



*"History is more or less bunk".
HENRY FORD, Chicago Tribune, 1916*

"Bunk"

Australian Comforts Fund supported troops at home and abroad

Diary Dates 2014

**Museum Open
10am to noon
Monday to Friday**

**Meetings At Museum
22 Alexandra Street
Hunters Hill**

**Thursday 28 August
10am for 10:30
AGM**

**And Election of
2014-15 Committee**

Guest Speaker: John Cutler
The Cutler Tailoring Dynasty
See back page

Thursday 25 September
Visit to Riverview College
Cost \$5 to be prepaid
Details this page

HUNTERS HILL HISTORICAL
SOCIETY INC

**NOTICE OF ANNUAL
GENERAL MEETING**

THURSDAY 28 AUGUST

**10:30am AT THE MUSEUM
22 Alexandra Street Hunters Hill**

**AGENDA, REPORTS AND
ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

*Tony Saunders
Honorary Secretary*

As a consequence of Australia's involvement in World War I, it was seen that there was a need to establish a means of providing and distributing free comforts to fit Australian fighting men; in other words, the men who were not wounded or ill, these being looked after by the Red Cross.

Support organisations took different names in the various States. In New South Wales it was called the Citizens' War Chest Fund, established in August 1914. In August 1916 these separate organisations were amalgamated into the Australian Comforts Fund.

Small collection boxes were distributed to offices, factories, shops and other public places. By October 1914 the New South Wales War Chest had collected £3,700 used to distribute a large quantity of clothing and necessities among recruits, including 1,800 shirts and over ten thousand pairs of socks.

The distress of Belgium was taken into consideration by the the War Chest Fund Committee, and for the fortnight from 14 to 27 October 1914 £1,200 was donated to the Belgian Fund, the invasion of Belgium being the reason for Britain and the Empire entering the war.

A depot was established at 321 Pitt Street for the distribution of goods. Large quantities of shirts, socks, balaclavas, knitted gloves and scarves were received and distributed. Nearly ten tons of clothing was consigned to the Agent General in London. As the Australian troops were initially in Egypt, the warm clothing was sent to the British troops already in the trenches in Europe. Three motor ambulances were ordered by the fund at a cost of £1,800 for the use of Australian troops when they reached the front.

In its first year the New South Wales War Chest Fund raised £24,000 of which £9,400 was collected from the War Chest boxes. The following items were sent to Australian troops

in Egypt and Britain: 11,223 shirts; 19,008 pairs of socks; 4,533 balaclavas; **891 cholera belts**;* 8,815 woollen scarves; 9,521 horse bandages; and 800 sandbags. In addition, six motor ambulances, valued at £3,280 were sent.

As well as the fund raising in Australia, it was decided there should be a place in London where troops could be catered for at reasonable prices in an Australian atmosphere. Hence the establishment of the AIF and War Chest Club in Horseferry Road, in August

1916. The Club provided buffet meals, dormitory accommodation, baths, hairdressing, watch repairs, 'dry' and 'wet' canteens, a billiard saloon, post office, bank, cinema and other hospitality facilities.

The Australian Comforts Fund was disbanded when Australian troops finally returned in 1920,

but was revived at the outbreak of WWII.

***The cholera belt was a band of flannel or silk resembling a cummerbund. Soldiers of the British Army wore them in India, where cholera was endemic, and in WWI, in the belief that wearing this around the abdomen to keep the stomach area warm would ward off disease.**

Information for this article was taken from a document by Richard Wright, held in the Historical Society's archives.



VISIT TO RIVERVIEW COLLEGE THURSDAY 25 SEPTEMBER

Morning tea will be served from 10:30am, during which our host Catherine Hobbs, the Riverview archivist, will talk about the historical items in The Parlour, followed by a tour of the historical precinct of the college, including the Rose Garden. The walking tour will take between an hour and 90 minutes.

Cost is \$5 for morning tea

Car pooling can be arranged, leaving the museum at 10:15am

For catering purposes you must book and pay by Monday 22 September at the Museum or PO Box 98 Hunters Hill 2110

HUNTERS HILL HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

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THE CUTLER TAILORING DYNASTY

The Ballarat gold rush originally brought the Cutler family from England to Australia in 1861, and from there, Joseph Cutler travelled to Sydney, establishing the J.H. Cutler bespoke tailoring firm that exists to this day.

John Cutler is the fourth generation of his family to take up the tailor's shears. He joined the family business straight from school at 16. At 18 he followed in the footsteps of his grandfather and father, and travelled to London, the home of bespoke tailoring. He attended the renowned Tailor and Cutter Academy where he studied 'cutting gentlemen's tailor made garments'. He returned to Sydney to work with his father Bruce in the family business before taking over as Managing Director in 1976.

John's talk will be based on the book ***Making The Cut***. It tells the story of J. H. Cutler, the Sydney bespoke tailor and shirt maker, which over its 130-year history has established itself as Australia's and one of the world's most respected bespoke tailors.

The story behind a familiar Hunters Hill landmark

Have you ever looked up at the clock above Parker Time in Ferry Street opposite All Saints Church? It always shows the correct time, but the real story is down below, in the clock maker's shop, where a large timber cabinet holds the working mechanism.

The turret clock, as it's called, was commissioned by Queen Victoria from clockmaker Charles Frodsham & Co, a well-known family firm of chronometer makers, as the presentation clock tower for St. Mark's, Victoria Park in the East End of London in commemoration of Her Majesty's visit in 1873. During WWII, the church was badly bombed. In 1976 St Mark's was demolished to make way for a housing development and somehow the bells and chimes disappeared, but the turret clock was retrieved in a state of disrepair from a London clock maker's basement, and found its way to the Ferry Street building in 1984. The mechanism in the cabinet drives the dial above the building through a brass shaft which runs across the ceiling, and a bevel gear.

The clock's pedigree is mentioned in ***The Frodshams: The Story Of A Family Of Chronometer Makers***, published in 1981.

Thanks to Parker Time for their assistance in this interesting story, part of the tapestry of Hunters Hill. ***Tony Saunders***



Above: The real story's down below



Left and above: The mechanism before being repaired. Below: St Mark's Church, Victoria Park, London.



St. MARK'S, VICTORIA PARK, LONDON, E.9.