

# NOTICEBOARD

MAY 2022



## Lane Cove Historical Society Inc

*(Affiliated with the Royal Australian Historical Society)*

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of Lane Cove the Cammeraygal and show respect to Elders past and present.

**PATRON:** Mayor Andrew Zbic

### Office Bearers & Committee 2021-2022

**President:** E. Prof Frances Christie  
**VP:** Dr Kay Leiper  
**VP, Secretary & Public Officer:**  
Patricia Madson  
**VP:** Margaret Bergomi  
**Treasurer:** Ajaya Jayarao  
**Convener- Friends of Carisbrook:**  
Jenny Harper

#### *Committee*

Bill McLaughlin  
Denis Smith  
Clio Wallace  
Karen Aubrey

### Carisbrook Historic House

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Lane Cove 2066  
Mob: 0434 757 300

[www.lanecovehistoricalsociety.com.au](http://www.lanecovehistoricalsociety.com.au)

[www.carisbrookhouse.com](http://www.carisbrookhouse.com)

**Caretaker:** Terry Eakin  
**Editor:** Karen Aubrey



After all the rain, we were pleased that the Easter weekend had perfect weather. Carisbrook Historic House was open on both Easter Saturday and Sunday to serve Devonshire teas, and the days went well, because people were attracted by the fine weather. I congratulate all those who made the two days a success. After Easter, the LCHS Committee was pleased to welcome a visit from the Mayor, Councillor Andrew Zbic, and his colleague, Councillor David Roenfeldt. The Mayor has agreed to serve as our Patron, for which the Committee is very pleased, while Councillor Roenfeldt has agreed to serve as the Council member on the Carisbrook Advisory Committee. Committee members were able to brief the Councillors on aspects of the work of the LCHS. They both indicated support for the work, including care of Carisbrook House.

Council has finalised the contract for a builder to commence work on the development of the scullery at Carisbrook. The work is scheduled to begin mid-May, taking about six weeks to complete. Heritage approval has also been given for work on restoration of the roof and chimneys at Carisbrook.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of May our next speaker at the Podium, Geoff Huntington. will speak on Bernhard Otto Holtermann, who arrived in Sydney in 1858. He and his partner Louis Beyers, found a huge gold nugget. Holtermann became wealthy and among other things, he helped to finance a project to photograph New South Wales. The negatives were found some years after his death and they are now stored at the NSW Library as the Holtermann Collection.

**Until next time  
Frances Christie  
President**

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**You could win \$1,000!**

Submissions may be

- \* a video doco of 7-15 minutes
- \* an essay 5,000-7,000 words
- \* an oral history of 30-45 minutes on video or audio recording, plus written transcription and short written rationale and summary



Entries close 31 August

[www.lanecovehistoricalsociety.com.au](http://www.lanecovehistoricalsociety.com.au)

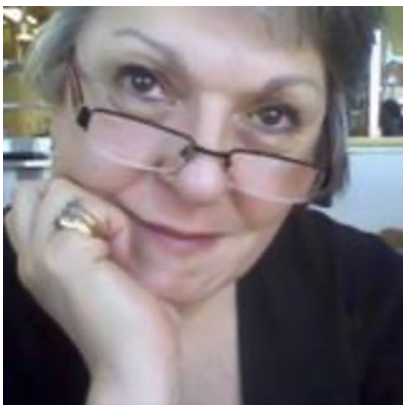
We have uploaded the winning entries of our History Competitions onto our website, including a transcript and recording of the oral history that Simon Cole did on Les Heap. So, if you were thinking about entering the competition this year and needed some guidance or inspiration you might want to check that out at:

<https://www.lanecovehistoricalsociety.com.au/lane-cove-history-prize>

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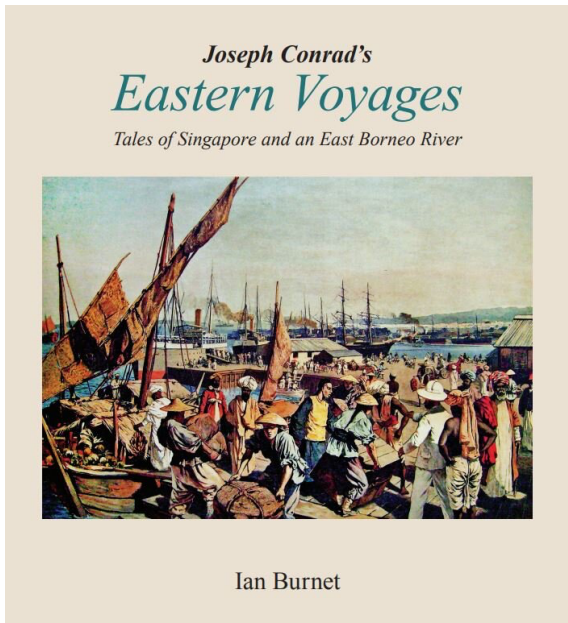
## Focus on a Member

### Dr Kay Leiper

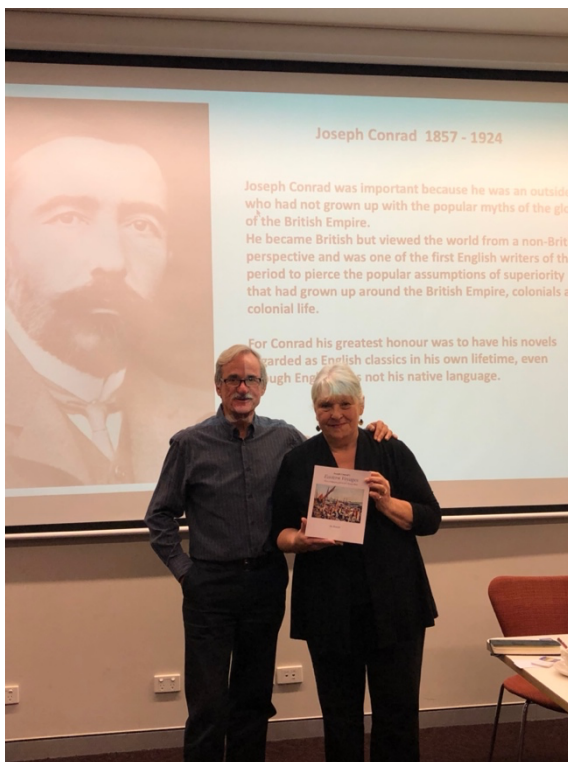


Dr Kay Leiper is a past President of the Society. She has strong interests in Australian history and the values of documenting cultural history in all communities. She is active in the conservation of Carisbrook Historic House. She manages Carisbrook's monthly open weekend, each third weekend. Devonshire tea and coffee are served in the courtyard.

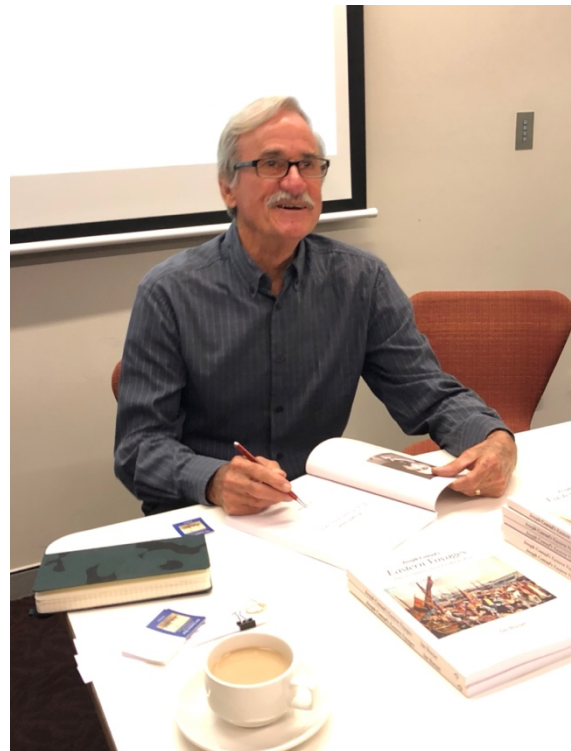
## April at the Podium



After a few technical difficulties with the AV equipment the night flowed beautifully. Ian Burnet was an inspiring guest speaker who spoke with authority about the life of one of the great authors of all time – Joseph Conrad. ‘Out of Darkness’, arguably his greatest literary achievement was only one of many books authored by Conrad. He said that his greatest honour was to have his novels regarded as English classics in his own lifetime, even though English was not his native language. If you couldn’t join us and would like to know more about Ian Burnet, you can visit his website: [www.ianburnetbooks.com](http://www.ianburnetbooks.com) His book is also available for purchase at all the usual places online. Or you can order one directly from Ian at the above website. How many Joseph Conrad books have you read?



*Pictured Above: Dr Kay Leiper with Ian Burnet*



*Pictured Above: Ian Burnet signing his books*

Don't miss the next meeting in May: [www.lanecovehistoricalsociety.com.au/at-the-podium](http://www.lanecovehistoricalsociety.com.au/at-the-podium)

## Rain, rain and more rain! By Frances Christie

These past few weeks rain has been an almost constant topic of conversation, and we can only hope, as the weeks proceed, that we can soon move on to other subjects. Most households by now have a quantity of umbrellas, raincoats, rain hats and perhaps even galoshes and gumboots. So where did all these various items come from and who invented them? It turns out that the various items all have an interesting history.

Perhaps the oldest of all wet weather items is the **umbrella**, designed about 4,000

years ago by the Chinese, though they used it as a shade against sunlight. The Chinese umbrellas were made of mulberry bark or sometimes bamboo.



Ancient royal

Chinese families used red umbrellas, while the poor people used blue. Ancient Egyptians also used umbrellas which were made of stretched papyrus, feathers and palms. They were carried by servants over the heads of nobles, also against the sun rather than rain. Umbrellas eventually came to England, mainly for the wealthier classes, and by the 17<sup>th</sup> century the word



“umbrella” had appeared in English, based on the Latin *umbra*, meaning “shadow” or “shade”.

What about footwear? The famous English **wellington boot** was named after the Duke of Wellington who defeated Napoleon in 1815. The Duke had commissioned his bootmaker to make a new sturdy boot, and the one that emerged

became very fashionable, on and off the battlefield. Variations on the original wellington were adapted for soldiers in both World Wars. Today wellingtons, often called “wellies”, are sometimes worn by fashionable women, as well as men. Apparently, the word “**gumboot**” is an Australian term, and this article is considered a variant on the wellington, but it is made from soft rubber. Some people wear **galoshes**, which are items worn over other shoes. These originated in the Middle Ages, and the name “galosh” comes from *Gaulish shoes* or *gallicae*.

The conventional raincoat, also called a **mackintosh**, was named after Charles Macintosh, a Scottish chemist. In 1823 he devised a method for using rubber dipped in coal tar which cemented two pieces of fabric together. The cloth proved to be flexible and very durable so that the mackintosh became very popular and even today people still sometimes speak of getting a “mack” out on a rainy day.



As for rain hats, there have been many kinds invented over the years, though perhaps the two most enduring are the **sou'wester**, made of soft oiled canvas with a back flap to protect the neck, and the **bucket hat**. The sou'wester emerged in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and it may have come from fishing communities in Massachusetts, though some authorities say that it came from England, where south westerly winds blew rain over fishermen. Either way, the sou'wester became popular beyond the fishing industry. The **bucket hat**, also associated with fishing communities, was bucket shaped with a downward sloping brim and it was made of heavy-duty cotton, canvas, or even tweed. It came from rural

communities in Ireland and Great Britain. Today, such is the way fashions change, the bucket hat is high fashion in many parts of the world.

So next time you select an item of rain wear, you might reflect on the ingenuity of many people in different parts of the world in addressing the problems of living with rain.

**Sources:**

<https://www.google.com.au/search?q=who+invented+the+umbrella>

<https://www.umbrellaworkshop.com/umbrellas/history-of-the-umbrella/>

<https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/walmer-castle-and-gardens/history-and-stories/invention-wellington-boot/>

<https://www.google.com.au/search?q=who+invented+the+macintosh+coat&source>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sou%27wester>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bucket\\_hat](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bucket_hat)

<https://artsandculture.google.com/theme/charles-macintosh-and-his-famous-coat/SwLSEIbM4qLrIq?hl=en>



*Pictured Above: Pat Madson, Andrew Zbik, David Roenfeldt & Denis Smith*

We thank Councillor Andrew Zbik (Mayor) and Councillor David Roenfeldt for taking time out of their busy schedules to join us for the April committee meeting. Here they are, all smiles after their guided tour of Carisbrook.

### From our collection – the darning mushroom (or egg)

This darning tool was an essential item in 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century households, as self-reliant women had to be able to firstly make and then repair all their family's clothing. Darning was considered a necessary skill for girls and young women, an important part of their education as future wives and mothers.

The darning mushroom was an essential tool in an era before the use of synthetic materials, when women were constantly repairing worn socks and many other items of clothing. Woollen or cotton socks and stockings, woollen jumpers and cardigans as well as many other items of clothing made from natural fabrics were in constant need of repair. The mushroom was used to assist when making these repairs, and there was always a steady supply of darning in the family mending bag. A woman sitting darning was a common sight and so was a darning mushroom inside a stocking or sock with a hole in it.

The mushroom or darner made it easier to stitch a neat repair which would replace the fabric that had been worn away or torn. To repair socks or jumpers the darning mushroom is slipped under the hole with the fabric stretched smoothly but not too tightly over it and then gathered tightly

around the stalk to hold it in place for darning.

Darning is not pulling the edges of the fabric together but is reweaving the fabric that has been lost. A darning needle is used with thread the same as in the garment if possible, or thread of the same weight and colour as in the garment being mended. Hand darning employs the darning stitch, a simple running stitch in which the thread is woven in rows along the grain of the fabric with the stitcher reversing the direction at the end of each row, and then filling in the framework thus weaving a new piece of the fabric. The repair is anchored by working the repair into the stable fabric surrounding the hole. A small loop is left at the end of each line of stitches to allow for the darning thread to shrink when first washed.

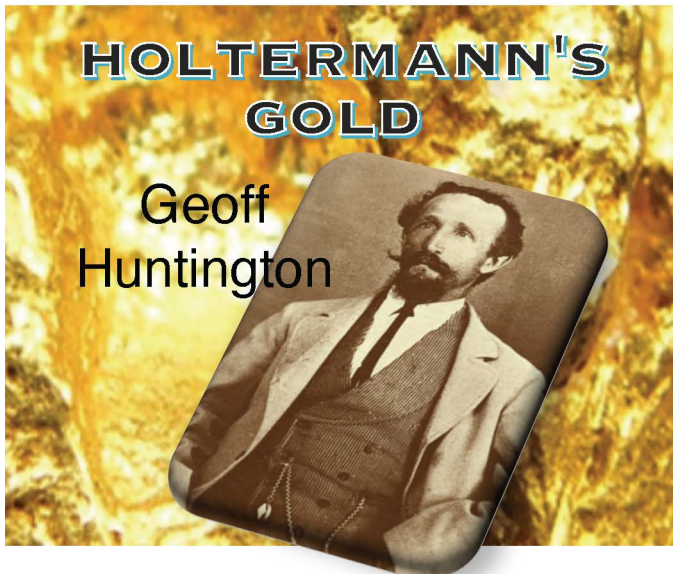
Darning is a traditional method for repairing natural fabric damage, or holes that do not run along a seam and where patching is impractical or would create discomfort for the wearer such as on the heel of a sock. The expanded use of synthetic fabrics in recent times has meant less use of this mending method, and cheaper clothing prices have meant there is less need for clothing to be repaired.



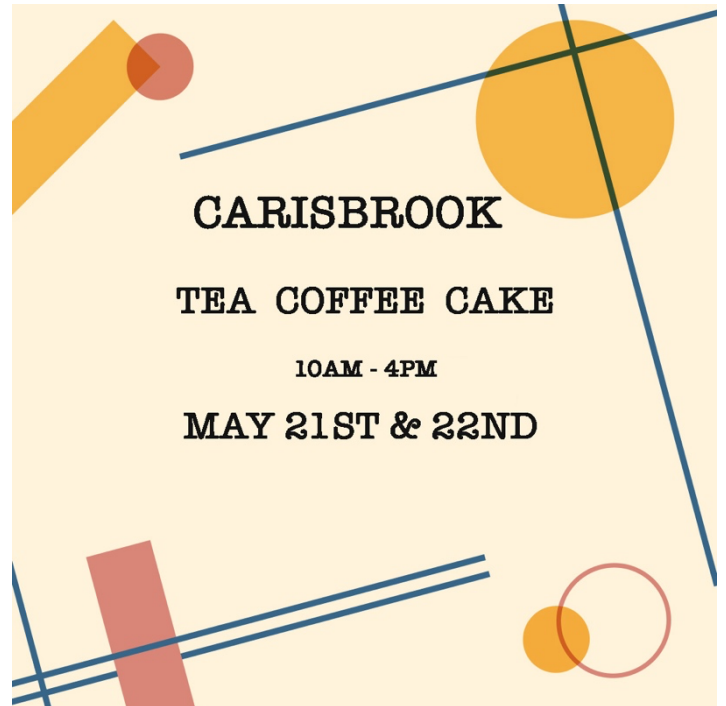
Examples of darning mushrooms from the Victorian Era

# Upcoming Events

LCHS AT THE PODIUM  
Lane Cove Library  
7pm May 24



[www.lanecovehistorical.society.com.au](http://www.lanecovehistorical.society.com.au)  
Enquiries 0418 276 365



## New Member Alert



Welcome

Judy Slatyer

Robin Guthrie

&

returning member

Alex Mattea

We hope you enjoy being a member & we look forward to seeing you at the next event

## Carisbrook Historic House Menu

Devonshire tea 2 scones, jam, cream, tea or coffee	\$12.00
<b>Cakes</b> Chocolate Brownie Carrot Cake (GF,DF) Coconut syrup cake (DF)	\$ 4.50
<b>Coffee</b> Cappuccino, Espresso, Latte, Flat white, French press	\$ 4.00
<b>Tea</b> English breakfast, Earl Grey, Green,	\$ 4.00
<b>Juice</b>	\$ 2.00

Open third weekend of the month