

HISTORY & HERITAGE NEWSLETTER

August 2023

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Hello and welcome to the August edition of the Cafs History & Heritage newsletter. I hope you're keeping warm during these winter months, wherever you may be.

We are excited to announce a series of creative arts workshops for former residents of the Ballarat Orphanage and Ballarat Children's Home. These will take place in the coming months here at Cafs, culminating in an exhibition in November. Further details are available below.

We continue with our important archival work with Amy Tsilemanis contracted to join us over the coming months.

The Cafs 2022-2023 Annual Report is currently under development and will be made available on the Cafs website in October.

Take care everyone, I hope you enjoy this edition.

Wendy Sturgess



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COLLABORATIVE CREATIVE ART PROJECT WITH FORMER RESIDENTS OF BALLARAT ORPHANAGE AND BALLARAT CHILDREN'S HOME

At the launch of the History and Memory Centre in February, we at Cafs were very honoured to be able to show numerous artworks by artists who spent time at the Ballarat Children's Home and Ballarat Orphanage, including Barry Walters, Debbie Gardener, Peter Clarke, Deb Findlay, Kerri Wilson McConchie, and Alec Cimera.

We have heard from some of our community members that people would love to engage in creative projects relating to their history. So, we have developed the 'creative responses to childhood records' project. This will provide the opportunity for former residents to make new artworks in a series of collaborative artistic workshops and have an exhibition in November.

WORKSHOPS AT CAFS

Local artists Kerri Wilson McConchie and Rebecca Russell will lead workshops using various art forms in a supportive and collaborative environment here at Cafs. Participants will be supported to explore creative responses to personal childhood records, archival and heritage materials, through drawing, collage, and animation.

The workshops can provide a platform for artistic development with supportive feedback, self-reflection and meaningful conversation.

Workshop times and dates will be:

- Saturday 2nd September - 10am-12pm
Introductory/research session
- Saturdays 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th October - 10am-1pm
Art workshops.

If you'd like to take part in these workshops, please register via the link [HERE](#).

WORKSHOPS AT BADAC

Artist Shanahan (Shu) Brown will lead creative workshops specifically for Aboriginal former residents at BADAC. Workshop times and dates are yet to be determined, so in the meantime you can contact records@cafs.org.au to register your interest.

EXHIBITION DATES

An exhibition will be held at Artspace Ballarat on Lydiard Street from Friday 24 November to Sunday 10 December 2023. There may be other opportunities to exhibit works at Cafs and BADAC as well.

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INTRODUCING AMY TSILEMANIS

Over the past 12 months we have been working on the cataloguing, indexing, and digitising of the historical records held by Cafs in order to assist with locating any information that we hold relating to individual children. Our heritage consultant, the fabulous Amy Tsilemanis, has been integral to this work.



We have recently re-engaged with Amy to continue with this work throughout 2023. Amy is incredible at what she does. Not only has she been invaluable to our archival work, she is also a multi-skilled artist, curator, producer & researcher. You can find more information about Amy's broader work on her website via the link [HERE](#).

Welcome back Amy - great to have you back on the team!

CLAN OPENS THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL ORPHANAGE MUSEUM

The Australian Orphanage Museum officially opened in April 2023. The Australian Orphanage Museum is operated by Care Leavers Australasia Network (CLAN). The Museum aims to collect, document, and present objects and materials from orphanages and children's homes from across Australia.

The museum has hundreds of items in the collection and on display at the Geelong offices of CLAN. The collection includes plaques, signs, badges, photos, crockery, personal diaries, and personal material such as suitcases donated by care leavers.

The Museum is located at 351 Ryrie Street, Geelong.

Visit the Museum website for further information via the link [HERE](#).



The Australian National Orphanage Museum,
Ryrie Street, Geelong.

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CAN YOU HELP IDENTIFY THE CHILDREN IN THIS PHOTO?

What's that in the sky?

This photo was taken in 1968. Front row, second from left is Greg Lawson - Far right Lindsay Saunders. If you recognise anyone in this photo please let us know.

Cafs holds many unnamed and undated photographs. Each newsletter, we'll feature a new photo in the hope that our former resident community can assist with putting names to faces.

If you can help us identify anyone in this photo, please let us know by emailing records@cafs.org.au or call 03 53 37 3333 to speak with a member of the History & Heritage team.

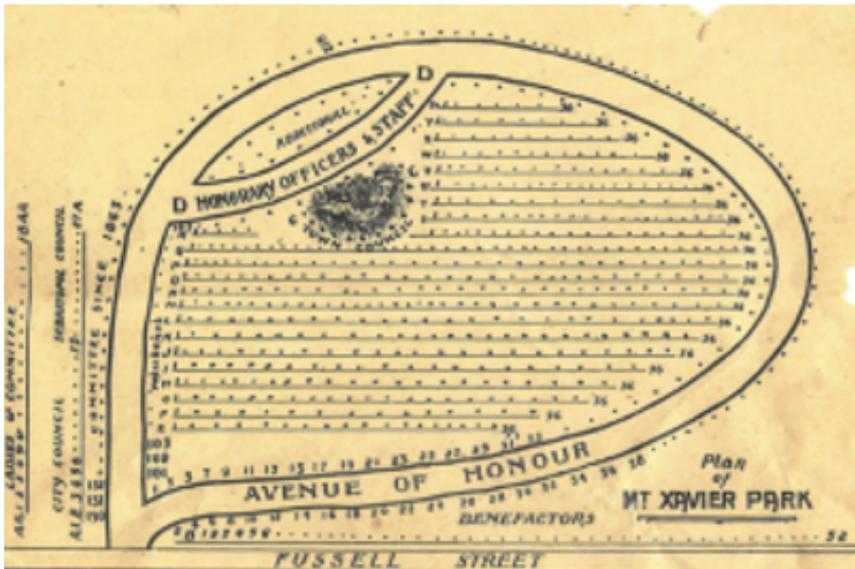


(CAFS COLLECTION CRS_15_10 B11 1966-1968)

2024 FORMER RESIDENTS ANNUAL REUNION

The annual reunion will be held in February 2024. Exact details will be included in the next newsletter to be issued Nov/Dec.

ARBOR DAY, 1917 – 105 YEARS ON



Arbor Day used to be a big deal. It was a celebration of trees, and tree-planting - an easy way of doing something useful, and an opportunity to connect with nature. On 3 August 1917 in Ballarat, it was an even bigger deal.

The Governor-General was in town, Sir Ronald Munro Ferguson, with his wife Lady Helen Munro-Ferguson. After a visit to inspect the Orphanage - where he handed out a wad of money to "to purchase lollies for the children" (Star, 4 August 1917, p.4)

The Governor was taken up the nearby hill known as Mount Xavier Park, and planted the first of thousands of trees in a new "Avenue of Honor", organised by the Ballarat Orphanage.

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ARBOUR DAY, 1917 - 105 YEARS ON CONTINUED...

Some months earlier the Orphanage Committee had resolved to take up an offer by the Victorian Minister of Forests to provide 2,500 trees to be planted as a nursery, and to dedicate each of those trees to an individual who had contributed to the orphanage over its 51 years so far.

First among those honoured were those former inmates "who have enlisted and are fighting for King and Country" (Special Committee Meeting, 19 June 1917). Boys from the Ballarat Orphanage signed up for war service at much higher rates than many others in Australia. Avenues of Honour like this were quite common in this period, and it was a popular and moving way of recognising the sacrifice of fellow citizens. That there was a dedicated Avenue for the Orphanage shows the esteem that they were held in the Ballarat community and that their contributions as young Australians were publicly appreciated and celebrated.

It was not only the former inmates at war who were honoured, however. As well as the Governor and his wife, the Premier Sir Alex Peacock and Lady Peacock, the Minister for Forests, who had supplied the trees, and various other agricultural officials also got their own trees. All previous Orphanage Committee Presidents and Committee Members from 1865 onwards- 111 men - each had a tree planted for them in their own special section. So too the "Ladies of Committee" as they were referred to, or the wives of current Committeemen, had a plot of trees. Various other local dignitaries: the Anglican Bishop of Ballarat; four parliamentary representatives from the local area;

Rows E to N were trees dedicated to "Life Governors", more of the institution's larger providers of cash. Rows O to U were taken for "Subscribers" in the years 1916 and 1917. Subscribers were the Orphanage's financial lifeblood in this period, including contributors from all walks of life. Among them were hundreds of local individuals, each of them named in the Arbor Day Booklet distributed for the occasion. Many others were from companies and other organisations, like the Ballarat Brewing Company, the Ballarat Woollen Mill, British Australasian Tobacco Co., the Ballarat Courier, "Chinese Gardeners and Hawkers", and the Consul General of China. The "Railway Carnival Committee" got their own row, having raised plenty of money for the institution over many years.

Rows W, X, Y and Z were for the "Children of the Ballarat Orphanage".

The site of this Avenue is still there today, a densely wooded hill in suburban Ballarat East. A place where families walk, BMXers jump, dogs sniff, teenagers explore. Though the original trees - as far as we know - have been mostly overgrown, there are some traces of them alongside the outer pathways. In 2000 Conservation Volunteers Australia erected a plaque to commemorate the Avenue, and in 2016 Cafs Ballarat re-created the Avenue in a more public location just around the corner from the original site, on Fussell St Ballarat East.

Written by David McGinniss, Historian

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REFLECTIONS OF A FORMER RESIDENT - ALLAN KRYGGER

Allan Krygger, born on the 8th August in 1900, became a resident of the Ballarat Orphanage at the age of 12. He went in with his younger brother, Carl. Former Child and Family Services CEO Kevin Zibell travelled to Newcomb in 2000 to share in Allan's 100th birthday celebrations. Allan passed away in 2001. He shared some memories with Mavis Wood in 1997:

I can remember being in a Children's Home and later we were transferred to Ballarat Orphanage where we learnt farming and gardening. We went to school in the orphanage as there were so many children there, well over a hundred boys and girls.

We had good school and I was quite content and well looked after. Miss Ritchie and Mr Sullivan taught at the Orphanage School. There were well over a hundred boys and girls.



Allan aged 19 years old.

I was very close to a boy named Allan Border, we shared the same birthday. I particularly remember him because he had the same name as the great cricketer.

The orphanage had a very good brass band, I played the E flat Bass. We played at the South Street competitions where we often won.

I remember once I was sent to take a flock of sheep to another paddock and when I counted them I was three short. I had to go back to the paddock and search for them. As the paddock was very bushy, this wasn't easy, but I found them all and brought them back to the rest of the flock. The Superintendent was very pleased, and so was I!

We used to dig up potatoes from the paddock, light a fire and roast them. The cook gave us salt and pepper for them, we were always hungry as growing boys are. We would do almost anything for a feed. I was caught for the second time climbing an apple tree but luckily the kind man who caught me did not report me, so I decided not to climb them anymore. At the 1990 reunion of the orphanage, a man there remembered me as the culprit who had pinched apples from his father's tree.

In memory of Allan, born 123 years ago this month.

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FROM THE NEWSPAPER ARCHIVES



(Cafs Collection, CRS_8_09)

Children from the Ballarat Children's Home were well rugged up against the weather when our cameraman snapped this group out for a walk in Victoria street on Saturday. Smiling faces show that the cold snap was among the least of their worries, even a sore head (centre).

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FROM THE NEWSPAPER ARCHIVES

THEY AGREE TO DIFFER

On Wednesday 180 Orphanage boys and girls returned to Ballarat after a six weeks' holiday at Queenscliff. Typical of mixed opinions were these:



Francis Gloria Smith, 13 years old, said the holiday was "very nice," but she was glad to get back to school. "I want to get on with my lessons so that I can leave school," she said. Highlight of Francis' holiday was when, with the aid of a friend, Carol Walters, she staged an impromptu concert at the Orphanage's rest home at Queenscliff.



Cliff Sealey, 12 years old, wasn't as keen as Francis to be home again. Asked if he was happy to be back at school, Cliff emphatically replied that he would sooner be at Queenscliff. With forethought Cliff had, during the past year, saved up for the holiday with a result that he was able to have all the ice creams he wanted while at Queenscliff.

Article from summer of 1948/49. Frances was admitted to the Orphanage in 1945 and left early 1949. Cliff was admitted to the Orphanage in 1940 along with his 4 siblings Lesley, Audrey, Harold and James. He left in 1950.

(Cafs Collection, CRS_8_05 1928-1950)

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KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH CAFS

Accessing your records

If you wish to access your records, please send an email with information such as the years that you were in Care, date of birth, names parents and any siblings. Please also include photo ID such as an image of your license.

Please know that we cannot facilitate walk-in requests. If you wish to come to Cafs to speak with us about accessing records, please kindly get in touch first to make an appointment to ensure someone from our team is available to assist, as we are only in the office 2 days a week. You can request your records by submitting the records form on the Cafs website, via the History & Heritage page [HERE](#).

Calling for contributions

Have you got a story or memory you'd like to share in the next newsletter? You may like to share a poem that you've written, some artwork you've created, share a photo or your experiences about accessing your records from your time in Care. It's really up to you! If you'd like to contribute, please get in touch.



Cafs Heritage and History Records Service

Ph: 03 5337 3333
ask to speak to the History &
Heritage team

Email: records@cafs.org.au
Hours of operation:
Monday 9am - 5pm
Friday 9am - 5pm

Next newsletter

Nov/Dec 2023 (to include information about the 2024 annual reunion)

