

# MORNINGTON & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC



Corner Main Street and Esplanade, Mornington 3931

## NEWSLETTER

August 2024

Newsletter No. 304





## President's Report

As I said at the beginning of the year, this would be our 60th Anniversary. There have been many many voluntary hours gone into preserving and presenting the history of the Mornington District by many people. We applaud Leslie Moorhead, Don Corkhill, Charlie Allchin and many others for their foresight in establishing the Mornington Peninsula Historical Society in 1964. It was initially to cover the whole of the Peninsula which proved to be a daunting task. There are now eight voluntary Historical Societies that cover the rich and diverse history of our beloved Peninsula.

We hope you will join us for our luncheon celebration on 8th October at the Mornington Golf Club. Details in the 'Dates to Remember'.

Joy, our expert in our book collection has written a piece on a book we had been given but didn't know what we should do with it. You will find some new 'old' words in Joy's piece. Thanks to Joy's diligence and offer to travel to the State Library, we feel this book is now much better placed where it can be cared for as part of the collection of rare books the Library holds.

*Diane White*

## The Genesis of the Mornington Peninsula Historical Society 60 years on

*(now known as the Mornington & District Historical Society Inc.)*

In the 1960s and 70s Australian history became very popular with academic study and many books being written about Australian History by Professor AGL Shaw, Professor Manning Clarke and Michael Cannon's many histories. Bush Bands became the music we all danced to and Professor Weston Bate championed local history.

The Royal Historical Society, understanding that it was a long journey for people to travel to Melbourne encouraged the setting up of regional history groups. Ours was the South Eastern Historical Association. But what was needed was even more local historical groups to tell the stories of the local area. Mornington wanted to tell its own story and so Leslie Moorhead and a group of other people interested in the history of the Mornington Shire started meeting in the library. They did a lot of work researching and then sharing this amongst the members through visits to historic places and talks, given on the information which had been found. Over the years we have placed some of this research with our fellow Mornington Peninsula Historical Societies. One great collection was that undertaken by Vera Mills who did research on all of the schools on the Peninsula. Vera was a primary teacher, hence her interest.

Of course, when the Commonwealth Government was going to sell the old Post Office, Leslie and others lobbied to have the building given to the community for a now much needed Museum. The idea of the area having an Historical Society prompted the citizens to clean out their cupboards and offer the Society many many historic items. The committee's spare rooms had become overflowing with these things, including the book Joy writes about. Now we have the Old Post Office Museum, Mornington thanks to them.

OUR AGM is next month, September (see Dates for Your Diary) and if you would like to be nominated or to nominate someone for a role on the committee, please have a talk to Dawn. She can give you a nomination form.

## MEMBERSHIP

A little reminder that if you have not paid your membership for the next year, please support us by joining or renewing your membership. We need your support. But you ask, "What do you get for your membership?"

Perhaps these reasons will encourage you to become a member of our Historical Society

1. Interesting speaker at coffee mornings once a month
2. Chance to share your history with others and meet like-minded people.
3. Visit and Research at our Museum upon request.
4. Twice yearly bus trip to historic places
5. Chance to share your history and learn from the general public on Sunday open days at the Museum.
6. And of course, you receive a copy of our quarterly newsletter



**From our Treasures coffee morning:**  
Michael with his family's Shillelagh, from the 17th Century.



**From our Treasures coffee morning:** Libby with plants for her new garden in Gippsland.



**From our Treasures coffee morning:** Janice with the beautiful quilt she made. It is now a family heirloom.



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## Dates for Your Diary 2024

Website: [www.morningtondistricthistory.org.au](http://www.morningtondistricthistory.org.au)

Follow us on Facebook    Museum Phone (03) 5976 3203

*Visitors warmly welcomed. Why not bring along a friend and introduce them to the Historical Society? The more the merrier. Come and join us.*

**Tuesday Sept 10th 10.30am**

### 60TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

St. Mark's Community Room, Waterloo Place  
Your committee reports on the activities for the year and a new committee is elected. Please come and join us on the committee - ask someone to nominate you.

**Tuesday July 9th 10.30am - \$10**

### COFFEE MORNING - TANTI CREEK

St. Mark's Community Room, Waterloo Place  
Martin Lenard Will share what he has learned about his research into this important waterway.

### OCTOBER - SENIORS MONTH & HISTORY WEEK

**Tuesday Oct 8th - 12pm \$35pp**  
LESLIE MOORHEAD LECTURE  
60TH ANNIVERSARY  
LUNCHEON

Tallis Room, Mornington Golf Club

Our guest speaker will be Chris Crewther, Mornington MP. His talk is on modern Slavery (yes it is still with us!).

When Chris was a Commonwealth Parliamentarian, he was the chair of the committee investigating Slavery.

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Our luncheon will be a two course meal with a piece of our birthday cake served as dessert. Drinks at bar prices.

Bookings are essential, so please contact Edna 5976 8106 or 0409 963 295  
email: kaedlowe@gmail.com

We will need full payment for this by Monday 30th September

Bank details for direct payment:

Bendigo Bank

BSB: 633 000 A/c No. 162 405 427  
and your name please..

**Sunday October 27th - 1.15 for  
1.30 walk - \$10**

### CEMETERY WALK

Meet at Office, Craig Rd, Mt. Martha

Wear appropriate footwear and clothing for day. About hour and half, of highly informative and often funny commentary by our lovely Val. A cuppa afterwards.

**A bus trip is being planned for  
November WATCH THIS SPACE.**

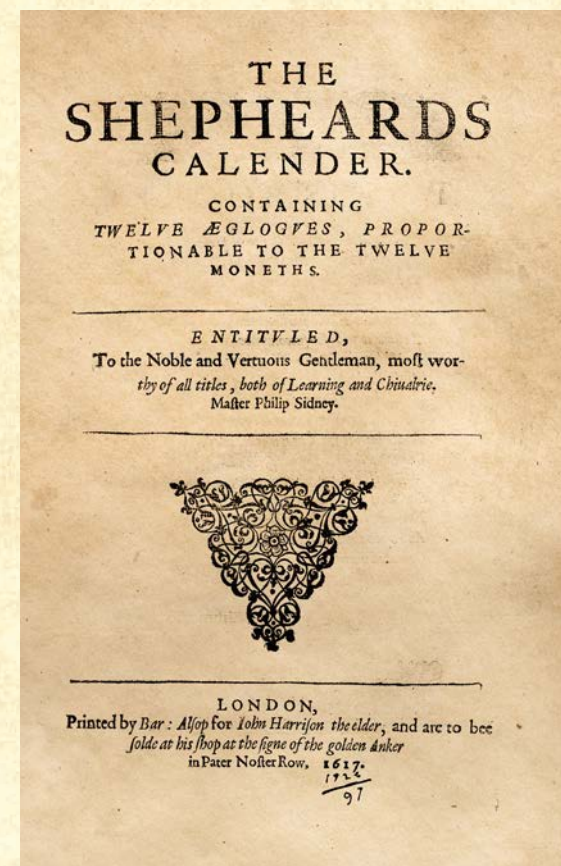
**FRIDAY DECEMBER 7th - 12.00  
MEMBERS' CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON**

Please bring a plate of Christmas goodies to share. A door prize will be on sale.

## The Shepherds Calender

An important function of the M&DHS is to receive, store and display historical items of local interest. A cataloguing team of volunteers works at The Old Post Office Museum to catalogue items. Val, who is our Archivist, is responsible for the overall collection, and registers and sorts incoming items, Edna catalogues historical documents under Archives, Maureen catalogues Images such as photos and drawings, while Joy catalogues books under Library. Currently, a further category, Objects, is lacking a volunteer. Our scanner keeps our database up-to-date, scanning and entering new items, and basically keeping us functioning. Some decisions about items are straightforward, others are complex. One of the most complex items we have considered is *The Shepherds Calender*.

In 1973, a Mornington resident, Arthur Darby, donated *The Shepherds Calender*, by the Renaissance poet, Edmund Spenser, to the Mornington Historical Society. Darby was an engraver who stated that his grandfather had purchased the volume at Sothebys in London, in 1868; his wife Fairlie Darby attended the Society's events. As a rare book, it would have been of undoubted interest to the Society's members, but as it was it was outside the new Society's focus on local history it primarily remained in safe storage, in the Old Post Office's safe. It gained the attention of the cataloguing team who returned to their cataloguing tasks following the Shire's painting of the inside of



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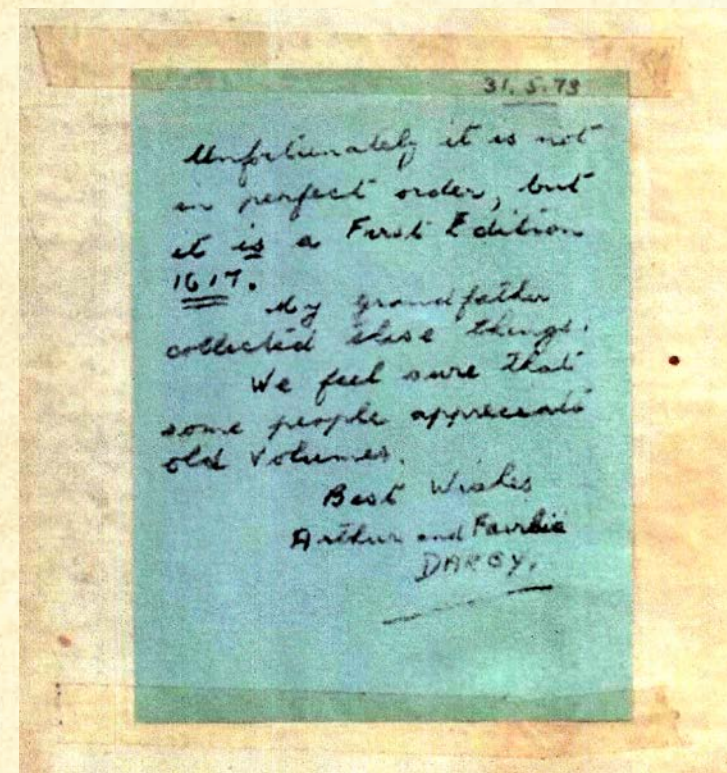


the museum, after the COVID lock-downs. First, we had to unpack all the items that had been removed for the painting team. Edna discovered *The Shepherds Calender* in one of the book boxes. I searched for information about the book and entered its details on the File-maker program used by M&DHS for cataloguing museum items, and Val searched for Arthur Darby's background. The book was in reasonable condition with some damage to the spine, and leeching of ink in the images. Aware that we had neither the resources nor the expertise to undertake restoration, the Committee agreed to offer it to one of Melbourne's research institutions with expertise in rare books. The State Library of Victoria (SLV) with its strong reputation for its displays of rare books was delighted to accept the volume and enthusiastic about undertaking its restoration. I had the privilege of taking the book to the SLV and was fortunate to view the Rare Books section where restoration work was undertaken. The SLV provided a signed Donation form for the Society's records that is now included in Archives, with other records pertaining to Spenser's life and work.

*The Shepherdes Calender* was originally published in 1579 and carried the sub-title: *Containing twelve eclogues, Proportionable to the twelve monthes of the year*. Eclogues were pastoral poems, cast as pastoral dialogues, adopted in the 10 eclogues of the Roman poet Virgil, and the earlier idylls of the Greek poet Theocritus. Use of archaic language in Spenser's works suggests a connection to medieval literature. Spelling differs in subsequent editions of his works, e.g. Shepherds vs Shepherdes, Calender vs Calendar. Each eclogue is preceded by a woodcut followed by an explanatory Argument. A short Glosse is also included after each eclogue for the exposition of "olde words and harder phrases". The January eclogue introduces Colin Clout, a shepherd's boy who complains of his unfortunate love for Rosamund. The December eclogue ends with a complaint of Colin to the god Pan, comparing his life to the four seasons of the year. While cast as pastoral dialogues, some eclogues include political and societal nuances, presumably based on Spenser's work and personal life.

Following Spenser's death in 1599 several collections of his work were produced. The 1617 publication donated to the M&DHS comprises collected works of Spenser, excluding his most famous work, *The Faerie Queen*. *The Shepherds Calender* is followed by examples of Spenser's work, e.g. Letter to Sir Walter Raleigh; a pastoral elegiac on the death of the knight, Sir Philip Sidney; Colin Clouts come home againe; sonnets e.g. Amoretti, and Epithalamion; and Fovre Hymnes. It was printed in 1617 by Bar: Alsop for John Harrison the Elder, Paternoster Road, London.

Edmund Spenser, was born c.1552, the son of a farmer, who was educated at a Grammar School, and Cambridge University where he was awarded a Master's degree. As a man of letters he obtained positions with government officials, most notably as secretary to the new Lord Secretary of Ireland, Lord Arthur Grey, whom he accompanied to Ireland. He subsequently obtained a land grant, Kilcolman, in Munster where he commenced the *The Faerie Queen*. He was encouraged by Sir Walter Raleigh, whose Irish estate was close to Spenser's, to return to England to present the first three books from the *The Faerie Queen* to Queen Elizabeth 1. The final three books were presented to the Queen following the loss of his Irish estate as a result of the Munster Uprisings. The Queen awarded Spenser a small lifetime allowance. After he died he was interred at Westminster Abbey. He is remembered as the pre-eminent poet of the Renaissance era. To the M&DHS cataloguing team, Arthur and Fairlie Darby's inscription on the inner cover of the book, "We feel sure some people appreciate old volumes" has been exemplified in our journey with *The Shepherds Calender*.





## **FOR SALE - *Please contact the Museum:***

### **FIFTEEN YOUNG MEN**

*by Paul Kennedy* - Published by  
Penguin Random House \$25

### **THE WOLFDENE STORY -**

**The Families and Functions of a  
Mornington Historic House**

*by Joy Cullen \$10*

**A JOURNEY ALONG BALCOMBE  
CREEK** *by Winty Calder \$30*

**READY AND WILLING,  
WE STRIVE TO SAVE -**

**The story of the Mornington Fire  
Brigade 1917-2017**

*by Colin Fisher \$5*

**OUR BOYS AT THE FRONT -  
from the pages of *The Peninsula Post*.**

This award winning book including DVD  
disc on World War 1 is now reduced to \$25

**THE NAMES ON THE MORNINGTON  
HONOUR ROLL**

**Who were they?** *By Val Wilson \$15*

*Special Offer - Both Boys at the Front  
and Honour Roll \$30 together*

**WORLD WAR 1 POEMS**

Selected from *The Peninsula Post* \$10

**REV GEORGE COX - A MAN OF  
MANY PARTS** *by Joy Cullen*

\$10 per copy plus postage.



## **DIGITAL NEWSLETTER**

We are wondering whether you have given any thought to receiving the Newsletter in digital form via email? The one advantage is that it will be in glorious colour. If you would like to partake of this, could you please email Dawn to let her know [dawnfisher@live.com.au](mailto:dawnfisher@live.com.au)

*We offer our respect to the First Peoples. The members of the Boon Warrung/  
Bunurong, past, present and future, the custodians of this land and waters.*

*Thank you to Chris Crewther MP for printing this newsletter.*

*Thanks to the Mornington Peninsula Shire for their support.*

Mornington & District Historical Society Inc. A00041916W

ABN 7515 1057 105 - PO Box 71 Mornington 3931

Museum: Corner Main Street and Esplanade

Open 12.30 - 3.00pm Sundays or by appointment

Donations to the Historical Society of \$2 or more are tax deductible

### **Banking Details:**

Bendigo Bank BSB – 633 000

Mornington & District Historical Society Inc.

Account Number: 162 405 427

Please say what the payment is for.