

2016/2017 Presidents Report

This is my third year as President of the Association and it is my pleasure to outline the activities of the association in the year ending 30th June 2017. We have continued to take a balanced and positive position on a wide range of issues affecting Surrey Hills and have maintained close working relationships with Jane Addis, the Councillor for the Maling Ward, the City of Boroondara and its officers in the pursuit of our aims.

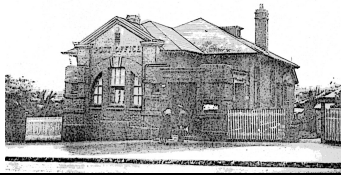
We have organised the third consecutive Anzac Day Dawn Service; designed and financed a new mural depicting three of Surrey Hills early pioneers on a prominent wall in Union Road; supported Boroondara Council in their application for funds to conserve the external and internal fabric of the Shrine in Surrey Gardens; supported the introduction of heritage overlays to the remaining southern section of Surrey Hills; expanded the operational reach of the Association to cover the whole of the 3127 postcode, following the demise of the West of Elgar Residents Association Inc, (WERA).

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

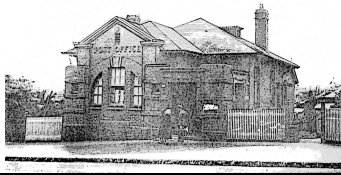


This four year period represents a centennial acknowledgement of the first world war (1914-1918), during which the Australian forces first fought in Anzac Cove. Anzac Day commemorates that landing and remembers the lives of all serving men and women who paid the ultimate price for the freedoms granted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

The Dawn Service held on April 25th 2017 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. Despite the cold and wet weather the event was well attended, as in past years. Crowd estimates were in the region of 700-900, supported by representatives of State Government and the City of Boroondara. 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 we honoured the lives of Frederick Mawson, who was born in January 1893 and grew up at Number 10 Bona Vista Avenue, Surrey Hills and William (Willie) Victor Bailey Wyatt who was born in 1893 and grew up at Number 46 Essex Road, Surrey Hills. Fred was killed in action on 9 November 1917. He was made a corporal on the morning he died and is buried in Belgium at the Ramparts Cemetery near Ypres. Willie was killed in action in the second battle at Bullencourt on 3 May 1917. He has no known grave but is commemorated at the Australian National Memorial at Villers-Bretonneux in France.

The Master of Ceremonies for the service Damien Gardiner and the two major organisers, Lynette Giddings and Greg Buchanan should be congratulated on the totally professional presentation of the service, following months of preparatory work. The funding for the event was supported by local businesses and the



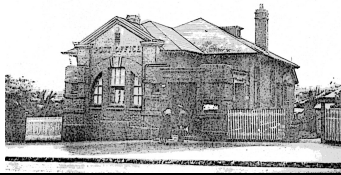
Progress Association. We acknowledge the help and involvement of officers of the City of Boroondara.

The Dawn Service is considered to make a major contribution to community strengthening in Surrey Hills.

Mural

Following the success of the mural on the side wall of 131 Union Road (cnr. Bedford Avenue), which recalls both the importance of the railway in the development of Surrey Hills and the spirit of freedom felt in the early 50's. A second mural has been some time in the making. It is designed to emphasise the history and heritage of the local area, following a theme taken up by the Association in the past years to improve the recognition of the breadth of heritage within the neighbourhood and to display it in a meaningful way. The new mural, located on the north side of the rail crossing, depicts three people, who are portrayed on a background of a view of Union Road looking north from Canterbury Road at the turn of the century. John Butler Maling, Thomas Hogg and Susannah Sarovich have been chosen to represent our early settlers. The sepia tones selected add to the impact of the wall painting.

The nostalgic murals were designed and painted by artist Simon White who spent time in Surrey Hills as a child and was recently commissioned by the Surrey Hills Progress Association as part of the ongoing beautification and heritage initiatives in our neighbourhood. SHPA worked closely with Boroondara Council to secure a Graffiti Grant through the Department of Justice and with additional contributions from local businesses and the Bendigo Bank. The graffiti protection coating was also organised and funded by the Council. It was fortuitous that both murals were vandalised AFTER the coating



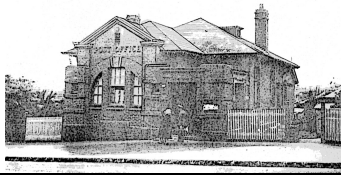
had been applied, which made the removal of the graffiti a relatively simple process.

Heritage Overlays

The Association over the past six years has supported the Boroondara Council in its commitment to engage with our community in striving for protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment in order to achieve the objective that the character of our neighbourhoods is protected and improved. Prior to the assessment of the heritage value of Surrey Hills there was precious little protection in place. With the incorporation of Amendment C177 as part of the Boroondara Planning Scheme during this year, it completes a long held need for appropriate Heritage Overlays to be applied to all the areas of Surrey Hills. The amendment introduces a Heritage Overlay to three (3) precincts (445 properties) and ten (10) individual properties, based on the Surrey Hills South Residential Precincts Heritage Study. There are now eight heritage overlays and numerous heritage places in Surrey Hills.

Shrine Conservation

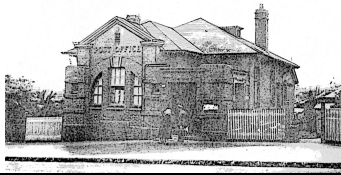
Although minor repairs have been made in the past, at nearly 100 years old the Shrine in Surrey Gardens needs to be maintained in good order to continue to be a fitting monument to the residents of Surrey Hills who fought and those that gave their lives in the Great War of 1914 to 1918. Works are required to address issues relating to the fabric of the building, the interior of the building, including conservation of the Blogg sculpture and updating of the lists of service personnel on the Honour Roll. It has become apparent that these currently have a significant number of spelling errors and the omission of many eligible names. A detailed investigation has been undertaken by a local Surrey Hills resident,



Sandra Dexter. Sandra's research also includes a list of local nurses who served. Their service has previously gone unrecognised. An updated Honour Board will more accurately reflect the service of men and women from this community. The Progress Association has worked with and supported the Boroondara Council in seeking funds to conserve and update the interior of the Shrine. The Council was successful this year in obtaining a grant of \$20,000 from the State Government under the "Restoring Community Memorials" grants program. Further funds are being sought from the Federal Government under the 'Saluting Their Service' Commemorative Grants Program, to fully conserve the exterior fabric of the Shrine.

WERA

Earlier this year the WERA group was disbanded. The West of Elgar Residents Association Inc. (WERA) was recognised as a strong, professional and active voice of the residents in the area of Surrey Hills and Mont Albert in the City of Whitehorse. At a time when there is significant pressure on Government to increase the density of residential zoned land close to the City of Melbourne, active residents associations are necessary to ensure the protection of neighbourhood and heritage character of Surrey Hills. After discussions with the President of WERA, Geoff White, the Surrey Hills Progress Association has agreed to extend its sphere of operation to cover all of Surrey Hills and Mont Albert within the 3127 postcode. Geoff has also agreed to join the SHPA committee and to act as the link to past members of WERA and the Whitehorse Council. The uptake of ex WERA members has to date been slow.

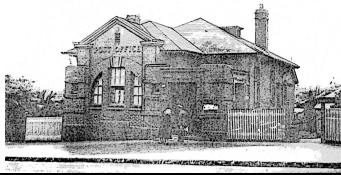


Planning

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.

In relation to residential development we would not normally involve the Association in objecting to planning applications unless there was a compelling reason. In the case of 50 Croydon we did lodge an objection to Council siting a number of issues. This was one of the first applications to seek demolition and development in one of the newly created Heritage Overlays. (HO 535) Although the house was non contributory, it was located in HO535 and we believed that the proposed new building was not an appropriate and good quality contemporary response to the key heritage values of the precinct. Ultimately the Council granted a permit, subject to a number of changes to the original plans.

The Association has also sent objections to the Planning Minister concerning two decisions in the year made without proper consultation with council or residents. One was the incorporation of Amendment C255 into the Boroondara Planning Scheme removing mandatory height limits in the Canterbury Road Commercial Corridor and the second relates to reforms to Neighbourhood Residential Zones in Melbourne, shifting the balance in favour of increased density and more intensive development, substantially weakening the protection of neighbourhood character and residential amenity.



Acknowledgements

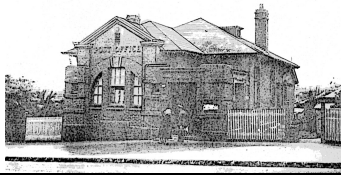
Community based organisations will only ever achieve their objectives with the active involvement of members and supporters. The Surrey Hills Progress Association is a small group of genuinely dedicated residents and I offer my sincere thanks to everyone who has been involved in the last year.

We have continued to develop a working relationship with the City of Boroondara Council, which is essential to properly represent the interests of the residents of Surrey Hills and I would like to offer the Association's thanks to Cr Jane Addis, the councillor for the Maling Ward, for all her active help and timely co-operation covering projects and topics in the past year. We have also received significant help from Council in running the Dawn Service, financing the graffiti protection for the murals and their activities in the lodging of applications for the conservation of the Shrine in Surrey Garden, which all achieved good outcomes. Our thanks also 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 three years. The event gets better, year on year, due solely to the professionalism of Lynette Giddings, Greg Buchanan and Damien Gardiner.

I would like to thank Sue Barnett for her work as secretary, making my job so much easier, for her valued contribution to the artwork and layout and content for the mural and for her persistence in prodding the Council to apply for grants for the Shrine.

I appreciate the help offered by Alison Dews to get our website in order.



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