

*We acknowledge the traditional custodians of Hunters Hill  
and show respect to Elders past and present.*



[www.huntershillmuseum.org.au](http://www.huntershillmuseum.org.au)

# “Bunk”

“History is more or less bunk”  
HENRY FORD, Chicago Tribune, 1916

## Flood causes damage to museum and archives

**N**ow here’s one for the history books of the Society.

Around noon on Monday 12 December 2022, I received a call from the Hunters Hill Council’s General Manager’s PA. “Bad news,” she said. Rainwater had entered the ceiling into the compactus area of the museum from a heavy downpour an hour earlier.

This sounded familiar. We had a leak in the same area about twelve years ago.



A visit was made early in the afternoon to view the damage. I entered through the Town Hall foyer as my pass key into the Museum was not working.

What a depressing sight greeted me! The double doors from the Town Hall into the museum were already open. Council staff had tables out in the hall where some of our artefacts were laid out drying.

Some items were temporarily being stored on the Town Hall stage. The roof leak wasn’t just in the compactus area, it was also in the museum. This was turning into a major disaster. Water was still pouring down through the light fittings into one of the now empty cabinets. The carpet was soaked.

Council staff were busy moving things around and mopping up the water from the cabinets. Full marks to them, they were a godsend!

We weren’t the only one with a problem. Apparently the Mayor’s office had a leak too.

The water damage was a shock. Where do we start on the recovery and dry out the museum and the artefacts? Why did it happen? A loose tile, a break in the roofing joint?

Council, thankfully, were onto it. A roofer was quickly organised. Giant blowers/commercial dryers were brought in to soak up the water from the carpet.

The following day a working bee was organised and we placed items on tables to dry outside in the sun.

The commercial dryers would continuously work for over a week - day and night - to remove the moisture from the room.

The only damage we could see was to some books and paperwork which needed only to dry out. Thankfully, the iconic Bi-centenary quilt was safe. With the Town Hall needed for an upcoming function, the items from there were brought back into the museum to dry and we decided then that the museum would need to close until everything was dry and the cabinets repacked and ready for show.

By the end of January we are in a better place but there is still a slight musty smell.

On the positive side we have now had clean out of “stuff” gathered over the years, mainly paperwork, no longer needed. It has been a time to consolidate and throw out items available elsewhere.

The museum clean-up is still a work-in-progress,

but hopefully we will be able to re-open shortly thanks to some dedicated volunteers. We expect to be open in time for our next general meeting on Wednesday 22 Feb 2023 (please note this date).

Booklets and books (some may have slight water damage) will be offered to members at this next meeting. History shows that the last leak we had in the compactus room was from a clogged box gutter, but thankfully it was nothing like this. The photos show the way it was during the recent clean up. Onward!

*Tony Saunders*

*Pictures: (Left) Rod Stewart assesses the damage. (Below) Books and documents drying out.*

### HUNTERS HILL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

#### Diary Dates 2023

#### Next General Meeting

Wednesday 22 February  
10.30am

In the HHC chambers

#### Guest Speaker

John Jeremy AM

“A short history of submarines  
in the RAN and the way of the  
future—going nuclear”

Morning tea will be served in  
the museum from 10am.



# Stained glass reflects early social life



One of our members, Dr Beverley Sherry, gave the annual William Montgomery lecture for 2022, “Australia’s Hidden Stained Glass Windows” in an online presentation recently. The address was a highlight of a three-day conference which was Australia’s contribution to the United Nations International Year of Glass (2022) and was organised by the University of Melbourne and Glas Inc (the Centre for Australian Glass). Beverley’s illustrated talk focused on windows in domestic environments. Hidden from public view, some are highly distinguished artistically but all are historically

and culturally significant, telling diverse stories of Australia and Australians at different times and places. They are “speaking windows”. The lecture uses PowerPoint to show windows in New

South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, Queensland, and South Australia. It is an eye-opener on a world inaccessible to the public (private residences) and a rare repository of history.

Some houses included in the talk are: The Swifts at Darling Point; Cranbrook in Bellevue Hill; Glenyarrah (Gladswood House) and Fairwater in Double Bay; St Cloud in Burwood; Booloominbah in Armidale; Mandeville Hall and Stonnington in Melbourne; Rupertswood in Sunbury (Vic.); Elena in North Adelaide; Carn Brae in Port Pirie; Fernberg (now Government House Queensland) and Cumbooquepa (now Somerville House School) in Brisbane. The windows are on staircases, entrance halls, ballrooms, and around front doors, as at Wybalena (Woolwich Road) Hunters Hill.



**Hunters Hill Historical Society Inc**  
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2022-2023

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*Photos: Azure kingfishers in Lugano (1889) Hunters Hill (above left); Waratahs in St Cloud, Burwood. Photos: Douglass Baglin.*

All the proceedings of the conference have been recorded on YouTube. Beverley’s lecture link is :

<https://youtu.be/IJzX6U3Kksw> or Day 3 Imagination 19 Day 03 Special event.

## A gentleman’s sport in a pretty window



*Squatters at play: detail of a hall window at Rupertswood, showing hunting the hare or coursing, considered the gentleman’s sport. Rupertswood was the centre of Sir William Clarke’s vast pastoral estate at Sunbury, Victoria. Stained glass by Ferguson & Urie (Melbourne), 1876. Photo by Ray Brown.*

*For more on the story of this window, listen to Beverley’s lecture.*