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**1. Annual Oration – Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2021- save the date**

Pandemics and borders permitting, the Oration will go ahead at PLC, Burwood. Clive Probyn will speak on *HHR goes to the movies and comes home with the Pianist*. As mentioned in the last newsletter the oration will cover both HHR's pleasure and taste in movies and her relationship with Olga Roncoroni, who she met as the pianist for the cinema and restaurant run by her family at Lyme Regis.

**2. HHR on the airwaves – don't miss it!**

ABC local radio are presenting a special program to mark the 75th anniversary of Henry Handel Richardson's death.



*The house in Sussex where HHR died on 20th March, 1946*

Presented by Alice Walker, the program will feature Lake View House in Chiltern and its manager, Beryl Pickering, as well as Clive Probyn from the Henry Handel Richardson Society and others. It will look at HHR's life, work and popularity here in Victoria.

It may be broadcast from Lake View House itself.

Tune in on Friday March 19 from 10-11am on ABC Goulburn Murray and ABC Ballarat/South West Vic.



*Alice Walker*

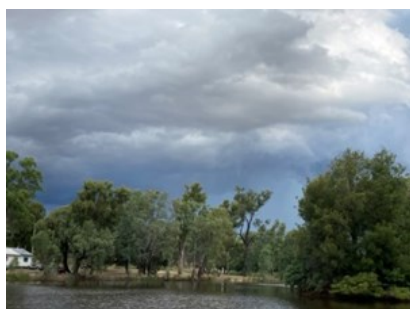
Alice Walker has been working in ABC radio for five years and presents the Mornings program on ABC Goulburn Murray each weekday from 10am. She grew up in regional Victoria and has always been a proud bookworm, majoring in literature at university. As a child she often went to sleep to the sound of Laura Tweedle Rambotham (protagonist of HHR's *The Getting of Wisdom*) lurching from crisis to crisis, through the magic of cassette tapes.

### 3. HHR's Birthday Picnic Tea at Chiltern - January 3, 2021

For those who were able to come to the birthday tea it was a pleasure to be greeted by the sign at the entry to the town. The sign was there because of the work of our tireless Chiltern HHR Committee member, Gloria Banks, who among many other preparatory tasks, tracked it down from where it had been stored in pre pandemic times. Thank you, Gloria, for all your work.



When louring skies threatened on the afternoon of January 3 we decided reluctantly that the picnic tea could not be held in the gardens of Lake View.



*Stormy skies over Lake Anderson*



Once again Charlie and Rhonda Summerfield made us welcome in the Stables at the back of the Grapevine.



*Picnic tea in the Stables – Rhonda Summerfield front right*

Robyn Heather provided delicious picnic teas for those who wanted them. Beryl Pickering, manager of Lake View gave a lively and informative welcome with an overview of the fate of Lake View during Covid – more details below in Beryl's article.

Janey Runci thanked the people of Chiltern for making the HHR Society welcome and Brigid Magner gave a presentation on the walking tour of HHR's Chiltern app.

An energetic discussion followed with a number of points being made:

- Andrew Gilmour expressed his belief that Father Stockdale has not been appropriately acknowledged for his work in establishing the picnic teas (see more in the article about Andrew below)

- Eunice De Piazza spoke about the role of Lily Salmon who donated Lake View to the National Trust (see more in the article about Eunice below)

- Val Shelley expressed concern that Anne Vyner's work in the Lake View gardens had not been sufficiently recognised.



*Mary Fuge cutting the cake*



The discussion was followed by the traditional singing of Happy Birthday and cutting of the cake, kindly made by Heather Payne.

#### 4. Lake View in the time of Covid

by Beryl Pickering



*Beryl Pickering in the gardens at Lake View*

What a year 2020 turned out to be! As we closed the doors of Lake View last March we never dreamt they wouldn't be open again until 10th January 2021. The North East Ladies Auxiliary, who are very supportive of Lake View had money to spend and I've never been one to shirk from my responsibilities, especially spending other people's money. We were plagued with burst pipes down the front path so the plumber was called. He came with his brother and a big machine and proceeded to divert the pipes, replacing them as they went. A great job well done and very little disruption to the garden. Next came the front verandah. Nails were sticking up and going through people's shoes. The whole thing has been replaced and three coats of oil applied. It looks fantastic and all thanks to the generosity of the North East Ladies.



*New verandah at Lake View*

Permission is now being sought to block off the five chimneys to reduce the soot and other rubbish from making such a mess. The money has nearly all gone, so jobs well done.

At the end of December four ladies braved the cobwebs and appalling dust. Armed with dusters and brooms we set to with a vengeance. After two hours there was a great improvement and we adjourned to the bakery to recuperate.

#### 5. Eunice De Piazza - a lifelong connection with Lake View

(from an interview with Eunice by Janey Runci on 4th January, 2021)



*Eunice De Piazza at the picnic tea in the Stables, 2021*

Eunice De Piazza has lived all of her 91 years in Chiltern, apart from a couple of holidays, and she has a long association with Lake View – HHR's home from 1876-7.

As a young girl Eunice lived on her parents' dairy farm on the Beechworth road, at the corner of Main and Wills Street, just past the railway line.



*The old Findlay farm house, sadly depleted and dilapidated now*

One of Eunice's tasks was to go on her bicycle each morning before school to deliver milk in a billy to the residents of Chiltern, including those of Lake View. She knew the Wilkies who moved into the house when Mr Wilkie returned from World War Two, and then Irwin (Tootie) & Marie Raine who lived there before they bought another home in town. After that there were a couple of immigrant families who lived there.

One of these families was the Krause family from Cologne in Germany who came to Australia and went first to the migrant camp in Bonegilla, and then came to Lake View. Their father found work chopping wood near Chiltern and then in the brickworks, which provided work for a number of them in the family. Kurt and Bert Krause were aged 15 and 20 at the time.

(See HHR newsletter, April 2016)



*Kurt's brother Rolf at Lake View in 1956*



*Kurt and Bert Krause at Lake View 2016*

By the 1960s the house had fallen into a state of disrepair, and then Dave Harvey bought it.

Eunice's husband, Johnny had a special relationship with the Harvey family.

At the age of six Johnny's mother died and he went to live with the Harveys who were the bakers in Chiltern for many years. The oldest girl in the Harvey family was Lily, who went on to become Lily Salmon. Johnny and Eunice often visited the Salmon family on their farm out at Howlong.

Lily's father, Dave had bought Lake View when it was near demolition to save it. When he died he left it to Lily. She 'tidied it up', made it a reasonable place to stay and donated it to the National Trust. The gazebo in the Lake View garden is dedicated to the memory of Lily Salmon.



Eunice also worked as a volunteer one day a week at Lake View for many years, mostly when Mary Vyner was in charge (1975-96). She's been attending the picnic teas for between 30 and 40 years and says it's always very enjoyable and pleasant, a time of the year to relax and catch up with everyone, and she appreciates the speakers – 'It's always great to hear about history'.

(To read more about Eunice's life in Chiltern go to 'Members' Contributions' on the HHR Society website:

[www.henryhandelrichardsonsociety.org.au](http://www.henryhandelrichardsonsociety.org.au))



## 6. Andrew Gilmour – Generations of connection

By Brigid Magner

On 4th January 2021, the day after the birthday tea, I interviewed Andrew Gilmour about his memories of Lake View and its restoration. Andrew's family has lived in Chiltern for seven generations so he has much wisdom to share. He believes that his grandparents, who owned the mill next to Lake View, actually bought the house when the Richardsons left town.

'At the clearing sale, my grandmother bought the drawing room tea set and tray and the famous new patent lamp that he refers to so many times in the book – she bought both of them...The lamp Mum loaned to some people in the town who didn't have the electricity on and it never came back.' Andrew remembers that he played with the tea set in his playhouse with his sister as a child, not knowing it belonged to the family of a famous writer. His grandparents' bed was up at Lake View for a long time till he took it back.

When asked if there were any memories of Doctor Richardson around the town, when he was growing up, Andrew remarked:

'The only recollection from my childhood would have been about the doctor who went mad – nobody said he had syphilis – and that he was interested in Spiritualism and in vaccinations. You can imagine, amongst ignorant miners and uneducated people, they thought he was the doctor from hell! And nobody would go near him. It was a tragic situation. But I always love to think of – when von Mueller would come on one of his country tours – the two of them would sit up all night in Lake View - and the doctor played the piano and von Mueller played the flute and I've often thought – what an oasis it must've been for both of them...It must've been a great high point in both of their lives. To find a like-minded person. There would have been hardly anybody, except my grandparents, that they had much in common with – I think that's a lovely story.'

According to Andrew, there was a big divide between the closing down of the mines and the Great War. 'I grew up in a hopeless town full of hopeless defeated poor people' he says.



*Andrew Gilmour speaking at the ten year anniversary event in 2018*

But, perhaps the only benefit of the poverty of the town for that period was that so little was changed because people didn't have the money to do anything with their houses. He doesn't remember anybody mentioning HHR when he was a child and doesn't think that her books were easily available, perhaps due to the Tall Poppy syndrome.

Andrew is fairly certain that the idea of having the birthday party for HHR originally came from local priest, Father John Stockdale: 'It was he who always had the cake made...He would come across from Beechworth with the birthday cake and he had a magnificent Baccarat candelabra with candles on it and he would put that on the piano and in the very early days he would play and I seem to remember, sing (because he had quite a good voice) some of her music.'



*Father Stockdale at an early picnic tea*

By the time Father Stockdale left, it was an established tradition. The house had a manager who organised the birthday tea and the event was on everybody's calendar.



*Andrew Gilmour with the candelabra*

‘It has always been delightful, you know, after the celebrations of Christmas and New Year which can be a bit formal and so forth. Just to sit out under the trees with likeminded people and talk and people share their food and their drinks and it’s absolutely charming.’

Andrew says that a garden designer named Ellis Stones planned the garden but it didn’t match the period of the house: ‘He’s made a charming garden but it’s not a strictly period garden but he did some good things like planting the mulberry tree for example, they were obligatory in houses of that age and a couple of other things like that but it’s not the sort of garden that would have been planted when the house was first built.’

He is full of praise for the local people who have devotedly looked after Lake View for so many years, saying that ‘the auxiliary ladies have been absolutely marvellous’. The members of the committee over the years have been strong minded ladies and they keep the money they raise and pay for things as they come up. ‘I don’t know what would’ve happened to the house if it hadn’t been for them.’

## **7. Anne Vyner – gardener extraordinaire**

All those with an interest in Lake View appreciate the marvellous work done on the garden by Anne Vyner, who continues a family tradition of involvement with the house and garden. Anne, who sets herself high standards, said she felt disappointed with the garden this year. There wasn’t as much colour as she would have liked because of the lack of rain. However, those of us visiting the garden were astounded at the number of colourful pots carefully tended and placed. The garden truly is a sanctuary. Thank you, Anne.



*Anne Vyner in the garden at Lake View*



*Memorial seat in Lake View garden*

(You can read more about Anne and the Vyner family’s connection with Lake View in the HHR newsletter, January 2017 – ‘The Woman Behind the Garden’.)



## 8. How could this vivid novel be forgotten in Germany? – on the reviews of the new translation into German of *Maurice Guest*

By Dr. Irmgard Heidler



*Dr. Irmgard Heidler*

The small Leipzig publishing house Connewitzer Verlagsbuchhandlung Peter Hinke celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a new German edition of *Maurice Guest* – fulfilling a goal already in existence at the time of the company's founding, and finally made financially possible in great part by receiving the Saxon Publishing House Award in 2019.

The new translation by Fabian Dellemann and Stefan Welz is based on the critical edition by Clive Probyn and Bruce Steele (The University of Queensland Press) from 1998.

The blurb points draw attention to the beautiful book design – and, indeed, it is beautiful: a two-volume-edition (each volume comprising 431 pages), bound in a cream-coloured cover, the title on the back in dark red, with a bright red head- and tail band, the book jacket in light green (volume I) and bright red (volume II), with the ornate frame initials “M” (I) and “G” (II) in the decorative Hobeaux Rococeaux. Each of the three parts of the novel, as well as each of the chapters, is introduced by decorative initials. The typeface is Bara, “narrow and elegant”, very pleasant to read in the narrow print space. The book end papers show maps from Leipzig in 1891.

The advertising surrounding this publication puts focus on the quote by Doris Lessing praising the novel as a great one – “unputdownable, unforgettable” (a quote also featured on the back of volume I's book cover) – as well as quotes from the preface of the book's English editions published between 1921 and 1950 by Hugh Walpole, featured on the back of volume II, stressing the deep and enduring influence on the literature of the younger generation and describing the work as “one of the most truthful novels that have ever been written”.

The short but thorough afterword by Welz, “Spuren von Gold (“Traces of Gold”): Die australische Schriftstellerin Henry Handel Richardson”, displays a solid understanding of the background, of multiperspectivity, and also of actuality and modernity of the novel. The blurb describes the work as a tragic love story, a music and art novel that pays homage to Leipzig around 1900.

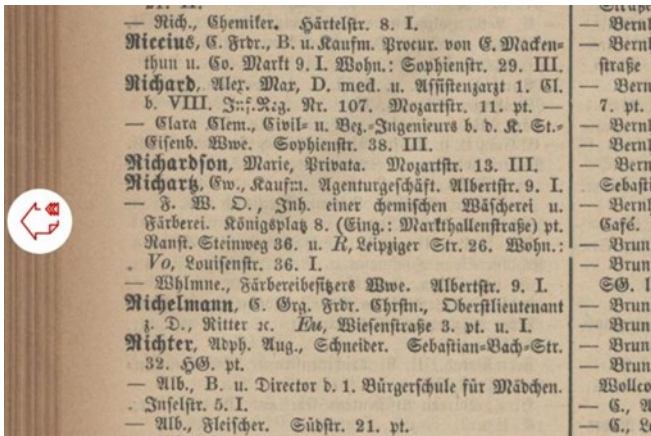
The new release is currently selling well, despite bookshops transitioning online just as the novel was published. The reviews consistently agree that it is a significant, great novel, and describe the translation as being one of superb quality, in accordance with the original tone in terms of style, syntax and expressivity. There is a general sense of appreciation at having the luxury of being able to read this translated novel in its entirety for the very first time.

The reviews from Leipzig, in particular, highlight the work as a “Leipzig novel”, portraying their city and its society. (Janina Fleischer's short but prominent review in the Leipziger Volkszeitung on December 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>, 2020, for example, under the title “Welt und Zeit verstehen” – “Understanding the World and Time”.) The Leipzig focus is especially highlighted in online reviews:

“Ein Leipziger Projekt durch und durch” (“a Leipzig project through and through”) is the title of a report on the creation and content of “*Maurice Guest*”, wherein the journalist claims that it is, without a doubt, a Leipzig novel.

(Linn Penelope Micklitz, <https://kreuzer-leipzig.de/2020/12/03/ein-leipziger-projekt-durch-und-durch/>)

The “Leipziger Internet Zeitung” published an essay in two parts by Ralf Julke, on December 10 and 14, 2020. Julke expresses his fascination with this authentic and lively “Leipzig-Roman”. “Man kann es regelrecht riechen und fühlen und sich vorstellen, wie man mit Maurice am ersten Tag durch diese neue, völlig unbekannte Stadt spaziert”. (“You can smell and feel and imagine walking through this unknown city together with Maurice.”) He included an image of the Richardsons’ Leipzig address book entry in his article:



*Die Wohnung der Richardsons in der Mozartstraße 13.*

Quelle: SLUB, Historische Adressbücher

Also, he researched weather reports in the years 1890-92 – frozen rivers in winter, perfect for ice-skating, but no record cold temperatures. Against a background of gas lamps and horse carriages, Julke recognizes HHR’s character traits within three of her protagonists, and points out her familiarity with contemporary German authors and cultural modernity, be it in the field of philosophy (Nietzsche) or music (Wagner, especially the performance of “Die Walküre”). Especially in regard to gender roles, the novel is seen as completely modern.

<https://www.l-iz.de/bildung/buecher/2020/12/Maurice-Guest-Der-atmosphaerische-Leipzig-Roman-von-Henry-Handel-Richardson-von-1908-jetzt-in-einer-neuen-Uebersetzung-363385>

<https://www.l-iz.de/bildung/buecher/2020/12/Maurice-Guest-Band-2-Das-Scheitern-des-Maurice-Guest-an-seinen-eigenen-Vorstellungen-von-%E2%80%9ELiebe%E2%80%9C-364028>

In a podcast broadcast by several radio stations (SWR2 Literatur, 7 minutes, MDR Kultur, 4’23 minutes, 13. 1. 2021), the literary critic Tino Dallmann expresses his disbelief at this vivid novel having been forgotten in Germany. For him, this edition is both a convincing psychological character study, as well as a genre picture of its time. Stefan Welz is interviewed, and reflects on the modernity of the novel – its expressiveness underlining the emotional states of the protagonists. For Dallmann, the novel is a time capsule – the music tradition, the debates, the every-day thoughts – but equally, he acknowledges that there is a familiar, contemporary connection to our present world in the portrayal of strong, complex figures whose love tilts into a toxic relationship.

The ultimate accolade was granted by Andreas Platthaus, head of the literature and literary life departments of one of Germany’s leading newspapers, the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, in a central review (December 17, 2020, No. 294, p. 12; links in [www.perlentaucher.de](http://www.perlentaucher.de) and [www.buecher.de](http://www.buecher.de)), which also displays a photo showing skaters in Johannapark in 1890 (Platthaus raises the question whether the author might have been captured on the photograph).



He declines to call *Maurice Guest* a Leipzig novel. Instead, he feels it is a caustic love story with breathtaking psychological consequences, set against a music-historical background. He warns the reader of the emotional abyss caused by the book’s process of disillusionment that unfolds in a musical fin-de-siècle world. The beauty of the language, the empathy with self-inflicted love misfortune, the knowledge of the thin ice of our existence all culminate to form Platthaus’ final conclusion: that *Maurice Guest* is a grand novel (with comparisons drawn to Proust) that will remain within the reader’s mind long after finishing it.



## 9. Misery from cover to cover? – one reader's view

By Graeme Charles

In our December 2020 newsletter we were asked “how do you find the experience of reading HHR's work? Is it a matter of “misery from cover to cover”?

I know there are many other readers of our newsletter much better qualified than me to answer this question, but here goes. In thinking about it and trying to respond I will confine myself to four of HHR's works: *Maurice Guest*, *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony*, and *Two Tales of Old Strasbourg*.



*Graeme Charles*

Misery is a strong word defined as “a state of feeling great discomfort or distress. A state of extreme unhappiness.” Therefore I’m not sure that “misery from cover to cover” is a fair description of these stories. Yes, they are all tragic, sombre tales, and certainly no one could describe them as being “joyful or uplifting from cover to cover.” I am more inclined to describe these three as “tragic stories”, as “gloomy” or perhaps “sombre from cover to cover”. When it comes to *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony*, the best description I have read is one attributed to an unnamed English critic writing in the 1970's who described it as “one of the great inexorable books of the world.” In his use of inexorable, I imagine words such as “unyielding” or “relentless” might have been just as appropriate.

I suspect that the four stories I have chosen to focus on here are the sort of stories with sombre themes, that HHR was always going to write, once she got started.

Axel Clark in his *Henry Handel Richardson: Fiction in the Making* published in 1990, said, referring to her early attempts at writing: “there were also plenty of signs that she retained her childhood inclination to dwell on the dark spots, and that as a result she had developed an eye for unpleasant telling details.....” Furthermore he said: “while she wrote, she might have sensed that she was discovering the kind of fiction best suited to her class and interests.” And so it proved to be I think, but I wonder what others think. And even if they do represent “misery from cover to cover,” which no doubt they do to some readers, is that in itself a problem? Over to you, whoever, wherever you are.

## 10. HHR's Queenscliff home for sale – 26 Mercer Street

HHR Society member, Pam Baker is lucky enough to live in the street where HHR once lived. Pam recently noticed that the house was for sale and sent us this photo, kindly taken by her husband, Ian Baker. You can go onto the website of the estate agent (Campbell and Potts) and get an inside view of the house as it is now.



*Pam Baker at the Mercer Street house*



*Article from the February issue of Rip Rumour,  
Queenscliff*

## 11. Susan and Sebastian's baby



Those members who met Susan and Sebastian either in Germany, or on their trip to Australia will be pleased to hear that their daughter, Hilda Elisabeth Fink was born on January 29<sup>th</sup> and all are well. In Sebastian's words, 'her second name is after my grandmother and her first name was inspired by the doctor at the pregnancy screening. As she watched the baby kicking and turning all the time, the doctor said she was a *wilde Hilde*, which is a saying for a wild girl in Germany.'

Best wishes to Susan, Sebastian and Hilda from the HHR Society.

## 12. Membership

If you would like to join the HHR Society or you seek to renew your membership, please pay \$20 via direct deposit to our bank account.

**BSB: 803070 Account No: 77605**

Be sure to identify yourself by name when you make the payment.

If you'd like to become a member for the first time you need to fill out a membership application. You can find a membership application form on the website:

[www.henryhandelrichardsonsociety.org.au](http://www.henryhandelrichardsonsociety.org.au)

Or you can email the membership secretary: [helen.macrae@bigpond.com](mailto:helen.macrae@bigpond.com) She'll send a form to your email address. Any questions about membership call Helen on 0401 901 558