

Community Pitch 2017

Thanks, thank you hosts, caterers and donors for your generous support. Remember two years ago we asked for assistance with the Eddie Warden collection of negatives.

I'm happy to say that the proceeds went towards containers for the hundreds of rolls of film which have now been sorted and stored.

Our friends at the Western Bulldogs Heritage Group also came to our assistance and paid for an archivist to advise us on how to manage this fragile collection.

A diligent volunteer Nick Tassos has been cross checking the negatives against the photographer's appointment and log books.

So now, the huge task ahead of us is to prioritise, scan and catalogue the negatives.

The society is investing in negative scanner and enlisting a team of volunteers.

We keep finding out more about the man behind the camera and sharing his story

Last year, our appeal was for help with IT – in particular the online sale of books.

Thanks to you we've been able to engage an enthusiast, Don Mooney to sort out all things IT related (not just ecommerce):

- Making the most of facebook
- Improving our emailing system
- Improving our security, and computer housekeeping
- Updating programs

Which brings us to this year's project: REPRINTING LOCAL HISTORY PUBLICATIONS.

As you can imagine, the upkeep of the heritage listed building is a big drain on our finances. So proceeds from booksales tend to vanish pretty quickly.

Sadly some titles are out of print quite a while before we order to reprint them.

Instead of the present ad hoc approach, I'd like to see book sales proceeds reserved to fund other publications. So you can help us to get the ball rolling.

As I was reminded at the Kilmore workshop I attended on the weekend, if we don't act in a business-like fashion, we're soon out of business, in no shape to fulfil our mission. We are committed to looking after this income stream.

Of course, our rent of the first floor of Ercildoune and government grants are our mainstay, but book sales, walking tours and memberships definitely count.

We don't see ourselves as a publishing house but it is vital we have stock of local history books for sale.

- Books are tangible means to foster public awareness and interest in our history – an aim inscribed in the society's mission.
- At festivals, library talks and Ercildoune, our customers buy books. They tell us they value them for their stories, their images, as touchstones for sharing memories, as reinforcement of the sense of belonging which, I'm sure we all hold dear.

A few of the titles ready to reprint:

Who'd like to see revised editions of Footscray's first 50 years and first 100 years?

Also: Frances Smith's *Yarraville village and club*

Eric Pooley and Stan d'Altera's *Hotels of Yarraville*

Emma Curtin and Tony Kelleher's *A distinctive wedge in the west: a history of Kingsville to 1930*

The last reprint of 100 copies in 2015 cost us \$1520

Other reprints require the involvement of the authors. I know because I have a few of my own on the back burner.

Down the track, we may even be in a position to commission new publications.

Don't worry, we have ample stock of many booklets as well as favourites:

- *Footscray and Yarraville a pictorial record*
- *James Cuming's autobiography*
- *Matt Harris's Unwanted Aussie*
- *Charlie Lovett's Footscray*

We welcome your support. We promise to make the best of all our resources, not only dollars and cents, but our combined effort as volunteers.

Thanks for all your continuing generous support. Congratulations to all the other community groups assembled here today. Let us know what we can do to help you.