



National Trust Heritage Festival at Lake View, 16 April 2016

Lake View house and garden looked wonderful for the Heritage Festival, thanks to the hard work of the indefatigable Beryl Pickering and Anne Vyner. Visitors were able to spend time in the house and then enjoy refreshments in the gardens.



Looking across the garden to Lake View house



HHR Information table

The HHR Society manned an information table with material about HHR and her time in Chiltern and about the Society. Some of HHR's books from the Text Classics series were on sale. Many visitors stopped to peruse the display of photos of Society events.

Stories of Lake View from the 1950s (the Krause brothers) and 1960s (Lesley Donelan)

Kurt and Bert Krause visited Lake View for the Heritage Festival and told the story of living there for six months in 1956. They were aged 15 and 20 at the time.

They'd come from Cologne in Germany in 1955 with their parents and three other brothers and went first to the migrant camp at Bonegila. Their father found work chopping wood near Chiltern and then in the brickworks, which provided employment for a number of them in the family. During this time they lived in Lake View.

Kurt's memories of the house were first of the many mosquitos, and of the old kitchen that used to be on the verandah where the Coolgardie safe is now. The family knew nothing of HHR at the time.



View from the verandah



Bert and Kurt Krause at 'Lake View', April 2016



Kurt's brother Rolf at Lake View, 1956



Another Krause family photo of Lake View in 1956

Lesley Donelan grew up living diagonally opposite Lake View. For most of her early years Lesley said it was just an old, dilapidated, vacant house which the local kids were sure was haunted. The house had the occasional transient family groups living there, but no-one stayed very long. Thinking about it now, Lesley says the families seemed European and were most likely post WWII refugees and were maybe even squatters. She would befriend the kids living there and can remember their 'camping' conditions.

The restoration and National Trust opening was a grand affair for Chiltern, with people dressed in period costume for the event and media photos. Her mother, Mrs Bertha Donelan, worked there for quite some time manning the house during opening hours, sharing this role, Lesley believes, with Mrs Vyner.

Lake View always seemed to attract a lot of visitors in the early years, often outside opening hours. Her memory was of frequent cars driving into the car park to look around which was a notable occurrence in sleepy Chiltern.

Lesley found that HHR herself seemed much more well known and admired by people in Melbourne than those of Lesley's childhood. Her friends and associates in Melbourne would often be excited when they discovered that Chiltern was her home town and the location of Lake View.



Lesley Donelan and Bob Morgan at the 3rd January 2016 event

HHR Oration – 'Aileen Palmer's Getting of Wisdom'

About fifty Society members and friends gathered in the Elvery Gallery in Chiltern to hear Dr Sylvia Martin's fascinating and thought provoking address about the way HHR's shadow both inspired and haunted the writer, Aileen Palmer, daughter of Vance and Nettie Palmer.



Sylvia Martin at Elvery Gallery



Part of the audience enjoying the oration at Elvery Gallery

Sylvia's biography of Aileen, *Ink in her Veins*, was recently published by UWA and was available for sale after the oration. To read the oration go to our website www.henryhandelrichardsonsociety.org.au

2016 AGM and elections

The 2016 AGM was held at the Elvery Gallery just before the oration. Our president, Graeme Charles farewelled Clive Probyn who has stepped down from the committee now that he lives in NSW. Graeme thanked Clive for all that he has done both for the Society and for the understanding and promotion of HHR's work.

Graeme Charles was re-elected as president, Bill Steele as vice-president, Janey Runci as Secretary, Helen Macrae as Treasurer and Bronwyn Minifie as an ordinary member.

We welcomed three new ordinary members, Gloria Banks, Heather McNeill and Rachel Solomon.

Thank you to Clive Probyn - by Graeme Charles

At the recent AGM in Chiltern Clive Probyn stepped down from the HHRSA committee, however his sterling work as president, vice-president and ordinary member is only one aspect of more than twenty years of commitment to promoting the life and writing of Henry Handel Richardson.

His commitment began in 1994, when together with his colleague Bruce Steele, he started working on what eventually became the Monash University Henry Handel Richardson Project. Aided by several large grants from the Australian Research Council – the first big one in 1996 enabled *Maurice Guest* to receive full critical editing, followed by *The Getting of Wisdom* (2001), *Niels Lynne* (2003), *The Young Cosima* (2004), the trilogy *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony* (2007). The three volume *Henry Handel Richardson the letters* was published in 2000. During this period they also supervised a number of graduate students' PhD dissertations on HHR including Society members Rachel Solomon (who has joined the committee this year) and Meg Probyn (also a former committee member) who completed her PhD on HHR's parents' letters, later published as *Marriage Lines*, at Monash in 2000.

Shortly after commencing work on the Richardson Project, Clive became aware that people in Chiltern and North East Victoria had been celebrating HHR's birthday at Lake View, Chiltern every year since the house had been opened to the public, under the care of the National Trust, in January 1970. He thinks he first attended the annual event in January 1995.

It was immediately after the birthday celebration in January 2008 following a discussion between Clive,

Meg, Rex & Mary Fuge and Graeme & Dot Charles that the Henry Handel Richardson Society of Australia came into being. It was particularly fitting that the inaugural President should be the late Rex Fuge, who had done so much to keep HHR's name alive in Chiltern, and that upon his retirement from the position he was to be followed by Clive. Between them, each in his own way had made significant contributions toward ensuring that HHR's name and works wouldn't be lost in the mists of time.

We know that Clive (and Meg) will continue to remain active and important members of the Society, but on the occasion of his retirement from the committee it is right that we should say on behalf of all our members both past, present and future, a big 'thank you' to him and let him know that it will always be a great joy to see both him and Meg at future Society events.



Clive Probyn speaking at Lake View

Introducing new Committee Members: Heather McNeill, Gloria Banks, Rachel Solomon,

Heather McNeill has been a long-standing member of the HHR Society and is delighted to be able to re-join the committee. She first read *The Getting of Wisdom* as a student at PLC and has enjoyed the works of HHR ever since.



Heather McNeill at AGM 2013 at Lake View

Moving from suburban Melbourne to Bendigo on her retirement from secondary teaching, Heather has become involved in a range of organisations and volunteer opportunities in her new community. She is keen to promote interest in the writings of HHR in Central Victoria and especially in local schools – and to help organise another HHR Victorian tour for Society members.

Gloria Banks

When Gloria moved to Chiltern in 1985 she soon became aware of HHR's connection to the town. She attended and enjoyed the annual birthday celebrations at Lake View instigated by the work of the late Rex Fuge, the Society's first president.



Gloria and Graeme Banks at Lake View – 2012 birthday picnic

Gloria became more fascinated with HHR's writings after hearing Clive and Meg Probyn, and Bruce Steele speak of her life and works. She appreciated the depth of their knowledge. A highlight of the birthday celebrations for Gloria was to hear a recording of HHR's voice reading a passage from the trilogy, *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony*.

Gloria and her husband Graeme became members of the HHR Society from its inception in 2008. In that same year they joined in the Society tour when members visited places where HHR had lived as a child in Melbourne, Queenscliff and Maldon. That trip was both enjoyable and enlightening for Gloria. As a new member of the committee she hopes that more trips like the one in 2008 will be arranged.

Rachel Solomon

Rachel was a PhD student in the English department at Monash, supervised by Bruce Steele. Her topic was a critical edition of Richardson's short stories known as 'The End of a Childhood'. She was also the Research Assistant on The Monash Henry Handel Richardson Project, which saw the publication of 'Henry Handel Richardson: the Letters', 3 volumes, Miegunyah Press, Melbourne University Press (Melbourne, 2000), which bears her name on the title pages. Her recent article, 'Two Studies – Henry Handel Richardson and the

Great Extractor', can be read on our website: henryhandelrichardsonsociety.org.au



Rachel Solomon and Clive Probyn at HHR prize-giving 2014, Wheeler Centre, Melbourne

Death of HHR scholar - Dame Leonie Kramer – thoughts from Clive Probyn

Dame Leonie Kramer AC DBE (1 October 1924–20 April 2016) answered her own telephone when she was Chancellor of Sydney University, and thought nothing of it. When I asked her to launch the Probyn and Steele edition of Henry Handel Richardson's *Letters* in 2000 at Monash University, she agreed immediately. She flew down to Melbourne for a day and between Tullamarine and Clayton she so impressed her taxi driver that he refused to drive away after delivering her to the Blackwood Hall, insisting on waiting there until she was ready to be taken back to Tullamarine about two hours later.



Dame Leonie Kramer

At Monash she was revisiting one of her earlier interests. As a young lecturer at Melbourne University she had requested and had been sent a box

of manuscripts from the National Library in Canberra , and thereby became one of the earliest readers of HHR's typescripts and manuscripts when they arrived in the early 1970s. They had been sent by HHR's companion and secretary, Olga Roncoroni, who had carefully preserved them for twenty-seven years.

At that time Leonie Kramer had already published three short studies, *Henry Handel Richardson and Some of her Sources* (1954), *A Companion to Australian Felix* (1962), and a short study of HHR's first novel, *Myself When Laura: Fact and Fiction in Henry Handel Richardson's School Career* (Melbourne, 1966), the last of these a full seven years before Dorothy Green's monumental study entitled *Ulysses Bound: Henry Handel Richardson and her Fiction* (ANU Press). She continued to make contributions to the understanding of the novelist's work, notably in introductions to reprints of the novels, and along with Dame Elisabeth Murdoch took a lively interest in the development of HHR's reputation and enjoyment.

Proposed HHR Society visit to Koroit

The Koroit Post Office in the Western district of Victoria was HHR's home after Queenscliff, and it was here that her father, Dr Walter Lindsay Richardson died. A Society trip to Koroit has been suggested for later this year. No details yet, but we'll keep you posted.



The Koroit Post Office (above)



Dr Walter Richardson's Grave in Koroit Cemetery (right)

Membership of the HHR Society

If you're not a member and would like to join, please contact the secretary, Janey Runci or the president, Graeme Charles:

j.runci@bigpond.com or graemejcharles@gmail.com

Subscriptions are \$15 per year.

If you are a member subscriptions for 2016 are now due and can be paid by direct deposit into our bank account or by posting your cheque to the Society at PO Box 35, Chiltern 3683.

Bank account details are: Henry Handel Richardson Society of Australia, BSB 803 070, Account number 77605. Please make sure your name appears on the deposit.

HHRSA Committee

President: Graeme Charles

Vice-President: Bill Steele

Treasurer: Helen Macrae

Secretary: Janey Runci

Committee Members:

Gloria Banks, Bronwyn Minifie,
Heather McNeill, Rachel Solomon

Website: www.henryhandelrichardsonsociety.org.au