



Friends of the Auburn Tower Newsletter

Volume 8, Issue 1
Summer 2011

"Conversazione" - an AGM with a difference

The Friends Annual General Meeting was held in the Church Hall on 13 October. This year it was just that little bit different. Thanks to the efforts of committee member, Bruce McBrien the members were invited to a casual "Conversazione" rather than listening to a guest speaker. This format provided considerable inter-activity between all attendees. As usual, there was plenty of delicious supper accompanied by tea and coffee and, for those who enjoyed something a little stronger, red, white and sparkling wines.

Prior to the informal gathering, the committee presented its report for the year 2010-2011. President John reported on his first year in the role and the directions planned for the Friends in the future including ways of generating more funds to continue the much needed work. It was his intention also to obtain more information on Alfred Dunn, the architect of the Auburn complex and the small church in Malvern which has now been given a Heritage overlay. John will provide an update on the Spring Road church in our next newsletter. He also thanked Alan Chuck for his great contribution to the concerts throughout the year.

We were saddened to learn that our biscuit maker extraordinaire, Norma Lupton, was unable to continue her great work and her contribution was duly acknowledged.

It was noted that there were a couple of typographical errors in the financial report and these have now been remedied. The corrected amounts are shown in the table to the right.

The AGM was great fun, we did have a few new faces but it was disappointing that more members were unable to take up this invitation to a most enjoyable evening.

Your committee is keen to know just what events our Friends would like to attend all our events; what sort of concerts, what would encourage you to attend the AGM and what excursions etc. A considerable amount of effort and organisation by your committee goes into such events. Whilst such factors as distance, health and many other commitments at the time of the year are taken into consideration, we really would like everybody to participate. If you have trouble getting to any of our events, please contact me and we will arrange transport.

Cheryl Pisterman, Executive Officer

RECEIPTS	2011 \$
Subscriptions	847.50
Concerts	3,499.94
Donations	--
Events	--
Interest	<u>8.17</u>
	<u>4,355.61</u>
EXPENSES	
Secretarial	612.50
Printing & Postage	560.50
Concert Artists & Expenses	2,045.00
Appeal	----
Maintenance	1,765.00
Sundries	87.84
	<u>\$5,070.84</u>

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The Committee of the Friends of the Auburn Tower Inc.

Patron:
Prof the Hon Evan Walker

Executive Officer:
Cheryl Pisterman
Contact: 9819 1899

President: John Herniman
Vice Pres. Alan Chuck
Secretary: Elisabeth Bethune
Treasurer: Ken Scott
Daphne Arthur
Noel Jackling
Bruce McBrien
Pat Rogerson

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2012 Concert Season

Some previous seasons have seen five or six concerts spread over the March – November period. This has involved a tremendous amount of work for your committee, often for a very small audience, and a commensurate return. For 2012, we will be concentrating our efforts on two or three major concerts, plus the annual joint concert with the Australian Boys Choir.

The 2012 Season will kick off on **Saturday 24 March at 7.30pm sharp:**

Aussie Legends: 100 Not Out

Entertainer **Geoffrey Graham** will present his unique insight into the 100+ years since Australian Federation. Graham's unique style of entertainment includes comedy, bush poetry, music, whipcracking and all things genuinely Australian.

In developing the show Graham focused on the tumultuous happenings of the past century. "The last 100 years has seen depression, war, and immigration in our vast and unique country. Change has been dramatic. Today, the process of reconciliation indicates a desire to 'do the right thing'. The lives of women have changed enormously. There have been great wins by ordinary people in extraordinary situations. The Australian identity has evolved."

The Hall, Auburn Uniting Church, Hepburn Street, Hawthorn.

Aussie supper after the show included in ticket price. Refreshments available for purchase at interval.

Book online at www.trybooking.com/BBHC . Please note: there will be no ticket sales on the night. We must have advance bookings for seating and catering purposes. If you don't have access to the internet, please link up with someone who does.

Ticket prices*:

Adult	\$35
Conc (including Seniors and children 12-18)	\$30
Friends	\$25
Child (aged 6-11, accompanied)	free
Family (two adults and two children or one adult and three children)	\$80
Group (ten people booking together)	\$250

*a small transaction charge also applies.

The **6th of February 2012** will mark the diamond jubilee of the accession of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. There has not been a diamond jubilee since Queen Victoria's in 1897, and none of us now adult will see another in our lifetimes. The Friends will mark the occasion with a grand choral concert in the Church on **Sunday 3 June at 2.30pm**, featuring the **Ashton Smith Singers of Australia**, virtuoso organist **Thomas Heywood**, soloists and brass ensemble. The concert will include music from the 1953 Coronation, and will provide for audience participation. The Friends has secured sponsorship from the Menzies Foundation to assist us in staging this event. Please put the date in your diary now. Booking details will be advised in the next Newsletter.

The joint concert with the **Australian Boys Choir** and the Vocal Consort will be held on **Sunday 24 June at 2.30pm**. Programme and booking details will be advised in the next Newsletter.

The season will conclude with a concert by early music group **Troveresse**, singing and playing the music of medieval Europe. The members of the group are: **Helen Dell** (voice, organ, percussion); **Alex Connelly** (voice, recorder, percussion); **Louise Horgen** (voice, hurdy-gurdy) and **Will Thompson** (voice and medieval instruments). The concert will be held in the Church on Sunday **9 September at 2.30pm**. Booking details will be advised in the next Newsletter.

Sir Ronald East - an occasional series of Auburn personalities

Ron East was born in Auburn in 1899 and died at Heidelberg in 1994. After leaving Scotch College he commenced an engineering degree at the University of Melbourne, where he joined the Melbourne University Regiment. In January 1918, soon after he turned 18 and after completing first year studies, Ron joined the Australian Flying Corps. He maintained and repaired war planes in England. He then sought to become a pilot. At the time, pilots had a life expectancy of six weeks, but according to Ron, the Kaiser heard that he was training to become a pilot and surrendered. After World War I, Ron was in the AFC 4th squadron in the occupation forces in Cologne. He was discharged in 1919 with the rank of second class Aircraft Mechanic.

Following return to Australia in 1919, Ron East resumed his studies in engineering. In 1922, he became an engineer with the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission of Victoria. In 1934 he was elevated to the role of a Commissioner, and from 1936 to 1965 served as Chairman of the Commission.

Ron East was a member of the River Murray Commission 1936–1966. He worked on the building of the Hume Dam during most of its construction (1919–1936), and regarded its extension (1950s to 1961) as part of his achievements. Additionally, he was a member of the Snowy River Committee 1948–1949 and a member of the Snowy Mountains Commission 1949–1966. In this role he was one of the primary architects of the Snowy Mountains Scheme. He also played a significant role in the construction of the Eildon Dam (1951–1955). He was a pioneer in soil conservation and promoted the avoidance of salinated soil. East's Lookout, on the west side of Lake Eildon is named after him. He staunchly upheld the principle, introduced by Alfred Deakin and the engineer-in-chief for Victoria, Stewart Murray, of the State retaining ownership and control of waterways and their banks, and of the State granting only limited water licences and grazing rights on river banks. Other great Australian engineers in Victoria who were Ron's contemporaries were Sir Harold Clapp (Victorian Railways), Major-General (later Sir) Robert Risson (Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board) and Sir John Monash (State Electricity Commission).

In 1927 he married Constance Kiel, whom he had met in Scotland during the Great War. In 1938 they moved from their war service home at Blackburn to Hawthorn and became members of the Auburn Methodist Church. In 1965, Ron and Constance sold their house in Urquhart Street, Hawthorn to another engineer who raised his family in that same house. But more about that story in another issue of our newsletter.

Ron was the author of four volumes of family history and became a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria. In 1984 he wrote an article about his friend from Auburn Methodist Church, senior railways engineer Bill Gamble. Bill claimed to have shot at the Red Baron's plane with his machine gun. Ron carefully examined Bill's war diary and other material and concluded that although Bill Gamble's bullets may not have killed the Red Baron, his volley probably did lead to Richthofen turning and climbing and exposing himself to fatal fire from other sources.

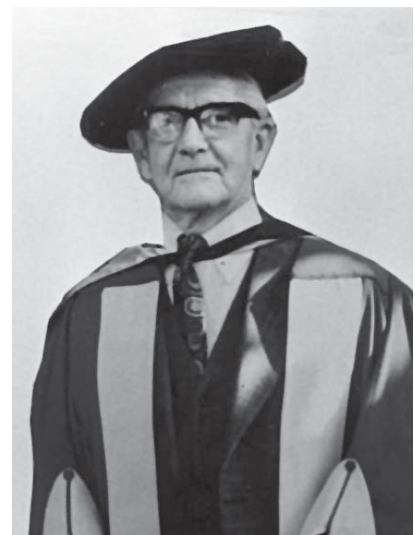
Ron East, as well as being a patient man and a very good listener, was a man of strong views which he was not shy to express. In the 1960s, another member of the Auburn Methodist Church was Jim Oates. Jim was a deed clerk at the elite legal firm of Blake & Riggall, and may also have had responsibility for the costing of files. Jim was an excellent but erratic tennis player who played for the Auburn Methodist Church in the Methodist Tennis Association competition. He was known to have won a game by serving four aces in a row; he was also known to have lost a game by serving four double-faults in a row! Jim was loquacious. He could talk the legs off an iron pot.

One Sunday morning after church, Jim and Ron got chatting. Jim had just been on a trip to the country and possibly had stayed on a farm. Jim had control of the conversation and it wasn't long before he was chatting about tractors. And he went on to explain to Sir Lewis Ronald East, one of the State's top engineers, in full detail exactly how a tractor worked! Ron listened patiently.

Noel Jackling



1923 Ronald East stands astride the River Murray near Nyah, one foot in Victoria, the other in NSW.



1981 Doctor of Civil Engineering Honoris Causa, University of Melbourne

Geoffrey W Graham presents: *Aussie Legends: 100+ Not Out a salute to Federation and beyond, our identity (and cricket!)*



Geoffrey Graham

Hear the cry at Eureka, feel the pain of the Anzacs, taste the success of Bradman, smell the frustration at the shearers strike, sense the immigrant's loneliness, touch the triumph of men and women in extraordinary situations, and feel the winds of change in the colonies.

A remarkable two hour experience and celebration on events leading up to Federation, the occasion itself; and the events following which have helped shape our identity; comedy, drama, music, audience involvement and heritage.

Geoffrey sees the move to bring a show about federation to the stage as a natural progression for him. "Banjo's works were the stories of real people, shearers, drovers, horsemen, and conmen. His characters, Clancy, Bandy Burke, Johnson, and Mulga Bill were the people's voice, representing an age of cheeky chivalry with a larrikin's ability to grin at misfortune."

"It's my belief that it was the poets, scribes and cartoonists that were the real narrators of events surrounding Federation. Today it is still the bards, the journalists and the masters of the daily cartoon who provide the commentary and wit that expresses the feelings of Australians about their polities, their country and themselves."

In developing the show Geoffrey focused on the tumultuous happenings of the past century. "The last 100 years has seen depression, war, and immigration in our vast and unique country. Change has been dramatic. Today, the process of reconciliation indicates a desire to 'do the right thing'. The lives of women have changed enormously. There have been great wins by ordinary people in extraordinary situations. The Australian identity has evolved."

Geoffrey brings his unique take on the Australian character to our first concert event on Saturday 24th March 2012 - see details on Page 2. This will a great night of entertainment so please make up a party to enjoy a different version of Australia's history.

with thanks to www.dinkumoz.com.au

✂ Membership Renewal/Application 18 months 1 December 2011 - 30 June 2013

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	\$30
Concession (under 18, over 60, concession card)	\$18
Family (two or more people at the same address)	\$45
Corporate membership	\$200

and enclose cheque payable to "Friends of the Auburn Tower Inc" for \$_____.

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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