

2017/2018 Presidents Report

This is my fourth year as President of the Association and it is my pleasure to outline the activities of the association in the year ending 30th June 2018. We have continued to take a balanced and positive position on a wide range of issues affecting Surrey Hills.

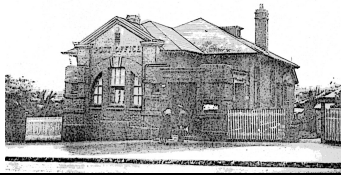
We have organised the fourth consecutive Anzac Day Dawn Service; updated and improved the Associations website and incorporated the Community Portal within the website; supported Boroondara Council in their application for funds to conserve the external fabric of the Shrine in Surrey Gardens; received a grant from the Boroondara Community Strengthening Grant Scheme to complete the History Board project ; expanded the operational reach of the Association to cover the whole of the 3127 postcode; made submissions to Council on a range of issues and opposed the applications for planning permits to build multistorey apartment blocks at 352-358 Canterbury Road and 3 Norfolk Road.

To review the activities of the Association in more detail I have divided the projects into two categories, Community and Planning.

Community

ANZAC Day Dawn Service

This was the last year of a four year commitment by the Association to hold an Anzac Day Dawn Service at the Shrine of Remembrance in Surrey Gardens. This

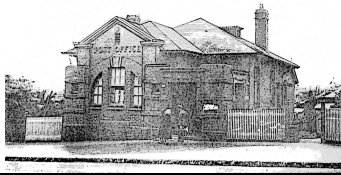


four year period represents a centennial acknowledgement of the first world war (1914-1918), during which the Australian forces first fought in Anzac Cove. Anzac Day commemorates that landing and remembers the lives of all serving men and women who paid the ultimate price for the freedoms granted to future generations.

The Dawn Service held on April 25th 2018 followed the guidelines laid down by the RSL for such an event, but emphasised the contributions made by Surrey Hills residents. It involved local schools in presenting details of the history of certain local serving personnel. The event was well attended reflecting the importance of the event to the community. Crowd estimates were in the region of 800-1000, supported by representatives of State Government and the City of Boroondara and local resident Geoff Kennett. A catafalque party, supplied by the local barracks, presided over the lowering and raising of the Australian flag. There was a significant increase in the number of wreaths laid this year.

An exhibition of WW1 memorabilia, a collaborative project of Surrey Hills Progress Association, Surrey Hills Historical Society and Sandra Dexter, a prime researcher of the servicemen and women of Surrey Hills, was on display in the newly refurbished cottage in Surrey Gardens during April, to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the dedication of the Shrine which occurred on the 7th April 1918.

This years Dawn Service honoured the lives of Leslie Ward, George and Robert Smart , Charlie Smart, Edgar (Ted) Ottosen, Percy Clarke, Harold Pasco Maxwell Smith, George Jobson and Douglas Breedon.

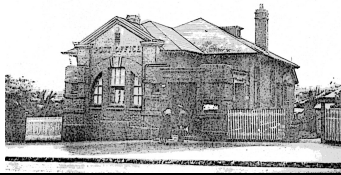


Leslie Ward, who grew up in Surrey Hills, enlisted for the war in December 1914. He was the only son of Alice and Charles Ward who lived at "Dumeresq" in Guildford Road. Leslie served at Gallipoli, Egypt and the Western Front with the 1st Australian Light Horse Regiment, and was promoted to Sergeant; He died of wounds on 19 March 1917 at Pozieres.

Brothers George and Bob Smart enlisted one month apart in March and April 1915. Both served with the 22nd Infantry Battalion. The family lived at Pembroke Street, Surrey Hills. George was a hairdresser and Bob was a carpenter. George Smart was wounded on 2 December 1915 at Gallipoli, just before the AIF left the peninsula. He died the next day. George was 31 and left a wife, Eliza, and four daughters. Bob went on to fight on the Western Front and was reported missing on 5 August 1916 at Pozieres. On Anzac Day 1917, following the death of his two brothers, Charlie Smart enlisted. His parents' permission was required as he was just 18 years and 9 months old. Charlie joined the 59th Infantry Battalion and fought at Villers Bretonneux. He returned home in September 1919.

Edgar Ottosen was born in Surrey Hills and was known as Ted. He lived most of his life with his family at Empress Rd in Surrey Hills. Ted joined up in April 1916 and served with the 37th Infantry Battalion. He was awarded the Military Medal "for exceptional bravery and devotion to duty in action east of Ypres on 4th October 1917 (in the Battle of Broodseinde Ridge.) Corporal Ted Ottosen was killed nearly a year later on 30 September 1918 at the battle for St Quentin Canal. He was 24.

The Battle of Broodseinde Ridge was a large operation, where the Australian divisions suffered 6,500 casualties. Three men from Surrey Hills died in that



battle: Percy Clarke, a 33-year-old clerk from Weybridge Street, Harold Pasco Maxwell Smith, a 20-year-old clerk from Vincent Street and George Jobson, a 22-year-old farmer, from Croydon Road.

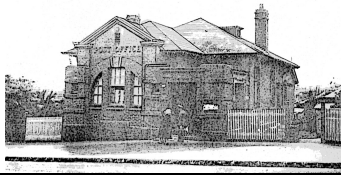
Douglas Breeden served with the Surrey Hills senior cadets and the Citizen forces. He was a sergeant bugler. His parents Charles and Lillian lived at Victoria Avenue in Surrey Hills. His older brother, Charles joined two years earlier and was serving in France when Douglas embarked for duty in August 1918 on HMAT Barambah. Douglas was admitted to the ship's hospital with influenza on 11 October and died at sea on 20 October 1918. He was buried at Freetown in Sierra Leone, West Africa. Douglas was 22.

The Master of Ceremonies for the service Damien Gardiner presented a deeply moving address paying homage and recalling the sacrifice upon which Australia, and freedom-loving nations around the world, have been built. .

The funding for the event was supported by the Bendigo Bank, the Progress Association and Woolworths. We acknowledge the help and involvement of officers of the City of Boroondara and Sandra Dexter. The Dawn Service over the last four years is considered to have made a major contribution to community strengthening in Surrey Hills.

Future of the Dawn Service

It was always the intention of the Association to organise and fund four services. This four year period represented a centennial acknowledgement of the First World War (1914-1918). The considerable support of local residents gave rise to a number of approaches after the 2018 service relating to the future of the event.



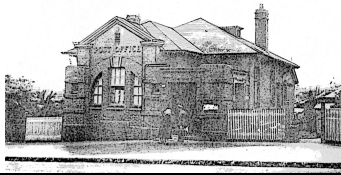
It was decided to seek alternative organisers for the event in coming years to support the continuation of the event leveraging the community benefit achieved in the past going forward.

Redesign and update of the SHPA website

The SHPA website was old and the information had not been kept up to date. A program to bring the website up to date and easy to read, making it a useful resource for residents of Surrey Hills, was initiated in the year. The information has been expanded to cover more of the Associations activities, both past and present, data on the history of Surrey Hills and of the Association and Annual Reports for the last 5 years have been added. Pages on Heritage, Planning, Commercial Developments and Planning Permit Applications have also been included. An update of the data held on the Community Portal has now been completed and the portal has been included in the revamped SHPA website.

Design and Installation of further Heritage and Street Art Panels

A community strengthening grant has been awarded by the City of Boroondara for the completion of the Union Road, Surrey Hills Heritage Project. The Union Road Commercial Precinct is of local historical significance. It is a long-standing local commercial/retail shopping area in Surrey Hills. It is important for the local community to be aware of and be engaged in the heritage of Surrey Hills to strengthen community ties with the past and in the last 5 years the Association has been financing and promoting projects which advance and strengthen that heritage and neighbourhood character. This grant application seeks to complete the ongoing work already carried out, which lays the foundation of possible



heritage walks around Union Road. The funding is to be used for purchase and installation of 4 additional History Boards and 2 mural plaques for the existing street art.

Work was carried out with the support of the Surrey Hills Historical Society to select suitable sites and suitable artwork for the boards and to gain permission for their installation on private property. It is anticipated that this project will be completed by the end of the year.

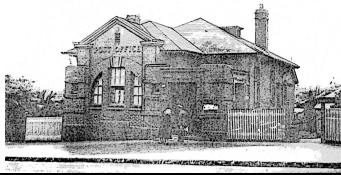
Surrey Hills Shopping Centre Union Road Improvement Plan

The City of Boroondara has developed a Shopping Centre Improvement Plan, which identifies streetscape improvement opportunities at Union Road, Surrey Hills. These improvements are intended to enhance the shopping centre's appearance and character, and create a safe, functional and pedestrian - friendly environment.

The basic plan has the support of the SHPA and a submission from the Association has been lodged with Council including strong support for the public toilet. The suggestion for a public toilet in Croydon Road has received significant negative response from some residents and the toilet and its siting have been deleted from the improvement plan and will be treated as a separate issue.

Planning

The year has been one of the slowest in terms of commercial planning applications and objections. At the moment attendance at VCAT and Council meetings is a distant memory. However the coming year is shaping up to be a busy one for the Association.



Objection to a planning Permit Application to develop 352-358 Canterbury Road.

This is the site between Red Rooster and the new development on the car wash site.

It consists of:-

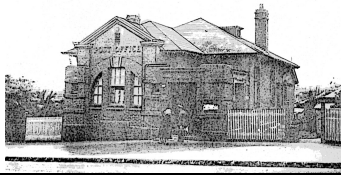
4-storeys at the Red Rooster end stepping up to 5-storeys adjacent to the new development to the west. This is 6 m / 2-storeys higher than this apartment block.

- **Allows for 42 apartments: 25 x 2BR; 4 x 1BR & 13 x 3BR on a c2500 sq m site**
- **Provides 83 car spaces – so no requirement for dispensation re reduced number of car spaces.**
- **The development proposal includes roof top gardens but these are private spaces.**

The Association lodged an objection of behalf of SHPA and circulated it to members in the immediate area. Basis for objection included:

- **Height and scale - maximum height is 17+metres (ie. 50% higher than the preferred height)**
- **Unacceptable interface with the heritage listed Surrey Gardens**
- **Communal space overshadowed by the building all year round.**

In relation to the communal space and light requirement, the developer relies on the area setback at Canterbury Road for future road widening (Public Acquisition Overlay) as a second communal space. Long term retention of this area cannot be assumed.



A decision on this proposed development by Boroondara is awaited.

3 Norfolk Road- Objection to a planning application and appeal to VCAT.

An application for a planning permit to construct a multistorey mixed use apartment building at 3 Norfolk Road has been lodged with Boroondara Council.

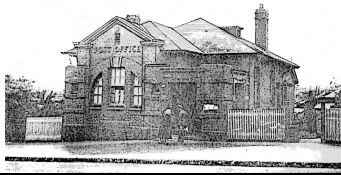
It is a difficult block to develop and includes

- **4/5 storey development with setbacks on 4th & 5th storeys and one retail premises on the ground floor**
- **16.6m at highest point**
- **Essentially a square box on the block covering most of the site**
- **Configuration: 1 x 1BR; 3 x 2BRs; 15 x 3BRs.**

There are a number of issues in relation to the Boroondara Planning Scheme.

- **Significantly it exceeds the preferred height level of 11 m.**
- **Adverse impact on public realm and the heritage overlay both in relation to land abutting (Surrey Gardens) and over the road (the Armenian Church and the heritage overlay HO670).**
- **Majority of the apartments are south facing abutting Surrey Gardens – this is poor from an energy efficiency standpoint & internal light amenity**
- **Harsh & overwhelming interface with the park**

There were nine objections to the application and the Association lodged a strong objection with Council regarding this development. The Boroondara Council subsequently refused to grant a permit on five basic grounds. This refusal was appealed to VCAT by the developer. The appeal was successful and the permit



was issued. During the very protracted process a number of plan changes gave rise to the following improvements to the design, including a reduction in apartments to 16, a reduction in building height to 15.5 metres, reduction in number of bedrooms by 5, removal of lower-storey apartments from Basement to Ground, alteration to lobby configuration and resident facilities at ground level, increased setback from street frontage to Level 4 façade alignment, increased setback from southern boundary alignment to Level 3 and 4 façade, reduction of street wall height facing onto Surrey Gardens by 1 level and increased setback to ground floor commercial tenancy. Not exactly a victory, but a significant improvement to the original plans.

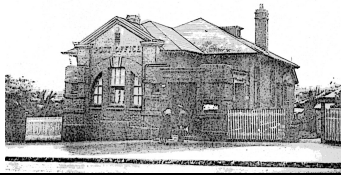
Acknowledgements

Community based organisations will only ever achieve their objectives with the active involvement of members and supporters. The Surrey Hills Progress Association is a small group of genuinely dedicated residents and I offer my sincere thanks to everyone who has been involved in the last year.

We have continued to properly represent the interests of the residents of Surrey Hills.

Our thanks go the Salvation Army for the use of their facilities and we look forward to a continuing mutually beneficial alliance in the future.

I would like to recognise the work of the team which has organised and run the Dawn Service for the last four years. The event improved, year on year, due solely to the professionalism of Lynette Giddings, Greg Buchanan and Damien Gardiner. We have also received significant help from Council in running the Dawn Service. We acknowledge and appreciate the involvement of the local



schools, Our Holy Redeemer, Surrey Hills Primary, Chatham Primary and Ashwood, which added poignancy to the event and recognition by the younger generation of the indescribable human sacrifice of Surrey Hills residents in the Great War.

I would like to thank Sue Barnett for her work as secretary and as the link to the Historical Society, for her valued contribution to the artwork and layout and content for the History Boards.

The redesign and improvement of the website appeared to be a huge task, but with the help and expertise of Alison Dews it proved to be a very satisfying one, giving rise to a very professional result.

Thanks to Andrew Watts for acting as Treasurer and for his organisation of an update to the Community Portal for incorporation into the website.

Finally, my sincere personal thanks go to the members of the SHPA for entrusting me with the position of President over the past four years. It has been a genuine privilege to be involved with this organisation.