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Community News

Carlton Historical Society

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CRA meets at KSC

The CRA met for the first time in six years at the recently renovated Kathleen Syme Centre on 21 November. The Council releasing the facility over to community use made this possible. The meeting featured our founding President Dr Sue Chambers and architect Peter Sanders, stalwart of the Carlton Association and CRA. Both our speakers are Foundation and Life Members of CRA. Sue was in Melbourne to attend a Memorial Service to her late husband Don (see story page 7 in this *Newsflash*), and graciously agreed to address our General Meeting on the establishment of CRA, in 1996.

Peter Sanders gave us an enthralling potted history of resident activism in Carlton, dating from the founding of the Carlton Association in 1969. Housing Commission 'slum clearance' demolition of a swathe of Victorian-era terrace houses, together with the destructive impact of the Eastern Freeway, galvanised residents into action. Gentrification of Carlton began in the 1970s with an influx of new residents and students, along with urban renewal and terrace house restorations. Formal heritage protection and classifications followed for many areas in Carlton. The excision of North Carlton by the Kennett Government in 1993 saw a decline in activism and the eventual demise of the Carlton Association.



Sue Chambers addresses the meeting

Sue Chambers outlined the formation of CRA in 1996 as a response to the off-campus expansion of Melbourne University into Carlton's residential heritage areas, initially in Faraday and Cardigan Streets (Eastern Precinct). In 1998, the University proposed to

demolish terrace houses around Barry Square to create the ill-fated Melbourne University Private. Both these landmark planning battles honed CRA skills and experience for planning debates which continue today. Don Chambers acted as a heritage consultant for CRA and led many historical walks around Carlton in the interests of community education. The publication of *Carlton: a History*, in 2004, was a highpoint of Sue's presidency. She congratulated us and wished us well in our ongoing endeavours to protect Carlton's heritage buildings and streetscapes. (Sue's presentation can be read in full on www.carltonresidents.org.au)

A comprehensive account of the Carlton Association and Carlton Residents Association can be found in *Carlton: a History*.

Reference Group Reports

Carlton Alliance Public Meeting – Re-unification of North and South Carlton

The Carlton Alliance held its second public meeting at the George Harris Room, Carlton Football Club, North Carlton on the afternoon of Sunday 16 October. The meeting was well attended by nearly 100 residents, keen to hear more about 'The Case for Carlton'. Former Town Clerk of the City of Melbourne, John Young, gave an outline of the historical background to the make-up of the City and its Council, ending with the flawed excision of North Carlton in 1993: 'The scheme was misbegotten: conceived in bad faith and with no hope of a viable offspring. It deserves to be scrapped'.



Carlton Alliance public meeting being addressed by former Melbourne Town Clerk, John Young. Meeting Chair, Angela Munro, and Cr Jackie Watts are in the foreground.

Meeting Chair, Angela Munro, then invited attendees to voice their views on the reunification of Carlton. There were speakers both for and against the reunification, including a vocal delegation from the City of Yarra, who emphasised the detrimental effect on rate revenue and the viability of the City of Yarra should North Carlton and Princes Hill decide to re-join the City of Melbourne.

CoM councillor Jackie Watts advised the meeting that the CoM had yet to present a formal position on the reunification, but the matter had been discussed twice at Council meetings and several councillors had expressed their strong support.

The following resolution was placed before the meeting:
This meeting endorses the move by the Carlton Alliance to further investigate the reunification of North Carlton within the City of Melbourne.

The resolution was passed by a 3/4 majority in a show of hands, with opposition coming primarily from the City of Yarra delegation.

Further information about the Carlton Alliance is available from Philip Watts (M: 0412-167640) and more information is available on the CRA website:

www.carltonresidents.org.au

Public housing

Carlton Housing Redevelopment – Community Liaison Committee (CLC)

CRA was represented at the CLC Meeting held on 27 October 2011 by Warren Green. Some items of interest were:

- **Stage 3 – Community Activities Room**
Earlier documentation made no specific provision for community activities, which had prompted CRA to support the Community Development office on this issue at previous meetings. It was pleasing to be advised by the Department Human Services (DHS), that the documentation lodged for Town Planning approval had included the provision of an appropriate space. However, the Department did comment that its final implementation would be subject to the availability of funds. CRA requested that a philosophical commitment be sought from the DHS.

- **Henry Review**
At the August meeting, Michael Henry indicated that he hoped to be able to submit the results of his review to the Minister by 3 September. CRA sought advice on when the outcome was likely to be made public because so much of the CLC's functioning and effectiveness could well be influenced by its findings and recommendations.

- **Communication**
General discussion took place and it was moved that a subcommittee be formed to address the problems relating to communication. Difficulties in this area are ongoing and the communication between the respective stakeholders is complicated by the lack of definition of the CLC's role, its responsibilities and its composition.

Resolution of the communication problems is unlikely without the elimination of the current uncertainties surrounding the CLC's existence.

CRA requested that any subcommittee formed for the purpose of reviewing communication be mindful of the imminent release of the Henry review, which will hopefully better define the CLC, identify the parties involved and specify the areas for communication. In addition, the subcommittee should avoid duplication of the work already done by Michael Henry.

- **Lygon St / Rathdowne St Estate**
The highrise upgrades are continuing and reoccupation is progressing, with favourable reports from the returning residents.

Town planning approval for the milk bar/café at 140 Neill St. has been issued and the anticipated completion date is June 2012.

- **General**
Work is proceeding on the landscaping at the Lygon/Rathdowne Estate, Stage 2 is on schedule and the DHS is well advanced on the preliminary works of Stage 3 (Nicholson St), prior to handing over to the contractor.

Traffic, Transport and Parking

Baillieu Government Transport Priorities— Eddington East-West tunnel

It was no surprise to learn via a Media Release dated 17 November 2011, that the controversial Eddington East-West road tunnel extension of the Eastern Freeway is now the top priority transport project for Melbourne. The Baillieu Coalition Government claims the \$10+ billion project is ‘a once in a generation project which would transform the way people move around Melbourne...’.

This announcement continues the roads-centric policies of the Brumby ALP Government (*Newsflash* Winter 2010) which were ridiculed by the Baillieu Government when in Opposition (*Newsflash* Summer 2011). Commonwealth Government and private equity funding will be sought for tunnel construction using costly and non-transparent Public Private Partnership arrangements.

Numerous transport studies have shown most Eastern Freeway traffic is destined for the CBD and beyond; just 10% travels east-west. The Eddington tunnel proposal assumes induced east-west traffic will increase to 40%. Even so, its admitted cost-benefit is just 0.5 (\$1 investment is required for every 50 cents of benefit). By any sensible assessment the project lacks economic credibility and environmental sense. Independent transport experts have estimated Melbourne’s public transport network could be upgraded to world standard for half the cost of the Eddington Tunnel.

The long-sought rail line to Doncaster would provide a ‘game changer’ public transport option for the multitude of Eastern Freeway driver-only commuter cars which traverse Carlton en route to the city every day. However, it remains as ever in the feasibility study phase, along with many other viable public transport projects.

Federal Member for Melbourne, Adam Bandt MHR, has vowed to ‘fight tooth and nail to stop a single dollar of Commonwealth money going towards a privatised road tunnel through the middle of Melbourne’. He said: ‘The proposed tunnel will wreck parkland and turn inner Melbourne into a rat’s nest of on and off ramps’.

The roads lobby has continued to drive the Eddington Tunnel project despite increasing demands for improved public transport and Australia’s carbon tax and global warming policies. Many in the Melbourne community are attracted to the project because it appears to offer a simple solution to traffic congestion. However, experience across the globe has confirmed the impossibility of building congestion out of the roads network because of ‘induced’ traffic which expands to occupy the available road space.

Reintroduction of tram conductors?

Victorian Greens Leader, Greg Barber MLC, recently commissioned Professor Bill Russell to report on the viability of reintroducing conductors to the Melbourne tram network. Professor Russell made the following observations:

- Automated ticketing has not led to the anticipated financial savings over many years.
- Fare collection and enforcement arrangements are flawed.
- The net annual cost of conductors could be below \$10 million, given improved fare collection, Authorised Officer reductions, along with reduced cost of graffiti, vandalism and passenger injuries.

Mr Barber suggested that, on the basis of the Russell Report, a trial introduction of 100 conductors would benefit passengers and make economic sense.

State Governments of both major political parties have pursued automated ticketing at great cost over the past 20 years. The latest *myki* system cost \$1.5 billion and is still being debugged.

For more information visit <http://vic.greens.org.au>

Melbourne Cemetery

While new trees have been planted around the Cemetery perimeter, not all are thriving. Residents, please be vigilant! If any trees appear to be dying or damaged it is important to notify CoM (T: 9658 9658), so that appropriate action can be taken.



Look out for Melbourne’s trees

Streetscapes

Urban Forest Strategy

The draft Urban Forest Strategy is the City of Melbourne’s tree plan for the future. It sets out a plan to manage the city’s trees over the next 20 years and outlines standards and targets to guide the replacement of the tree stock that is currently in decline.

A forum, held on 30 November, provided an opportunity to participate in the conversation about Melbourne’s Urban Forest and the future of Melbourne’s trees.

The City of Melbourne is committed to maintaining its liveability and to improving the health and well-being of the community. Ideas and feedback are needed to guide the further development of this important strategy.

For more information visit:

www.melbourneurbanforest.com.au

Reference Group Reports

Carlton Police Station - Community Service & Arts hub?

The vacant Carlton Police Station in Drummond Street has now been declared surplus to police requirements and transferred to the State Department of Finance for disposal. CRA has been concerned over the fate of the 130-year-old heritage building should it fall into the hands of developers. Federal Member for Melbourne, Adam Bandt MHR, is looking into potential sources of Federal funding to support restoration and refurbishment of the building for community use.

Over the past year, the CRA Police Station Reference Group has actively lobbied for 'adaptive reuse' of the station for community purposes, such as community services and the arts. When the former Brumby State Government back-flipped on its promise of 700 square metres community services space within the Housing Estates redevelopment, service providers on the Estates were left without appropriate accommodation. There has been a push to include these Estate-specific services within the recently acquired Kathleen Syme Centre, where CRA has long lobbied to accommodate a Community Centre/Library and other facilities serving the entire Carlton community.

The Carlton Local Agencies Network (CLAN) and La Mama have now joined with CRA to lobby the Council to acquire the Police Station as an ideally located site for support services for Housing Estates tenants and for arts purposes. The *Melbourne Leader* (31 Oct 2011) provided helpful publicity for the campaign.



CRA, CLAN and La Mama representatives at the Police Station

VCAT

Appeal: 52 – 54 Rathdowne Street Carlton

Town planning approval was sought for the redevelopment of the old Silver Top Taxi depot at the above address. The proposal involved increasing the existing two stories to four. The application was opposed by CRA and concerned residents as inappropriate, an opinion also held by the CoM, as evidenced by the conditions it imposed in the town planning permit issued, one of which required the deletion of the upper storey.

The Applicant sought a VCAT review of the conditions of the permit issued. CRA did not appear at the hearing however it registered formal support of the ably represented CoM.

After hearing submissions by the applicant and the respondents, VCAT Member Ian Potts found in favour of the CoM and the Respondents. As a result, the proposal is limited to a maximum of three stories. Minor changes to another condition, relating to the environmental assessment process, were agreed to by the parties involved.

For further details refer to the VCAT website Ref No. P1618/2011 issued 18 November 2011

Mediation: ETU Building



Blue ETU building (cnr Swanston & Queensberry Sts): site for a new 17-storey apartment complex and ground floor retail tenancies

A 21-storey development proposal for the corner of Swanston and Queensberry Streets in Carlton has caused much concern to CRA in recent months. A compromise was arrived at during a VCAT Mediation on Wednesday 19 October.

Although the site is covered by a Development Design Overlay (DDO45) that imposes a discretionary height limit of nine storeys, in August 2011 the CoM granted a permit for the development subject to conditions, one of which allowed a height of 15 storeys.

The Applicant's Appeal against the conditions imposed by the CoM led to mediation involving Piccolo Developments, CoM and CRA (represented by Warren Green & Ian Bird). Following almost four hours of detailed negotiations under a very engaged VCAT Mediator, all

(VCAT cont. from page 4)

parties finally compromised on a 17-storey building, with setbacks and vertical articulation, comprising 120 apartments and two retail tenancies on the ground floor.

It was generally conceded that the architectural design adopted for this building was of a high standard. This, combined with its proximity to the CUB site, which has approval in principle for much taller buildings, was the stated justification for exceeding the discretionary height by such a large margin.

Given the proximity of the site to the CUB site and the CBD, the defence of the Swanston Street nine-storey discretionary height limit south of Queensberry Street is now problematic. A better outcome for the community was unlikely had this appeal gone to a VCAT Hearing.

JOIN THE CARLTON RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Annual Membership subscription!

Full member (if you live in 3053):

Single \$25 Family \$40

Concession: Single \$15 Family \$25

Friend (if not in 3053): \$15

EMAIL: Membership Secretary:

membershipcra@gmail.com

WEBSITE: www.carltonresidents.org.au

PO Box 1140, Carlton 3053

Planning and Development

At the beginning of each month, the CRA's planning subcommittee meets to consider the previous month's planning applications for the 3053 postcode area. The committee is particularly alert to the following:

- overlooking or any other loss of amenity to neighbouring properties
- loss of amenity to the wider surrounding area (bulk, aesthetics, car parking)
- whether the application complies with the council's heritage overlay and height restrictions
- internal amenity (chiefly in multi-dwelling developments)
- whether the proposed development threatens residential diversity (e.g. oversupply of student housing)

The City of Melbourne has an easy-to-use online search facility of the Planning Register, which provides up-to-date information on the status of a Planning Permit or current Application. Searching by date or suburb is also possible.

<http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/BuildingandPlanning/Planning/Pages/PlanningRegisterSearch.aspx>

Summary

Since the last Newsflash, the Planning Subcommittee has reviewed 29 Planning Applications for Carlton, and submitted no objections to the City of Melbourne in relation to these applications.

CRA was represented at mediation regarding TP 2011-112 (see below and page 5)

The number of applications and associated objections appear to reflect a continuing reduced level of activity in the construction and development industry.

Details

APP No./ADDRESS	DETAILS OF WORK/CRA INTEREST
August – 15 Applications; 0 objections	
September – 14 Applications; 0 objections	
October – 5 Applications; 0 objections 2 VCAT Decisions – TP-2010-318 73-81 Cardigan St Carlton VCAT decision-P1433/2011 TP 2011 – 112 514-520 Swanston St ETU Building cnr Queensberry St VCAT decision-P2430/2011 TP-2010-630 52-54 Rathdowne St (Silvertop Taxi Site) VCAT Appeal – see these pages	The outcome was varied – some concessions were achieved for the adjoining residents on Queensberry St. in regards to overlooking. CoM Permit issued, conditions subsequently appealed by applicant, resolved at VCAT mediation. Refer to separate article page 4,5 for details. Awaiting outcome of VCAT hearing of Applicant's Appeal against conditions of permit

Council rejects reform

Two significant matters were debated at the Future Melbourne Committee on 8 November 2011:

- **Postal Only voting system:**

Cr Brian Shanahan proposed that the council adopt an *attendance voting* model at the next election in 2012, with a postal voting option. This is the familiar arrangement used at State and Federal elections. Attendance voting is transparent and conducive to voter engagement and participation. The present *postal only voting* process is confusing, open to fraud, and has significantly lower participation rates.

Melbourne's many apartment complexes, including Public Housing, are open to addressed mail only. This means that only wealthy candidates, or those supported by major political parties, can access voters with electoral material. As a result, voters are often uninformed about the candidates' policies and merits.

Ballot papers are complex, particularly for those with English language difficulties, which leads to others completing the ballot papers; signatures cannot be verified. Conversely, in attendance voting voters are verified and assistance is available at polling booths, as are independent interpreters.

The Committee did not support a change from Postal Only to Attendance Voting with a Postal Option.

- **Culture of confidentiality on council business:**

Information is the very basis of democracy. Local Government is supposed to be the most accessible level of government. That is why council meetings are public, why stakeholders can make submissions, and why members of the public are allowed to speak on matters of concern. But how can they do this when so much of the business of the Melbourne City Council is held to be 'confidential'? This does not create confidence in local democracy.

Councillors are fully accountable to those they represent. Closed sessions undermine such accountability. A recent council meeting was public for just 12 minutes.

Under the Local Government Act, the default position on all matters is openness and disclosure. Obviously some matters such as market-sensitive development proposals, legal, industrial or personnel matters *may* be considered to be 'confidential'. However it was argued that confidentiality is increasingly used by Council to potentially stymie public debate on important matters.

Cr Jackie Watts called on council to seek improved guidelines on the use of confidentiality from the Minister for Local Government. Such guidelines would help deliver the transparency our city needs in order that exemplary, open and consequently participative local government can occur in Melbourne.

The Committee rejected any change to the current use of confidentiality in Council business.

Vale Don Chambers



Dr Don Chambers 1935-2011

It is with great sadness we report the death of Don Chambers in Canberra on 9 October 2011. Don's final letter to his many admiring friends in CRA, and a brief summary of his activities, were published in *Newsflash* Winter 2011.

More than 100 people attended Don's Memorial Service at Ormond College on Sunday 20 November, including Sue and daughter Zoe, and many of his CRA friends. Tributes were given by Peter Sanders (CRA), Dr Celestina Sagazio (National Trust) and Dr Peter Yule (historian and editor of *Carlton: a History*). All spoke warmly of Don's meritorious contributions to historical research and the Carlton community.

In October 2010 Don was diagnosed with cancer. Through the many ups and downs of treatments, Don showed great courage and determination in fighting his illness and was comforted by the loving support of family and friends.

Don's life was very varied and encompassed a wide range of activities and places. At the heart of this journey was Don's Christian faith found in early adulthood, which provided the framework for his approach to life. He was a man of action, who turned his hand to community activities, building a house, gardening, cooking, and whatever was needed.

Deeply involved with CRA from its inception, Don was invaluable as our heritage consultant. In his professional life as a scholar he was a great storyteller and found writing history a joy.

Don was a 'scholar and a gentleman'. He was a man of integrity and wit, and a loving and supportive husband, father, grandfather and friend.

We extend our heartfelt sympathies to Sue, Zoe and Jonathan and their families

• News from La Mama



Caitlin Dullard (left) working on the Schools Project

• Schools Project

CRA members will be pleased to hear of La Mama's first involvement with the Schools Project. Students from the Sydney Road Community School in Brunswick proudly presented *The Way Out: A Masterpiece by a Dead Goblin* on 24 and 25 October, at La Mama Courthouse.

Written and performed by the students, *The Way Out* was developed with funding from Arts Victoria, Extended School's Residencies Program, in conjunction with La Mama Theatre. Over two terms, students worked with writer Barry Dickins and deviser & director Caitlin Dullard, producing written pieces, participating in workshops and coming together in small groups and as a whole cast.

• Kids Program

Parents and grandparents will find a very lively *La Mama for Kids* program in November and December: puppets, principessas and bongo beat to delight all ages. Book early. They are very popular.

• Explorations

As the **2011 Explorations Season** enters its final week at La Mama Theatre we welcome the premieres of three more theatrical productions: Christy Flaws' *String Thing*, Penny Gutheridge's *Letters to Evie*, and Ruth Baird's *Round the Corner*.

• Coranderrk

Meanwhile, down the road at La Mama Courthouse, *Coranderrk: We Will Show the Country* opened to almost unprecedented demand, with extra sessions selling out minutes after being announced.

• Hidden Secrets

In other news, Tony Robinson (of *Blackadder* fame) and Foxtel's History Channel team dropped in to glimpse a typical day at La Mama and chat with artistic director Liz Jones. This will be featured in the *Hidden Secrets* series in 2012.

• Community Safety Forum

A recent community safety forum held at the Carlton Primary School and organised by the Melbourne North Police Station, was the first of several proposed for local Carlton residents.

Police had organised the meeting because of their concern about a significant increase in the number of robberies and armed robberies in the Carlton area. They indicated that a high proportion of people under 18 years of age are involved in the robberies. As well, 60% of robberies were committed by 'persons of African appearance'. An unfortunate description; however, it was clear that the police were trying to address the whole community, including the African community, about this problem of increasing violence in the area.

Approximately 70 people attended the meeting, and there were a number of speakers, including a community worker from Drummond Street Services, Nick Parissis (Police Community Liaison Officer), other police officers and the local Imam. For many people at the meeting, the safety issue was a problem of security devices, improved communication, use of security guards on the Estate, the absence of a Neighbourhood Watch and a fundamental lack of police resources in the area. Imam Ismail however, speaking to the predominantly African audience, made it clear – on the issue of appropriate family and community life – that *all* should take responsibility for the behaviour of their children and young people.

The key message from the police officers was about 'intelligence gathering'. They emphasised that their ability to respond is only as good as the information provided by the local community.

• RACV Motorclassica REB



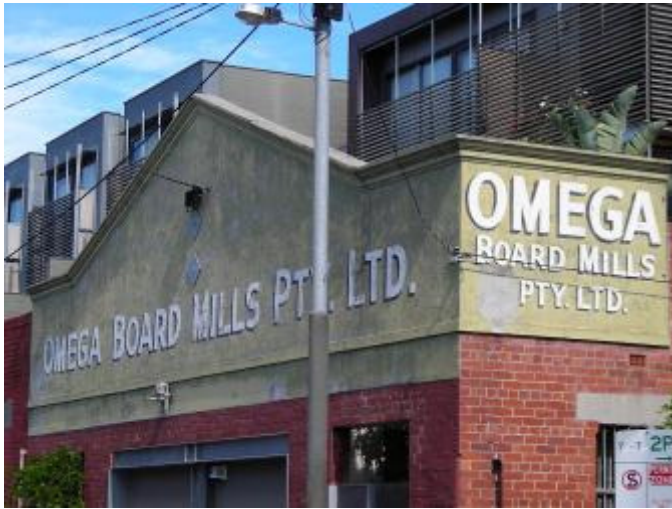
Heritage Automobiles visit our heritage Royal Exhibition Building in October 2011 for the **RACV Motorclassica**, the Australian International Concours d'Elegance and Classic Motor Show

JOIN CRA TODAY

Carlton Community History Group

Interview with Dr Judith Biddington - President Carlton History Group Inc.

The Carlton Community History Group Inc (CCHG) was incorporated in 2007 but grew out of Library Friends groups, when libraries and citizens across Yarra and Melbourne councils began consolidating local historical records, stories and photos.



"From Board Mills to lifestyle apartments," Earl St,

In 2003 the Friends of the Yarra-Melbourne Library held a well-attended seminar and produced the book *Rural Remnants*, which looked at the landscapes and their stories across the two Councils and how they have been transformed. Judith feels that this was the real beginning. 'What we were trying to do was make a history group that encompassed all of the suburbs covered by the Regional Library,' she said.

From then on, several small groups of people interested in local history in suburbs within the two cities began working together, putting up displays about local history.

When the MCC decided to withdraw from the Yarra-Melbourne Regional Library in 2006, the Carlton Friends were faced with the problem of having historical records from Carlton in different libraries. The group set out 'to preserve the past and the present for the future' by collecting historical information from both sides of Princes Street, hoping to 'consolidate the shared history of Carlton'. Since then it has produced displays and booklets, and collected material covering the whole suburb.

This development is of particular importance to Judith. 'We do not make any distinction between Carlton North and South or the areas defined by Council boundaries,' she said.

'The experiences of one person in 3053 are as important as another in 3054 to our collective history'.

Over time, we have edited *Broken Biscuits* -- a book relating the tale of Boltin's grocery store in Lygon Street, recounted the story of the women who signed the 1908 monster petition on votes for women in Davis Street and looked at the attitudes of women who live there now. We have also explored the contribution of people like Georgio

Mangiamele, a photographer and film maker, a local couple who still run a tailoring establishment who had a fascinating immigrant history which included a proxy marriage in Italy, the moves of various shop owners, families that lived in small side streets, the experiences of school children, as well as people who, in various ways, tried to fight the Housing Commission as it set out to raze areas of Carlton. A comprehensive history of Rathdowne Street will also soon be published.

The CCHG recorded material on La Mama, itinerant musicians, current and past opera singers and women who worked from home sewing, as well as convicts who dug up bluestone in what was to become Curtain Square. They have traced a major event like the Burke and Wills Expedition and added some original material on Charlie Ferguson and John King in separate booklets.

CCHG is also trying to recover a large Community History Catalogue that was produced and networked by computer through the Carlton Library to all the schools of the area in 1984-1986. Part of the record of that material was lost or misplaced during a computer upgrade. The largest selection to survive is now at the Lee Street Primary School, some of which is currently being sorted by CCHG members and also deciphered by BBC computers at the British Library.

Today, the CCHG is steadily working at what Judith calls 'unravelling', that is to say working to get a clearer picture of what life was once like in Carlton and recording what it is like now. This isn't always easy.

The CCHG has always been about people talking, telling stories, chatting to neighbours and writing down such memories. But it is also interested in careful historical research because sometimes 'stories' conceal or distort what actually happened. Judith stressed that community history is not just about finding exciting or dramatic information about the famous or the wealthy, it is about what ordinary people can reveal about life in Carlton then, and now.



"Final milk run" cnr Canning and Barkly Sts

Judith issued the following invitation: 'If you wish to be part of this working group, the best way is to attend our meetings on the first Monday evening of every month,

except for January. We meet in the Carlton Library meeting room. You can visit the website www.cchg.asn.au/ to get a sense of what we do. We encourage young people to be involved, to provide both technological skills and their stories and experiences of living in Carlton. Everyone is welcome and CCHG looks forward to seeing new members'.