



# Prahran Mechanics' Institute

## Victorian and Local History Library

Newsletter No. 43 February 2006

140 High Street, Prahran (PO Box 1080, Windsor VIC 3181)

Open Mon-Fri 9.30-4.30 Sat 9.30-1pm

Tel/fax (03) 9510 3393 [library@pmi.net.au](mailto:library@pmi.net.au)

<http://www.pmi.net.au>

Free Lecture

Andrew Brown-May

## THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MELBOURNE

Join us for the first PMI free lecture for 2006 when Andrew Brown-May tells us the story behind The Encyclopedia of Melbourne, which he co-edited with Shirlee Swain.

Andrew is a Melbourne historian, writer and a Senior Lecturer in history at the University of Melbourne. His previous publications include *Espresso: Melbourne Coffee Stories* (2001) and *Melbourne Street Life: the Itinerary of our Days* (1998). He has been the Director of the of the Encyclopedia of Melbourne project since its inception ten years ago.

7.00 pm, Thursday 16 February, 2006  
at the library

Don't miss this! Seats are limited so book now!  
Phone 9510 3393 or email [library@pmi.net.au](mailto:library@pmi.net.au)

### PMI Press Book Launch

The second publication of Prahran Mechanics' Institute Press *No Shops in Acland Street: the Autobiography of an Entertaining Lady* is complete and will be available to purchase from 13 Feb. The book will be launched on 12 February by theatre historian Frank Van Straten, OAM and 10 places at the launch have been set aside for PMI members. Details Pages 4 - 5 >>

### Inside...

Regular features: *Library News*, *Recent Acquisitions*

Special Articles: *Committee Profile No. 1 p.3*

*No Shops in Acland Street: the Story of a Book p.4-5*



## Members News

We wish all our members an enjoyable and relaxing long weekend and advise that the library will be closed on Monday 13 March.

We welcome the following **new members** who joined in December and January:

Thank you to the following people who made **financial donations** to the Library in December and January:

<i>Denis Boundy</i>	<i>Murray Marshallsea</i>
<i>Clive Brooks</i>	<i>Ian Matthews</i>
<i>Roger Beeston</i>	<i>Jennifer Matthews</i>
<i>Judith Buckrich</i>	<i>Roland McCausland</i>
<i>Ron &amp; Ruth Cameron</i>	<i>Elsie Percy</i>
<i>Jennifer Campbell</i>	<i>Les Percy</i>
<i>Michael Challenger</i>	<i>William Power</i>
<i>Cinema &amp; Theatre</i>	<i>Jacqueline Quirk</i>
<i>Historical Society</i>	<i>Cecile Rees</i>
<i>Philippe de Gail</i>	<i>Keith Rogers</i>
<i>John Don</i>	<i>Heather Ronald</i>
<i>Jim Ellwood</i>	<i>Mary Russell</i>
<i>Deirdre Farfor</i>	<i>Margaret &amp; Barrie</i>
<i>Elaine Herbert</i>	<i>Stevens</i>
<i>Peter Isaacson</i>	<i>Ron Thomas</i>
<i>Hinton Lambert</i>	<i>Joy Tuckett</i>
<i>Reuben Lazarus</i>	<i>Frank Van Straten</i>
<i>Michael Macgeorge</i>	

We particularly wish to thank all those members who have made it a habit over the years to make a financial donation with their subscription renewals. Financial donations help us to afford extra things for the library over and above those things covered in the normal operational expenses, such as ....

## Air Conditioning

Regular visitors to the library will know that our building heats up in the warm weather

to an uncomfortable degree. This is particularly noticeable on evenings when we have events at the library such as meetings and lectures.

An air conditioning system will very soon be installed, and will make the library a much more pleasant place to read and relax.

## Alan Shinkfield Awards

Congratulations to the following Grade 6 students who were the recipients for the 21st annual Alan Shinkfield awards in December (presenters names are shown in brackets):

*Armadale Primary School (Catherine Milward-Bason) - Patrick Clarkson*

*Malvern Primary School (Alf Lazer) - Will Abbey, Harrison Stobie*

*Stonnington Primary School (Chris Gahan) - Georgia McKaskill*

*South Yarra Primary School (John Chandler) - Maria Halkias, Ben Ellis*

*Toorak Primary School (Christine Worthington) - Sara Webber*

*Victorian College for the Deaf (Christine Worthington) - Idelia Lay*

Grade 6 teachers at each of the schools annually nominate one student who has made a significant contribution to the life of the school, and their fellow classmates. Recipients of the award receive a certificate, \$100 towards the expenses of beginning secondary school (where there were two recipients students received \$50 each) and a copy of the PMI history *Pioneer and Hardy Survivor*.

## PMI Press Update

See our special article on page 4-5 of this newsletter regarding the launch of **No Shops in Acland Street: the Autobiography of an Entertaining Lady** by Helene Jacoby Swieca, transcribed, compiled and edited by Cecily Parris. Remember that only 10 places at the launch have been set aside for PMI members, so if you are interested in attending, please book as soon as possible.

Our next project will be a history of French Island written by Ruth Gooch. We look forward to working with Ruth to produce this very interesting and well-researched publication which will contain many remarkable illustrations. You will be hearing more about this as the project develops.



### Meet Your Committee ... No. 1.

Last year our series of special articles in the newsletter focused on the 140 High Street building. This year we shift our emphasis from the past to the present and from bricks and mortar to people as we shine a light on our committee members. Each newsletter this year will contain a profile of a member of the committee in alphabetical order.

## Alison Boundy

My name is Alison Boundy, and my husband and I and our family have lived in Prahran since 1969. I have a great interest in Prahran as my paternal grandfather, Charles Thompson White Morris, was the Building Inspector for the City of Prahran, and my father's family lived in East Prahran for many years.

My great, great grandmother was born in Prahran in 1851!!! I am very proud to have in my possession a copy of Cooper's The History of Prahran 1836-1924 which is inscribed as follows: 'Presented to Mrs Elizabeth Peebles, the oldest lady Pioneer (born in Prahran 1851) present at the Annual General Meeting of the Prahran Pioneers' Association 2nd March, 1925. J.C. Pickford, Mayor.'

Both my husband and I qualify as members of the Port Phillip Pioneers Group as our ancestors arrived in Port Phillip prior to Separation in 1851.

My main interest now that I am retired is genealogy and family history. I also subscribe to the Australian Ballet, and love listening to classical music. Reading is my passion, and I have a very large personal library.

As a natural follow-on from my love of reading, I trained as a teacher at Toorak Teachers' College in 1957 and 1958, then as a teacher-librarian (primary) at Melbourne Teachers' College in 1959. During my career I taught at Coburg West and Huntingdale Primary Schools, Lauriston and St. Michael's Grammar School in St. Kilda. I also lectured to the students doing the Trained Teacher Librarian's Certificate at the then Melbourne Teachers' College.

As a librarian I was aware of the PMI Library before we lived in Prahran, and we joined in 1991. In particular, the local history collection has been very useful in our search for information about the areas in which our families lived.

I was elected to the Committee in 2003, and re-elected in 2005. I chose to accept nomination as I felt that my knowledge of libraries and of genealogy, gained from being a member of the Genealogical Society of Victoria, could be of use to the Committee and perhaps to subscribers to the library.

Alison Boundy.

*Alison has contributed to the Prahran Mechanics' Institute by her advice on library classification and shelving arrangement policy, by contributing material to our library week genealogy programme and last year she gave a Library Week lecture to the members regarding information organisation for family historians and the care of family history documents.*



*Alison after her talk to the members during Library Week in 2005.*

## Book Club Month

July is Book Month again this year, and Book Club meetings will be held at the Library on three Saturday mornings in July from 10am to 12pm. Details are as follows:

- 1 July - **Of a Boy / Sonya Hartnett**
- 15 July - **Zorro / Isabella Allende**
- 29 July - **The Master / Colm Toibin**

The above books are on order, so if you would like to reserve a copy please do so by phone 9510 3393 or email [library@pmi.net.au](mailto:library@pmi.net.au).

If you wish to purchase any of the books lease let us know and we will order them in for you.

Participation in Book Club is free, and it is a fun and relaxing winter activity for our members who love to read and talk about novels. Tea, coffee and morning tea provided.



## MIV Goldfields Coach Tour

A tour of Goldfields mechanics' institutes is planned for Sunday 30 April 2006. The itinerary is as follows:

- Bus departs Prahran MI 8.30am ● Melton MI
- Ballan MI ● Ballarat MI (*full building tour + morning tea*) ● Creswick MI ● Newstead MI (*exhibition viewing*) ● Maldon Athenaeum (*break for lunch*) ● Castlemaine MI (*new community library & theatre*) ● Fryerstown - Burke and Wills MI
- Chewton MI ● Taradale MI ● Malmsbury MI
- Kyneton MI ● Newham MI (*afternoon tea*)
- Lancefield MI ● Romsey MI ● Bolinda MI
- Brunswick MI
- Bus arrives back at Prahran MI around 5pm.

**Cost= \$55 (includes morning and afternoon tea, a light lunch and tour notes)**

Previous MIV bus tours have been very popular, so please reserve your seat ASAP. **First 5 PMI members to book will pay a discount price of \$50. Book now on 9510 3393.**

## No Shops in Acland

The second publication of PMI Press is complete and will be launched by

**Frank Van Straten, AM**  
at **Grattan Gardens Community Centre,**  
**40 Grattan Street, Prahran**

on **Sunday 12 February at 2pm.**

Only **10** places at the launch have been reserved for interested PMI members so if you would like to attend, please book as soon as possible by contacting the PMI on 9510 3393 or [press@pmi.net.au](mailto:press@pmi.net.au).

**Launch attendees will be able to purchase copies of the book at a special introductory price of \$25.**

*No Shops in Acland Street has taken some time to reach this stage, as you will see from the following feature article which contains comments from the compiler, the author and the publisher ...*

Hélène Jacoby Świeca (author):

Over the years I was a patient at the Cabrini Hospital and used to tell stories to my doctor there and he was very adamant that I should write my story. I did begin to do this, but I couldn't keep it up because of my failing eyesight.

I met Cecily in Sydney many years ago. Her grandmother Alice and my mother Ethel were sisters. Cecily and I got along very well and after I moved to Melbourne Cecily would visit me regularly. When Cecily suggested she write my story I did not have to think about it at all - I was pleased.

Cecily and her husband live in NSW these days, so every time she interviewed me, she would have to travel down to Melbourne to see me. Then as parts of the book were completed she would travel down to meet with me again.

I didn't find the interview process difficult because I have an excellent memory, and in my career I was very used to being interviewed. I don't think it particularly mattered that it was a family member doing this project, what is most important is to be able to tell your story to someone with whom you have a rapport. I would like to thank everyone involved with the book, especially PMI Press and Frank Van Straten.



# Street: the Story of a Book . . .

Cecily Parris (transcriber, compiler & editor):

I was motivated to take on such a large project and to see it through to the end because I have always admired Hélène's ability to tell a good story about her life and experiences. She was always so willing to tell me as much as she could remember that I was inspired to go to the end.

I started the ball rolling by asking Hélène a few basic questions about her earliest memories, but I found that she didn't need much prompting. Hélène's very early memories were the starting point of the book also.

I ended up with about eight hours worth of recorded interviews, which took me several months to transcribe to my satisfaction. To organise the material into a coherent story, I treated all the material from a chronological point of view. I then had to edit a lot of the transcribed material, as Hélène remembered further along things she had previously forgotten to mention about an earlier episode in her life.

I would advise anyone considering such a project to be patient, because it is definitely worth it. It is also worthwhile to spend the time researching as much as you can to give historical context to the person's memories.

Christine Worthington (Administrator, PMI Press):

This was our second publication, but it represented a number of important firsts for Prahran Mechanics' Institute Press.

*No Shops in Acland Street* is our first publication to be laid out and typeset using Adobe InDesign software, for which I attended a course at Swinburne University in 2005. This is also our first publication to be installed on Booksurge, a worldwide print-on-demand system.

Publications registered and installed on the Booksurge system never go out of print and are available globally through the Amazon and Booksurge online bookstores. This is an inexpensive option for authors of books with local interest who have no idea of whether they should get 50 or 1,000 books printed.

Cecily was referred to us by PMI member Ron Cameron who had heard about PMI Press in our newsletter. In many ways this was an ideal project for us to take on next because it was reasonably sized, contained a significant amount of Victorian history, and is a colourful story developed from an oral history - one of the types of projects that PMI Press aims to encourage and support.

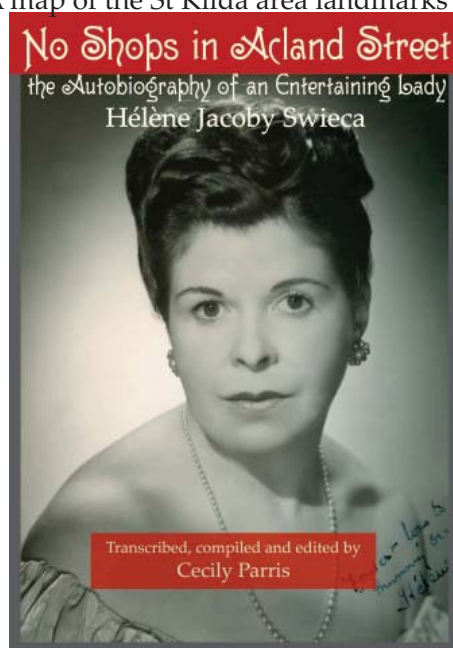
Thank goodness for email and pdf files because with Cecily in NSW, most of our project communication occurred this way. Apart from our initial meeting, Cecily travelled to Melbourne at a later stage of the project and over two days we sorted through Hélène's scrapbooks which were full of theatre programmes, photographs and press clippings, and selected items for inclusion and scanned them. At this time we were able to decide on possible pictures for the book cover.

For this project I worked on almost every aspect of the book files including layout and book cover design in consultation with Cecily and Hélène. I also created a small name index. A map of the St Kilda area landmarks mentioned in the book was provided by Ron, and apart from all her work on the text, Cecily has added a preface and an appendix containing a summary of Hélène's career and other tidbits. Frank Van Straten has provided the Foreword and will launch the book.

I would particularly like to thank Michael Blair from Booksurge for his patience, guidance and assistance throughout.



Above: Cecily and Christine at their first meeting at PMI. Middle: Hélène as she appeared in the programme of the Ernest C. Rolls production **So this is Hollywood** in 1935. Right: The front cover of *No Shops in Acland Street*, featuring a studio portrait of Helene from 1936.



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## *RECENT ACQUISITIONS (December-January)*

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### General Collection

The butterfly man / Heather Rose  
The lincoln lawyer / Michael Connelly  
Mary Mary / James Patterson  
The devil's feather / Minette Walters  
A tale of love and darkness / Amos Oz  
The camel club / David Baldacci  
S is for silence / Sue Grafton  
Two lives / Vikram Seth  
The city of fallen angels / John Barendt  
Saving fish from drowning / Amy Tan  
Ticket to ride / Sarah Darmody  
The sea / John Banville  
Gilead / Marilynne Robinson  
The white earth / Andrew McGahan  
Mona Lisa: the history of the world's most famous painting / Donald Sassoon [donated by Wilma Farrow]  
The son of war / Melvyn Bragg [donated by Wilma Farrow]  
Breakfast with Beaverbrook: memoirs of an independent woman / Ann Moyal [donated by Heather McKay, North Melbourne Library]  
The age of Macquarie / edited by James Broadbent and Joy Hughes [donated by Heather McKay, North Melbourne Library]  
In Hearn's footsteps: journeys around the life of Lafcadio Hearn / John Bellair

### Historical Collection

#### General, Local Histories

The land tax register and valuation for Victoria 1888 [CD-ROM]  
Victoria Government Gazette 1859 [CD-ROM] / Archive CD Books Australia  
Arthurs Creek Arthurs Creek Cemetery: a history / Lindsay Mann (rev.ed.)  
Bairnsdale Bairnsdale: portrait of an Australian country town / Hal Porter [donated by Heather McKay, North Melbourne Library]  
Beechworth Beechworth: an Australian country town and its past / Tom Griffiths [donated by Heather McKay, North Melbourne Library]  
Berwick Berwick and District Agricultural and Horticultural Society Inc.: celebrating 150 years of agricultural competition 1848-1998 / Bob Johnson and Noelene King  
The school that was: a history of the Berwick Grammar School 1882-1928 / John Bellair  
The church on the hill: a history of St. Michael's Parish Berwick / Maree Chapman  
From village quarry to Botanic Park: a short history of Wilson Botanic Park / compiled for the Friends of Wilson Botanic Park  
Box Hill Where a city grew: the Salvation Army in Box Hill / Dorothy J. Hill  
Briarolong Discovering Briarolong / Laurie Manning  
Chadstone 1975-1995 Rotary Club of Chadstone / East Malvern Inc. District 9800 [donated by the club]  
Dandenong Dandenong Fire Brigade centenary 1894-1994 [donated by Carmen Powell, Dandenong and District Historical Society]  
Essendon The annals of Essendon vol.4 (1986-2000) / R.W. Chalmers

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## *RECENT ACQUISITIONS (December-January) (cont.)*

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Gippsland Gippsland heritage journal no.29 2005

Kilmore Kilmore on the Sydney Road / Maya V. Tucker [donated by Heather McKay, North Melbourne Library]

Maldon Australia's first notable town: Maldon / Grant Blackman and John Larkin [donated by Heather McKay, North Melbourne Library]

Maryborough Against the odds: Maryborough 1905-1961 / Betty Osborn [donated by Heather McKay, North Melbourne Library]

Melbourne Making magic: forty years of fun: the Myer Christmas windows / Pat Lawson-Black  
The encyclopedia of Melbourne / edited by Andrew Brown-May and Shurlee Swain [reference]  
Melbourne then and now / Heather Chapman and Judith Stillman [donated by Reuben Lazarus]

Plenty The cultural landscape of the Plenty Valley / edited by Lucy Grace Ellem

The Australian experience in the Plenty Valley / edited by Lucy Grace Ellem

The Plenty bushrangers of 1842: the first Europeans hanged in Victoria / Lindsay Mann

Port Melbourne Port Melbourne's child: memories of early years in Pickles Street / Phyllis Kelly  
[donated by Pat Grainger, Port Melbourne Historical and Preservation Society]

Women of Port Melbourne: guide to exhibition: Port Melbourne Historical and Preservation Society  
17-29 October 2005 [donated by Pat Grainger, Port Melbourne Historical and Preservation Society]

Prahran 5.30 nurse!': the story of the Alfred nurses / Helen Paterson

Rushworth Archibald Sutherland: the story of a Scottish miner on the goldfields of Rushworth,  
Victoria 1858-1888 / compiled by Thomas E. Armour [donated by Tom Armour]

Springvale A history of the City of Springvale: constellation of communities / G.M. Hibbins [donated  
by Heather McKay, North Melbourne Library]

Upper Beaconsfield Community in action...from the ashes: a history of the Upper Beaconsfield  
Community Centre 1983-2003

Ash Wednesday in Upper Beaconsfield: 16th February 1983 / John Milligan

The history of St. John's Anglican Church Upper Beaconsfield 1883-1986 / John Milligan

A century partnership: a history of the Upper Beaconsfield Cricket Club / Rob Hansen

Beaconsfield's WW1 honor board

Western District Nobody's home [three houses in the Western District: Myrngrong, Wooroglin and  
Henham] / Judy Dungey

Woorayl

No parallel: the Woorayl Shire 1888-1988 / John Murphy [donated by Heather McKay, North  
Melbourne Library]

Woorarra

Woorarra West via Foster, South Gippsland: recollections of Woorarra West 1935-1956 / Trevor M.  
Lagstrom

Miscellaneous

Babes in the bush: the making of an Australian image [lost children] / Kim Torney

Proceedings of the first garden history conference, Melbourne 28-29 March 1980 /

National Trust of Australia (Victoria) [donated by Wilma Farrow]

Italian Historical Society journal vol.13 nos 1-2 January-December 2005

Victoria's Italians 1900-1945: an exhibition by the Italian Historical Society and the State Library of  
Victoria for Victoria's 150th March 5-31, 1985, Queen's Hall, State Library of Victoria [donated by  
Diane Nicholas]

Family, business and community: the Australian Lebanese in Victoria 9 November 2001-28 January  
2002 Immigration Museum [exhibition] [donated by Diane Nicholas]



## **Book Covering**

Would you like to protect your books from wear and tear by having them professionally covered?

*Paperbacks - \$1.50 ; hardbacks with dust covers - \$2.50*

This service is strictly for **members only**.  
Maximum of five books at a time please.

## **COMING UP AT THE PMI:**

Lecture: Andrew Brown-May to speak about  
*The Encyclopedia of Melbourne*

Prahran Mechanics' Institute Press:  
Launch of second publication - special article inside

If undeliverable please return to:

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Victorian and Local History

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