary.

Diana has been the Museum Secretary for most of its ten year existence. Her love of the district and her work in promoting and preserving it possibly stem from the fact that she is a direct descendant of Joseph Stevenson, one of Kangaroo Ground's first white settlers. She and husband Peter have also been principal contributors to the Museum's photographic collection during the past ten years. There will be more time for Diana to tend her garden now, but we hope she and Peter will continue to photograph the district and its events.

- John Austin

KANGAROO GROUND STORE CLOSURE

Trading at this century old landmark building ceased early in the New Year. Ann and Bob Maloney continue to operate the Post Office, now located in Graham Road behind the Church.



