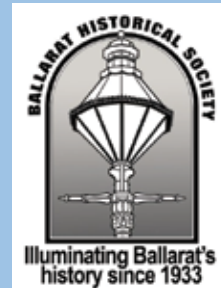


The LampLight

NEWSLETTER OF THE BALLARAT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

VOLUME 12 No. 3

MAY - JUNE 2022



Commemorating the Queens Platinum Jubilee

The President's Word



What a delight it was to visit the new Tramway Museum in the Botanic Gardens for our April meeting. Sixty members enjoyed a lively talk on the history of the museum by Peter Waugh followed by an opportunity to explore their amazing collection. For a museum run entirely by volunteers it has become another treasured asset to our wonderful city.

During the evening I had the pleasure of presenting past president Michael Cuttle with a certificate recognising his long involvement and outstanding contributions to the Society.

Unfortunately, I missed our annual Nathan Spielvogel Oration as I joined the growing ranks of Ballarat Covid

casualties, but I have received numerous positive comments and calls from members who enjoyed the evening.

Finally, the committee is continuing the daunting task of sorting, culling, and selecting images for inclusion in our forthcoming picture book. The book will be published next year to celebrate our ninetieth birthday so we are focusing on selecting photos that help tell the story of the change and development that has occurred in our city since 1933.

Marion



*Left: Marion and BHS past president Michael Cuttle
Above: Peter Gilbert and Doug Bradby catching up with a cuppa*



Right: Andrew pondering getting his tram drivers licence!



Above: Nathan Spielvogel Oration speaker Robyn Annear and BHS Vice President Andrew Wallace



Above: Committee members, Ian Moyle, Nina Netherway, Kevin Williams, Marion Littlejohn, John Smith and Jennie Daly



When the Queen came to Ballarat

On the 6th February 2022 Her Majesty The Queen became the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee, marking 70 years of service to the people of Great Britain and the Commonwealth. This year also marks the 68th anniversary of the Queen and Prince Philip's visit to Ballarat in March 1954 as part of the Begonia Festival. To commemorate the occasion, *The Lamplight* takes a look back at a royal tour that captivated the citizens of Ballarat and thrilled the whole nation at a time when national pride and loyalty in being a member of the Commonwealth was at its peak.

The 1954 royal tour of Australia was a much-anticipated event. Planning had commenced in 1949 for King George VI to visit Australia and New Zealand, however due to the king's ill health he was unable to make the visit. Instead, the then Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh would come in his place. When King George VI died in February 1952, Australia was then placed to host the first visit ever by a reigning Monarch.

At the time, the royal tour was the single biggest event ever planned in Australia. It was organised in the days before email, facsimile and mobile telephones. Official printed programs stated that all those responsible for an event were to synchronise their watches with the ABC time signals at 9am each day. The royal couple visited 57 towns and cities during the 58 days they spent in Australia, arriving on February 3 and leaving on April 1. They traversed the country by plane, train, ship and car from Cairns in the north, Broken Hill in the west to Hobart in the south.

The Queens' visit to Ballarat was scheduled for Saturday March 6, 1954 and as described through the pages of the Ballarat Courier, it was an event much anticipated and meticulously planned.

The excitement of the Queen's arrival is reflected in the days leading up to the Ballarat visit. On Thursday March 4 The Courier reported that the royal couple were greeted by thousands of people along the Sale to Melbourne rail line as they returned to Melbourne from their Gippsland visit. On Friday March 5, 100,000 people attended the MCG to greet the royal couple who were treated to a display by 17,000 schoolchildren, the highlight being thousands of girls and boys dressed in white suits and frocks laying on the turf and spelling out the word "welcome".

By 9pm on the Friday night in Ballarat, hundreds of people had poured into the Botanic Gardens precinct preparing to camp for the night and gain the best vantage points from which to view the royal visit. On the Saturday, The Courier reported that *"The city scene in Ballarat yesterday was no longer that of a normal shopping Friday, but a gala preview of today's history making occasion when Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth arrives. The whole atmosphere of the city was charged with excitement, which was heightened by the preliminary functions of the Begonia Festival and gay appearance of streets and buildings. Nothing impressed the fact that the great day of the royal visit was at hand more than the sight of the barriers, some of which had already been erected in Sturt St in the early afternoon."*

The Courier edition on Monday the 8th of March covered aspects of the royal visit on almost every page. The front page carried the image shown on the front cover of *The Lamplight*, and every page thereafter ran headlines such as “Begonias provided a thrill for the Queen”, “Air rang with the voices of 20,000 children” and a quirky “Dust in eye as Queen leaves Royal train.”

The main feature story carried by the Courier that day is worth reprinting in full as it conveys the mood and feeling of the nation and the strong links Australia still held with Britain in the post World War II era. The Courier editorial on the Monday extolled the virtues of the visit and made the claim that “The royal tour is making us better people and better britishers.” The Courier headline banner began with;

150,000 in Ballarat’s Unique Welcome to Queen

Ballarat’s tumultuous, gay and yet unique welcome to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, and the Duke of Edinburgh on Saturday carried with it untold warmth and recognition from a crowd of more than 150,000 for the visit of the first ruling Monarch to this Garden City.

It was a spontaneous reception, which gathered momentum as crowds, up to 12 deep in parts, demonstrated their loyalty and enthusiasm. The welcome had two ear-splitting crescendos – when the Royal Party slowly moved past 20,000 schoolchildren on their special stand, and at the Botanic Gardens where 40,000 yelled their approval of Her Majesty’s acceptance of an “on the spot” invitation to inspect the famed Begonia glass house.

The gardens setting was also highly commended by all associated with the tour, and overseas pressmen said it was the most picturesque and natural they had seen since the tour started in Fiji.

The Mayor, Cr FJ Cutts who warmly welcomed the royal couple at the railway station, took it upon himself to invite the Queen to inspect the glasshouse, while the official party was on the dais at the gardens. The inspection was something that had often been hinted at during the months of planning, but had been frowned upon by those responsible for the timing of the progress. It needed no words from Her Majesty, although she did comment to the Mayor, to describe the breathtaking beauty she found within the conservatory, for as she left the building she lingered, taking one last look at the begonias bathed in the warm rays of the sun.

The Queen and Prince Philip had earlier arrived at the railway station at 10am, where they were met by a phalanx of dignitaries including the Mayor and Mayoress, the Town Clerk, City Engineer, the leader of the State Liberal and Country Party Mr Bolte and Mrs Bolte, local parliamentarians and their wives and local Australian Defence Force personnel.

Accompanied by the Mayor, the Queen walked to the station foyer where city councillors and their wives were assembled. As Her Majesty turned to face them, all the ladies curtsied. In the Royal Progress, led by a pilot car, and with the Royal Car next, the Queen had a guard of mounted Victorian Police Troopers, while the Police Commissioner, who followed several cars behind, had an escort of police motorcyclists.

The royal couple received their first burst of cheering in the city as the Royal car slowly moved from the station. Railway employees who had swarmed on to the platform when the train first arrived, had by this time taken up vantage positions in the upstairs section of the building, and looking down on the scene below, gave a loud and almost continuous cheer.

Greetings for the Royal couple along the Royal Progress route were loud and long. Throughout, those with barrier positions ahead of the Royal car leant over, craning their heads and necks, and then the cry would go up, “Here she comes!” Another burst of cheers and flag waving would follow, and vibrate among the thousands further along.



A section of the crowd greeting the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh on their return to the station after visiting the Botanic Gardens. Lydiard St looking resplendent in buntings and flags.

BHS collection

When the school children's great moment arrived and the Royal car reached the start of the stands, each school seemed to take a huge breath and let it out with a gigantic cheer, one after the other, all the way along the route, until the air rang with a glorious welcome. Their ecstatic greeting was endorsed by the thousands along the three mile route. Older people were no less sincere. Many awe-stricken at first by the momentous occasion found their voices and sent her away with a ringing, "Godspeed."



Part of the 20,000 strong crowd of school children. BHS collection

The girl Queen, so young and lovely despite her staggering responsibilities, went straight to the hearts of the people, her radiant smile and waving small, white-gloved hand forever imprinted on their memories. A stirring moment came when the Queen upset the carefully timed plans, and walked to the begonia house at the Gardens and inspected the blooms. The roar of appreciation which followed Her Majesty's unscheduled gesture hung in the air for minutes, and deepened as she slowly walked back to the Royal car. Warning of the Royal approach to the Gardens was given through loud speakers recording the cheers of the throng as the Queens car passed along the route.

In no time the escort of motorcycle police and mounted troopers came into view, and presently the Royal car – open to give the people the best possible view – slid to the kerb in front of the dais. Stepping lightly from the car, the smiling Queen was met by the Mayor. She looked about her with intent interest as she moved towards the dais followed by the Duke of Edinburgh, the Mayoress, Lady Pamela Mountbatten, lady-in-waiting, Commander Richard Colville, the Queen's press secretary, the Town Clerk and Mrs Maddern. Before advancing to the dais there was a solemn silence as all stood motionless when the City of Ballarat Band played the National Anthem and the Royal Standard was broken. The Mayor gave a brief speech of welcome before handing the Queen an address from the council and citizens of Ballarat.

Reply in Light, Firm Voice

The Queen read her address in reply in a light, firm voice. The crowds applause followed. She was then escorted to a beautifully arranged begonia display erected on the north side of the platform. The Queen bent slightly and gently smiled at seven year old Helen Beaumont, daughter of the garden curator, Mr T Beaumont, who handed to Her Majesty, a basket of glorious begonias. Mr and Mrs Beaumont were then presented to the Queen. As the Queen was admiring the blooms the Mayor asked her if she would like to see the main begonia display. "I'd love

to" the Queen said eagerly, and turned to walk to the glasshouse. Chatting to Cr Cutts as she walked, the Queen admired the beautiful gardens setting and described the trees as "wonderful." The people accompanied their approach with cheers.

Before entering the car to the farewell cheers of the throng, the Queen turned to smile radiantly and repeatedly waved her hand to the enthusiastic gathering. And here came one of Her Majesty's characteristic acts of simple grace. About to step into the car, she paused and bent to pick up a small, homely posy of flowers tied with red, white and blue ribbon, from the floor. For an instant she gazed at it, then gently and carefully placed it back on the floor out of range of her feet.



Members of the 8/7 Battalion forming a guard in Lydiard St Nth. BHS collection

Just after the Royal car turned north into Lydiard St, members of the 8/7 Battalion, which had formed a guard of honour on both sides, turned, and with arms at the slope, marched alongside the remainder of the cars. After bidding farewell to the Mayoral party and the Station Master, the Royal party stepped aboard onto the observation platform at the rear of the train. By this time the platform crowd had increased with city councillors, tour officials and railway employees, and as the Queen turned towards them, they broke into Auld Lang Syne. The Duke put his hands together, as if giving a small clap, and the Mayoress tried to get the group to sing "Will ye no Come Back Again." When this failed, a deep baritone voice from the rear struck up, "A city built on gold... it gave its wealth untold" and the whole assemblage burst into the city's own song, B-A-L-L-A-R-A-T."

And so ended Her Majesty's brief visit to Ballarat. Years in the making and lasting no more than 2 hours, it was imprinted in the memories of those who were there forever. Further royal visits occurred in subsequent decades, including the Queen Mother, Prince Charles and Princess Diana, and Prince Edward, but none have captured the mood of a nation and a city like the Queens visit to Ballarat on March 6 1954.

There will be members reading this article who were present that day, perhaps as one of the 20,000 school children. What memories do you have of the Royal Tour? *The Lamplight* would love to hear from members who have a story to tell of a very special day in the life of Ballarat – when the Queen came to visit.



May meeting at the Ballarat Tramway Museum

Over 60 members and visitors crammed into the newly opened Ballarat Tramway Museum (BTM) for our April meeting. BTM facilities manager Peter Waugh, ably assisted by wife Pam, gave an entertaining and informative presentation on the design and development of the new museum and the trams on display.

Peter covered the events leading up to the closure of the tramways system in September 1971 and the formation of the (then) Ballarat Tramways Preservation Society and its efforts to reinstate trams on a small section of track around Lake Wendouree.

Initially the focus was building a depot to store and maintain the trams rather than a fully fledged museum, however over the years the interest in Ballarat trams has grown to the extent that the original depot building was no longer suitable (or designed for) tourists to see the trams at close quarters.

Sensing the need for a much more user friendly facility, the BTM committee began planning for a new museum building which now stands at the southern end of the depot and was fully paid for by donations from BTM members - an incredible achievement. The building was opened to the public on Saturday April 2 2022, and the Ballarat Historical Society meeting was the first official group hosted by the BTM.

After the presentation, members were able to explore the museum and view the magnificently restored trams on display (and a very unrestored number 32). The museum also has on display various items of interest including destination rolls, signage and an archive of photos and memorabilia. Our thanks go to the Ballarat Tramways Museum for making us so welcome and for a very enjoyable night.





PASSENGERS MUST TRAVEL
ONLY ON THE INSIDE OF THE
TRAM. TRAVELLING ON RUN-
NING BOARDS IS PROHIBITED.
PENALTY UP TO £20.





Nathan Spielvogel Oration

Nathan Spielvogel was a passionate historian, teacher and successful author. Together with other local residents, he formed the Ballarat Historical Society in July 1933, becoming its first president and remaining in that position until his death in 1956. He was largely responsible for the creation of the local museum and for placing the many plaques and monuments you see around Ballarat today. He presented a series of radio broadcasts on Ballarat's early years which the Society holds the scripts for and are published as the Spielvogel Papers. His life and contribution to the Ballarat community is honoured every year with the staging of the Nathan Spielvogel Oration.

Our 2022 Nathan Spielvogel Oration speaker was acclaimed Australian author Robyn Annear. Robyn's books include; *Bearbrass: Imagining Early Melbourne*, winner of a Victorian Premier's Literary Award in 1995, *Nothing But Gold: The diggers of 1852*, *The Man Who Lost Himself*, *Fly a Rebel Flag*, *A City Lost & Found: Whelan the Wrecker's Melbourne*, *Nothing New: A history of second-hand*, and her latest work - *Adrift in Melbourne: Seven Walks with Robyn Annear*.

Robyn's talk was titled "Blood will tell, but often it tells too much" which focused on her own journey into family research and the important role personal letters play in revealing the personalities and relationships of our forebears, as told through the ebb and flow of their daily lives.





Ballarat Historical Society

Capture The Vision

In response to the request for images for our 90th anniversary book, the Society was recently gifted a number of images from the family of Robert Trahar, son of the builder W.B. Trahar. They show the construction of the Civic Hall which is interesting in itself, but the streetscapes captured in the background are just as fascinating.



The second image shows the streetscape of Doveton St Nth, with the old Carriers Arms Hotel building on far right. The Howard Lockett & Sons and Davis Bus Lines building is now the Bob Jane T Mart site. The bottom left image shows the old AW Hancock business, which later became Captain Snooze and has since been demolished for the new Aboriginal Medical Centre.

A Life of Service to E. Lucas and Co.

The picture on the right was recently given to *The Lamplight* by Society member Joan Bulluss, who was a former employee of the famous Ballarat business of E. Lucas and Co.

It shows Lucas Director Mr E. M. Price presenting a gold watch to Miss Lily Pryor on her achievement of being the first Lucas employee to reach 50 years of service.

The accompanying story in the Lucas staff magazine "The Spectator" reads;



"A unique gathering of long service staff members was held early in March to honour Miss Lilian Pryor on completing 50 years of service with the company. Mr Keith Price paid tribute to the value of Miss Pryor's services to the firm; her loyalty and personal regard for the welfare of its activities.

On behalf of the directors, Mr E M Price presented Miss Pryor with a gold wristlet watch, congratulating her on her achievement. Replying, Miss Pryor mentioned some of the interesting things which had occurred in the company during her association, and thanked the Directors for their lovely presentation, and the thoughtfulness and assistance she had received over the years".

Lily Pryor was born in Ballarat in 1896. Her grandfather, John Pascoe Pryor emigrated from Cornwall in the 1840's, working on the goldfields of Ballarat and

surrounding districts. He amassed considerable wealth, but lost much of it in the bank crash of the 1880's – reputedly around \$3 million in today's currency.

Lily Pryor began her career at E. Lucas and Co. in 1911 at the age of 15, becoming one of the famous Lucas Girls who planted 3728 trees to form the Avenue of Honour and raised funds to build the Arch of Victory. She is known to have planted tree numbers 185, 685, 1704, 2341 and 3398. Her wages when she began were 5 shillings a week (50 cents). For the majority of her working life she was the head of the smocking department, a task requiring great skill with a needle and thread in the manufacture of babies and children's garments. She was known as a formidable person of strong character and was a spinster all her life. She retired in 1962 at the age of 66 and died at the age of 94 – a life well lived.

The image on right is from a booklet titled; An Appreciation - The Arch of Victory and Avenue of Honour. The page caption reads;

The Lucas girls loading bricks, which were urgently needed to complete the Arch in time for the opening by HRH Prince of Wales, this being the only way they could be procured in that time.

Lily Pryor is shown in the front row, fifth from right wearing a hat and holding a brick.



‘Old Spivver’ Nathan Spielvogel Remembered

The following article was printed in a 1984 Ballarat Courier supplement called ‘The Rest is History’. The article was written and submitted by Mrs V J Adams of Darling St Ballarat, a former student of the Dana St Primary School who penned this touching and heartfelt tribute to the man known to his students as ‘Old Spivver’.



Left! Left! He stood on the steps of the Dana St School. Short, balding, well rounded in front and a very imposing figure indeed. “Left! Left! I had a good house and I left!” A brisk tattoo on the drum indicated strong approval of the move. “Why would he leave a good house?” I wondered. They were not prolific in 1933.

Voices besides me hissed sharply, “Joy you’re out of step!” Desperately I shuffled my feet in the clumsy black boots, trying to match my classmates ordered stride. Just recently transferred from a tiny country school, I was a raw recruit. The marching drill seemed to show that I possessed two left feet. “I left! Left! Left right, left” Spiv continued to cast a Napoleonic gaze on his troops. The little ones were straggling past the steps now, awed faces upturned to the great man.

Some of them no doubt were looking forward to Friday when each week they would tumble around him as he came out of the lolly shop and set forth along the footpath, a benevolent Pied Piper distributing sweets to eager hands. Left! Left! The voice boomed happily and the drum gave a triumphant roll. Was that Wakeling or Lillingston performing with such skill?

Fortunately my inexpert shuffle had not been marked and, Glory Be!, the marching pennant would hang for a week above the sixth grade classroom door. Our headmaster knew the heart of a child and his own heart was very big.

There were numerous awards to give us encouragement. Honour Cards – for spelling achievements and test results. Thank goodness my head worked better than my feet! I

treasured some of those cards for many, many years.

Pages in front of our Nature Study books where Spivver created a design for zealous workers and embellished it each time a delighted student’s work was selected for the honour. How did he ever make the time? Each class was visited and its progress keenly noted. When I attained the mighty seniority of grade 8, the Merit Certificate year, there was Spiv sharing time with us. Bringing to life the sage of Lorna Doone and the thrills of Treasure Island in weekly episodes.

There, too, was the enthusiastic historian recreating the violence and the tragedy, the drama and the triumph of the Eureka Stockade Affair. We heard the shouting of the miners and the troopers, we saw running men who had no licences, we heard the roar of the flames that rose from Bentley’s Hotel. And our Spivver stood in our eyes as tall as any Peter Lalor.

The year 1933 had passed. I was a little older, a little less timid. The sharp eyes of my principal may have noted my lack of affluence. He didn’t miss much. Once a week there fell to my lot the task of tidying his office, and the bright sixpence in “payment”. Looking back, I wondered if some of the minor disarray was created deliberately by a big man who knew that the sixpence would buy “specked” oranges or a pound of meat.

One day while I was engaged in this happy chore, Spiv suddenly said, “Pink is a sissy colour Joy!” I wish I could remember what prompted the comment. I wish I could have responded.

Oh no Sir! Pink is a beautiful colour, the colour of fragrant blossoms; of innocent baby faces; of delicate wisps of clouds in early dawn.” But I murmured something long forgotten now and took the precious proffered sixpence. As I made my exit there was the incorrigible young Sandy Salter waiting at the door. Not for six of the best I hoped. Sandy’s wink was optimistic.

It was half a century ago, but the inspiration lingers. Spiv reading to us Cuthbertson’s lovely poem, “The Australian Sunrise”.

“Now write your own sunrise poem” Spivver urged us. And I wrote my first childish verse, receiving his warm approval.

Anzac Day. Another favourite theme. Vividly he recounted the Gallipoli story as Australia’s young heroes once more fought their way across the beaches and up the hillside in the dawn of an April day. Again, “Now write your own story about it for Ballarat’s Anzac Day competition.” A faded Courier paragraph yellow with the passage of half a century lies among my bits and pieces of memory, bearing witness to his inspiration.

1935 drew inexorably to a close and a goodbye. And Spiv was saying “I have an errand for you, Joy. Go down to Mark’s the jewellers. There is a package waiting for you.” Yes. There was. A package containing a delicate gold medal, engraved for a little girl from the bush and given to her by Nathan Spielvogel, beloved Spiv, to treasure for a lifetime.

Down five decades comes the voice.

Left! Left! I had a good home and I Left!

But some of the magic remains.

Future Meetings

Tuesday June 14, 7.00pm at BNCC Walker St Ballarat Nth

**My Journey through Family History - Ian Moyle
and**

Introduction to the Ballarat Research Hub at Eureka (BRHAE) - Simon Jacks

Tuesday July 12, 7.00pm at Ballarat Golf Club

**Christmas in July Trivia Night and dinner
Ballarat Golf Club Sturt St Ballarat**

The LampLight

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The LampLight

Ballarat Historical Society Inc.

Reg. No. A0007322F

ABN 57 934 755 725

ISSN 1838 6814

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The Lamplight is issued bi-monthly

Membership subscriptions (annual)

Single \$40, Family \$50

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