



MOUNT ALEXANDER BRANCH

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NEWSLETTER JUNE 2010

Granite Houses tour voted an unqualified success!



The Granite Houses of Harcourt are quite distinctive. There are about thirty granite homes in the Harcourt/Faraday area, mostly built prior to 1900 and last March some 70 Mount Alexander Branch members and friends enjoyed a self-drive tour, visiting three interesting granite homes under the expert guidance of George Milford of the Harcourt Valley Heritage & Tourist Centre Inc. The day was perfect and at the end there was an exciting surprise when members were able to enjoy a nostalgic ride on this miniature railway which had carried many of them as children in its earlier location at the Melbourne Zoo.



Trust Conference in Castlemaine



ON 3 MARCH 2010 the Mount Alexander Branch hosted a conference of senior executives of the National Trust of Australia (Vic) with committee members of the Mount Alexander and Bendigo Branches. Pictured above are the Trust Executives with Branch Committees (T=Trust, MA=Mount Alexander, B=Bendigo). Front row: David Cunningham (MA), Peter Brain (MA), Ruth Crofts T, Martin Purslow (T), Paul Roser (T), Mike Butcher (B), Janet Gilmore (MA). Back Row: Bruce Harvey (T), Gary Hill (B), Elaine Doling (B), Jane Cleary (B), Peter Cuffley (MA), Geraldine Mitchell (B), Bill Taylor (MA), Brian Tresidder (MA). The major themes of the conference were development of the Trust's strategic plan, based on appreciation, conservation and celebration of heritage, the viability and responsibilities of branches and the development of closer liaison between branches and the Trust's administration.

Photo courtesy Castlemaine Mail

Branch Committee Expands

The Mount Alexander Branch Committee has recently been enlarged and strengthened by the inclusion of several new members.

The twelve current members are: David Cunningham (President), Peter Brain (Secretary), Brian Tresidder (VP Activities), Bill Taylor (VP, Treasurer, Membership), Peter Cuffley and Hilary Da Costa (Maldon Liaison), Janet Gilmore, Joyce Sanders, Merlyn Pritchard, Elizabeth Eager, Derek Reid and Frank Thompson.

Each member brings his or her experience and skills to add to our effectiveness. From time to time we will publish a brief comment on these members, commencing here with two of the newest:

Elizabeth Eager is a former Councillor with Mount Alexander Shire. "During my term on Council I was particularly interested in the community life of the Shire, particularly noting how this town can be truly modern and focused on progress while retaining our built and social heritage" Elizabeth says. "The fascinating history of Castlemaine and the evident appreciation of its heritage are the very reasons I chose to live here and I'm certainly happy with that decision".

Frank Thompson OAM. For many years a Collingwood Councillor, Frank was appointed Commissioner for the City of Yarra during the Council reconstruction. He has been involved in local health for 26 years and was instrumental in the establishment of 'The Farm' at the Convent of the Good Shepherd, where under-privileged children are introduced to aspects of country life. He also recognises the importance of heritage as a background to contemporary living.

National Trust - Mount Alexander Branch

COMING EVENTS TO NOTE IN YOUR DIARY

JUNE

AFTERNOON TEA AT THE OLD POWDER MAGAZINE

Enjoy afternoon tea with fellow members and friends in a lovely private garden surrounding the Old Powder Magazine.

SUNDAY 20 JUNE 2.00PM TO 4.00PM

COST \$10.00

The Old Powder Magazine is on the Register of the National Estate. Built in 1867, the designer was the Chief Government Architect William Wardell who also designed St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne and St Mary's Cathedral Sydney.

The Magazine was built to store gunpowder and explosives for mining, the militia and storekeepers and is made of hand made bricks on a deep granite foundation. In an historic area with the sandstone Powder Magazine Keeper's Cottage on one side and further up the hill the former residence of the surveyor Downe, who designed the Castlemaine Market, the Magazine overlooks the site of the original Commissioner's Camp. It has sweeping views over Castlemaine towards Mount Alexander.

While we enjoy afternoon tea, the owners will explain its many interesting features, including thick buttressed walls, a vaulted keyed-in brick ceiling, to allow any blast to escape upwards, high lightning conductors, King Billy pine flooring with wooden pegs rather than nails and copper lined doors. It will also be possible to view the exterior of the adjacent Magazine Keeper's Cottage. This is also on the Register of the National Estate and is an important example of a picturesque cottage designed in the 1860s by the Public Works Department.



THE ADDRESS AND DIRECTIONS
WILL BE GIVEN ON BOOKING.
PLEASE CONTACT BRIAN TRESIDDER
ON 03 5472 1108 OR 0429 450 055 OR AT
TRESIDDERBRIAN@YAHOO.COM.AU
BETWEEN 28 MAY AND 13 JUNE.

TOUR MUSEUM VICTORIA'S LARGE ARTIFACTS STORE

An opportunity to enjoy a visual feast at Museum Victoria's Large Artifacts Store at Moreland.

MONDAY 2 AUGUST 2010

COST \$5.00

Museum Victoria's Large Artifacts Store is not open to the public. It contains a vast array of artifacts – a plane, a Sunshine Harvester, refrigerators and many other fascinating items, some relating to our Shire. The tour is limited to twenty people and we have 13 bookings to date. If you are interested in attending contact Brian Tresidder as above by Friday 23 July.



The Mount Alexander Branch has invited members of all Trust Branches to enjoy the heritage treasures of Maldon and Castlemaine over the weekend 3-5 September 2010.

This will be a spectacular event commencing with a reception in the historic Castlemaine Market Building on the evening of Friday September 3. On Saturday and Sunday we will provide a variety of activities in Castlemaine and Maldon. While the weekend is designed to attract visitors from other parts of the State (or even interstate) we hope that many of our local members will join the activities - both to enjoy the visits to local places of interest and to meet other Trust members.

This is the most adventurous program this Branch of the Trust has ever undertaken and we would welcome your participation and support. A detailed program is in course of preparation and will be forwarded to you in June, from which you will be invited to join the full weekend of activities or subscribe to one or other of the days. For any queries call 5472 4534 or email adco@bigpond.net.au.