



Friends of the Auburn Tower Newsletter

Volume 7, Issue 4
Spring 2011

Friends Annual General Meeting

This year's Friends AGM will be held on Monday 17 October at 8.00 pm in the Hall. Formal notice of meeting, and the annual financial statement, will be sent to members shortly. This year, after the formalities of the AGM (which shouldn't take more than 20 minutes), instead of a guest speaker, the Committee will host a 'Conversazione,' with the aim of allowing both newer and older members to get to know one another over a delicious supper and a glass of wine. If you know of other people who may be interested in the work of the Friends, this would be an excellent opportunity to invite them along. It is also an opportunity to perhaps think about joining the committee. We are always looking for new ideas. This event is free of charge.

Alan Chuck

From the Executive Officer

We have had a great number of membership renewals since the letters went out in July and also some new members, I can only reiterate Vice-President Alan's invitation above that you and your friends come along to the AGM, particularly as the Committee is planning an entertaining and informal evening which will finish no later than 9:30 pm. And, of course, there will be the usual "sumptuous supper". Included with this newsletter are your new membership cards. If you are not sure whether you have renewed or not, please do not hesitate to phone me on 9819 1899 or email me at execofficer@auburntowerfriends.org.au

In our last edition, I sought contributions from our members for the newsletter. Our next (Summer) edition will be put together in November for publication in mid December. If you have an article or item that could be interesting to other members, whether it be historical (like Noel's contribution in this issue) or personal, drop me a line. So long as it is relevant to our community and perhaps just a bit related to the Auburn Tower and its precinct, we will consider publication. In the meantime, I thank all those who have provided items. Of course, all sources will be acknowledged.

Cheryl Pisterman, Executive Officer

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The Committee of the Friends of the Auburn Tower Inc.

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Auburn Tower Concerts



Dominic & Michael

In July, an audience of 50 enjoyed *Pipe Organ Plus*, a concert featuring virtuoso organist Dominic Perissinotto, organist at St Patrick's Basilica, Fremantle WA, and guest artist Michael Lichnovsky on saxophone. The two instruments complemented each other beautifully, and some photos by Ted Huang give the flavour of the afternoon. Added interest was provided by the video system, which enabled the audience to see, some for the first time, the organist's hands and feet in action.

The Sound of Tears Concert featuring Gambit was held on Sunday 28 August 2011 at the Auburn Uniting Church. Gambit is a group of fine talented musicians. Members of Gambit include Laura Moore who graduated Bachelor of Music Performance at the Victorian College of the Arts in 2010, majoring in Cello, and Stella Gray, a gambist with interests in music and art history. Both Laura and Stella are very enthusiastic chamber musicians, playing with Gamba consorts 'Gambit' and 'Consort Eclectus'. Laura and Stella were accompanied by two guest artists namely Rachel Landgren who is currently completing a Master of Music Performance (Voice) at the University of Melbourne. Rachel also performs regularly as a soloist in opera, chamber music and recitals. Most recently Rachel performed the principal role Elizabeth in the world premiere of Stuart Greenbaum's opera 'The Parrot Factory' for Victorian Opera. The second guest artist was Claire Conolly, a member of Australia's leading baroque ensemble, the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, who played a baroque violin.

The exceptional playing and singing of the group transported the audience to another period through music ranging from 1556 to 1774 with the music of Robert Chetwood, John Dowland Jenkins, Michael East, Charles Coleman, Jean-Marie Leclair and Le Pleureux Monsieur de Sainte-Colombe. Members of the group introduced pieces linking the composers, the music and interpretation with connections with England and France. The Auburn Uniting Church proved an excellent venue acoustically for the group and the concert was greatly enjoyed by the audience.



The final concert in the 2011 season was *Creatures Great and Small*, the annual concert by the Australian Boys Choir, presented as part of its lease agreement with the Church. The angelic choir, with the deeper voices of The Vocal Consort, organist Calvin Bowman and pianist Russell Hodges, all under the deft direction of artistic director Noel Ancell OAM, presented an eclectic programme of music on the theme of animals in music. The principal piece was Britten's 'Rejoice in the Lamb'. An appreciative audience of over 200 demanded, and received, an encore from the talented ensemble.

As usual, after all of the concerts, the audience adjourned to the Hall to enjoy Norma's home-made biscuits, with coffee and chatter.

Dominic with the magnificent organ

If you missed hearing Gambit in August you may wish to hear Laura and Rachel perform the work of J.S. Bach joined by baroque oboe, violin and organ at 2:30 pm on Sunday 23rd October at St Carthage's Church, 123 Royal Parade Parkville.

Members who attended the visit to the organ builder might remember that it was the St Carthage organ which was under repair at that time.

Contact Laura Moore on 0400 987 728

“New Old South” Congregational Church, Boston

What is the connection between Auburn Uniting Church and the Boston Tea Party? Well might you ask!



In 1964, F. Maxwell Bradshaw, in writing about the choice of design for the Presbyterian Church in Glenferrie Road Hawthorn, contrasted the choice made in about 1890 between a building with an octagonal tower and a building with the square tower of the Oxley Road Wesleyan Church. That choice, Bradshaw says, ‘... seems to have been inspired by another American original, that of the “New Old South” Congregational Church, Boston’.

According to John Herniman, architect Alfred Dunn visited Europe and North America extensively en route to Melbourne, in which case a visit to Boston is quite possible. If he did, he would have seen the 1875 New Old South Church, in Boyleston Street, where the Boston Marathon finishes at what is now known as Copley Square. This church is thus thought to be the church that inspired his design for the Wesleyan Church in Oxley Road Hawthorn (1889).

The congregation of the New Old South Church traces its origins to 1669 when a group of dissenters broke from the First Church in Boston. In 1670 it started using the Cedar Meeting House in Washington Street for its religious gatherings. The Cedar Meeting House was one of many Puritan public meeting houses used for political, social and religious gatherings in an era when there was no separation between church and state. They were a sort of town hall, mechanics hall and church all rolled into one.

In 1729 the Cedar Meeting House was replaced on the same site by the Old South Meeting House, and at the time of completion was the largest building in Boston. In 1872 the congregation, under architect Charles Amos Cummings, started building new premises in Boyleston Street in a style variously termed Venetian Gothic and Northern Italian Gothic. The church was called the Old South Church, or sometimes the New Old South Church, and was completed in 1875. It was this building complex that Alfred Dunn may have visited and which may have inspired the design of the Lombardic Romanesque suite of buildings in Oxley Road Hawthorn.

So what has all this got to do with the Boston Tea Party?

It was at the Old South Meeting House on 16 December 1773 that a mass meeting attracted what has been estimated at five thousand people from Boston and the surrounding towns. The British Parliament had just passed the Tea Act, which authorised the British East India Company to sell tea to the colonies without paying duties, enabling the company to undersell the smugglers. Late in November 1773, three ships arrived in Boston Harbor laden with tea. But colonists, instead of accepting cheaper tea as the British had thought they would, blocked the unloading of the ships, and convened meetings of their local Committees of Correspondence, including the one on 16 December 1773 at the Old South Meeting House, which demanded that the tea be returned to England without delay.

As an American friend of mine, Hope Stewart has said: ‘The poor British. They just didn’t get it! The Americans weren’t protesting about the tax. They were protesting about the lack of political representation. The catch-cry was “no taxation without representation”. By 1773, many colonists in New England were 5th-generation Americans. They were used to governing themselves at the local level. Meetings held at the town’s meeting house were really an entire town affair (read: adult males) where the entire town made decisions. This is a form of government unique to New England and it still exists today’.

According to the Massachusetts Historical Society’s version of the story, ‘Samuel Adams rose, announcing that he did not see what more the inhabitants could do to save their country. At this, [American Indian] war-whoops filled the hall, and between 30 and 60 men, disguised as Indians, rushed out of the hall and into the streets of Boston, heading for Griffin’s Wharf and its three tea-laden ships. In all, 340 large wooden chests containing some 90,000 pounds of tea were dumped into Boston Harbor that night’. The event, of course, came to be known as the Boston Tea Party, arguably the first of a series of events that led to the American Revolution or War of Independence.

So Auburn Uniting Church, with its Lombardic Romanesque style, is thought to have been inspired by the ‘Northern Italian Gothic’ style of the New Old South Church in Boston, whose antecedent congregation worshipped at the Old South Meeting House, the place from which a band of rebels (or patriots or terrorists!) disguised as Indians emerged from a protest meeting to board three tea-laden ships and infuse the surrounding sea with their cargo.

The connection is, of course, close to meaningless, or akin to six degrees of separation, and is based on slender evidence. But it is fun to pursue!

This is the condensed text of a paper prepared by Noel Jackling. The full paper, with sources and bibliography, is available on request to the Executive Officer.

Planning Minister protects Dunn Church building



The Minister for Planning, the Hon Matthew Guy MLC, has placed a heritage overlay over the former Spring Road, Malvern, Uniting Church, designed by Alfred Dunn at about the same time as the Auburn church. This is an interim control, expiring on 31 July 2012, by which time the Stonnington-wide heritage overlay for historic churches and halls should be in place. The weatherboard buildings at the rear of the site (which were not designed by Dunn) are not included.

John Herniman and Alan Chuck recently appeared before VCAT at the hearing of an application for a planning permit to convert the former church into three town houses, and to demolish the wooden buildings and erect new apartments and town houses. The Tribunal's decision was reserved. The Minister's action will greatly reinforce our arguments that the fabric of the Dunn building should be respected, although the interior will be greatly modified and removed from public view.

An interesting link with our Auburn church is that the foundation stone at Spring Road was laid by Edwin Moran, the business partner of Frederick Cato, whose memorial window graces the east wall at Auburn. We hope that the Tribunal will support our submission that the foundation stone should continue to be visible from the public domain.

Proceedings of the Uniting Church Historical Society

The June 2011 edition of *Proceedings* may be of particular interest to Friends of Auburn. It contains a paper by Noel Jackling, Friends Committee member, on the Reverend Professor A E Albiston, Minister at Auburn from 1917 - 1920. The article contains three of his sermons, taken down in shorthand and later typed by Mrs Lissette Stringer, the last preached on Good Friday 1961, just three months before his death at the age of 94.

Copies of *Proceedings* are available on request to the Hon Treasurer, Uniting Church Historical Society, 16 Baden Drive, Hoppers Crossing 3029. Please include either a subscription to the Society (\$20/\$15 conc) or a donation to cover printing costs.



Membership Renewal/Application 1 July 2011 - 30 June 2012

If you are already a member, please encourage more people to join. Membership applications to:

Executive Officer, PO Box 583, Hawthorn BC, 3122

I/We apply for membership/wish to renew [delete whichever doesn't apply] membership of the Friends of the Auburn Tower Inc. in the category of:

Individual Adult	\$20
Concession (under 18, over 60, concession card)	\$12
Family (two or more people at the same address)	\$30
Corporate membership	\$200

and enclose cheque payable to "Friends of the Auburn Tower Inc" for \$_____. Annual subscriptions for each financial year are listed above.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Address/Email: _____

I wish to receive the newsletter via email: Yes No

Membership is open to all who have an interest in this inspiring Hawthorn landmark, built in 1889. Members will receive a newsletter, free or reduced admission to concerts and talks, and free admission to the Tower.

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