

Glimpses of Geelong's Past

Exhibition Guide



At

The Geelong Club

74 Brougham Street, Geelong

**October 9 to 11, 2026
and
October 16 to 18, 2026**

Free Admission: Donations are welcome.

Note:

The material presented in this exhibition reflects the perspectives of the non-indigenous settlers and residents who created the surviving historical record. We acknowledge the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners of this Country and recognise that Indigenous histories and cultural knowledge should be presented by and in partnership with Aboriginal communities.

Glimpses of Geelong's Past Exhibition

Photographs, personal objects, and names on Honour Boards tell us much about people who have left their mark on Geelong's society, from the humble to the famous. Artefacts show the objects they valued and cherished.

Our Exhibition displays, through personal, family, and Geelong Historical Society archives, objects that reflect the fashions they chose, society's trends, and the technology available. We can learn about their work, homes, roles in the family and participation in the community.

In July 2026, the Geelong Club and the Geelong Historical Society entered into a partnership to promote Geelong's history. This Exhibition is the first outcome of our partnership.

Welcome to the Geelong Club

The Club was founded in 1859 and has met in many venues. For various reasons, the Club fell into dormancy until Edward Harewood Lascelles resumed operations in 1881. Since that time, the Club has operated continuously.

Located in Mack's Hotel just next door, the club decided in 1881 that it was time to have its own establishment, and it acquired land here on Brougham Street. You can view the financial documents and original plans in this exhibition. The rest is HISTORY!

Throughout the Club's history, its members have come from different occupations. Like Lascelles, many were involved in Geelong's commerce and industry. Many members also came from the political classes at local, state, and national levels of government. Pastoralists from the Western district also appear in the Club's membership. The Geelong

Club has been a social microcosm of Geelong's society. The Club's building and its features remind us of times when people with power and influence could mingle and share their dreams for Geelong's prosperous future.

The Honour Boards have captured the names of people who have participated in the Club, going back to 1859. They speak about the commitment those people have made. Some are remembered for their service and sacrifice to our nation during war, service to the Club's



E. H. LASCELLES

administration, and participation in Club activities. Each person has their own story and a legacy.

Founded in 1944, the Geelong Historical Society has collected important objects that tell Geelong's past. These objects, together with its quarterly *Investigator* magazine and monthly talks, bring Geelong's past to life. In this Exhibition, we offer visitors and Geelong residents the opportunity to explore the building, its contents, and important artefacts from our City's past.

Exhibition Format

The Geelong Club building is an exhibition in its own right. As you access the building on both the ground and first floors, you will view the many items of historic furniture, paintings, photographs and objects that furnish this historic building. A tour through the Geelong Club is like stepping back in time. It is a voyage of discovery where the past comes to life.

On the first floor, some of Geelong Historical Society's artefacts are on display. They blend comfortably with the historic surroundings, alongside Geelong Club furniture, pictures and paintings.

A range of artefacts, donated by the Geelong public since 1944, are on exhibition for the first time since that year. Arranged by theme, the objects offer glimpses of the past: clothing worn from cradle to grave, and artefacts for communication and entertainment. Pictures and maps from the past show how much we have evolved.

Lectures

On two Fridays at 11 am, we have guest speakers in the ground floor front room.

Friday October 9 – Dr Norman Houghton will speak about the History of the Geelong Club.

Friday, October 16 – Dr David Rowe will speak about a relevant topic associated with the Exhibition.

After the speakers, you can buy lunch at the Geelong Club's Café Felix.



Walk through History
Welcome to our Exhibition.

Ground Floor– The Geelong Club

Built in 1889, the Geelong Club building exemplifies Queen Anne architecture. Designed by respected Ballarat architect Charles Figgis and built by the famous Geelong firm of J.C. Taylor, the building now enjoys Victorian Heritage protection.

Through two large, welcoming doors, you are enveloped in its warm old-world charm and inviting features. Be transported to another century, when the horse dominated road transport, and wood fed its open fireplaces, warming its occupants. Surrounded by ornate timber features, members relaxed in the luxurious décor.

Self-Guided Tour of the Club's rooms

Travel through downstairs corridors and rooms and view wall-mounted and standing objects such as honour boards, trophies, pictures, plans, sketches, photographs, and memorabilia from another age in Geelong's past. Marvel as you enter the Turner Billiard Room on your way to the 19th-century heritage-listed Member's bathroom, then return via the tranquil 'hidden garden'. You will observe our walls at both levels covered with bookshelves. They are the silent witnesses of our past, and their stories are ready to be unlocked by the inquisitive eye. What interesting stories could they tell?

Follow the direction arrows to navigate through the building.



Entry

The first spacious room on your right is where Victorian Premier Sir Henry Bolte and Australia's 16th Governor-General, Lord Richard Casey, sat to view Geelong's waterfront. Little has changed apart from a large reverse-image painting by Harold Freedman. He used it as part of his 50-metre mosaic in the Government State Offices on Little Malop Street.

Through the stained-glass doorway and turn right

Through the bespoke stained-glass interior entry doors, you arrive at the foot of the stairs. Turn right here to enter the ground floor of the Club.

Honour Boards grace the walls. One tells us about those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation and Empire. Others inform us about the many Presidents who devoted personal time to advance the Club. Many presidents were distinguished Geelong community leaders.

Furniture

Historic, period furniture, including a sideboard buffet and ornate hall stand. The Grandfather Clock was ubiquitous in wealthy houses. Analogue, wind-up clocks chiming the hour tell the 'mechanical' time before the digital age.

Pictures, Plans, Paintings and documents

As you make your way through the corridor, take time to examine the variety of framed messages on the walls.

- Corio Bay images speak to the bay's importance for communication and the import and export of produce.
- Eastern Beach's sea baths highlighted aquatic recreation, even as open swimming was discouraged in public.
- Geelong Club is presented almost as it was when it was new in 1889.
- At the end of the passage, you will see the original plans for the Geelong Club are displayed.

The door to the right is Lascelles' Bar.

You can buy refreshments here or continue on. This comfortable lounge is the centre meeting area.

- Many paintings and photographs that show scenes of Geelong's past.
- A stag's head (not de rigueur today), wearing the Club necktie, gazes at us above the fireplace.

The door straight ahead is the G.M. Turner Billiard Room.

This amazing room is architecturally unique and takes us back in time.

Through the door to the right is the Heritage Gentlemen's bathroom.

Once a very modern facility, its interior shows its age. No changes are possible; this is a heritage-listed building. After the ALL CLEAR, venture in.

Return to Lascelles' Bar

Follow the arrows and enter the Hidden Garden
This tranquil green space adds serenity to the inner city.

**To the right is the wonderful
Garden worthy of a quick visit.**



Return to the Foyer and climb the stairs to the First Floor

First Floor – Geelong Historical Society Exhibition

First Floor - three upstairs rooms and balcony



Geelong Historical Society was formed on February 22, 1944, with the opening of the *Historical Exhibition*. The Society's first *Historical Exhibition* was its last. Many Society objects were donated to the Geelong Heritage Centre and can be viewed there. Now, eighty-two years on, we share a few selected items from our collection with the public.

THEME	THEME
Clothing Communication Employment and Transport	Household Goods Notable Geelong Residents Photographs, Pictures & Maps

Labels and descriptions are attached to every listed Exhibit item.

Names of many donors are unknown.

Clothing

Baby's dress

Health Centre Noticeboard and poster

Black mourning ensemble, skirt and hat

Black skirt and top hat

Girl's dress and petticoat

Pre-1905 mourning dress and cape

Wedding dresses

Wedding dress and bridesmaid dress

First Floor Landing

Communication

Argus Newspaper bound copy January - March 1889 & April to June 1889

Argus Newspaper bound copy October to December 1920

Poster William Jackson Thomas – first telephone in Victoria

Stromberg-Carlson Mantle Valve radio (1936)

Portable Writing Desk (c. 1850)

Healing His Master's Voice valve radio (1946)

Underwood typewriter

CO8 Candlestick telephone, pre 1912

Large front room



PROUDLY SUPPORTING OUR LOCAL HISTORY

Fagg's Mitre 10 is proud to
support the
Geelong Historical Society Exhibition,
celebrating the people,
places and stories that have helped
shape our local community.

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1-9 Barwon Tce
Ph: 5221 2899

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print.
design

Color Advertisement

Employment and Transport

Small front room

Corio Abattoir – 1920s

Steam engine on Railway Pier (Cunningham Pier)

Goods being loaded on Railway Pier's electric conveyor

Wool bales being exported from Strachan, Bostock & Co. Wool Stores

Meat Freezing works at Corio Quay

Lascelles' Wharf construction

Opening of the Hopetoun Channel

Members of the Royal Garter present and grant to the Geelong Harbour Trust a symbol of an anchor through a naval crown

William Fagg's store on the corner of Moorabool and Barwon Terrace c 1880

Fagg Brothers store decorated for Queen Elizabeth II's visit to Geelong in 1954

Household Goods

Large front room

Bedspread 1879

Cane Cradle

Child welfare poster

Hand crocheted tablecloth

Nursery years photograph frame

Oil lamp funnel with brass base and frosted glass shade

School Photograph

Silver teapot – donated to Buchans by Drysdale church 1883

Tablecloth – linen and handmade crocheted lace

Weights for balance scales

Vintage Art Deco "Diana" figurine table lamp

1790 dinner set donated by the Rhind/Spence family

Trait lemonade barrel



Notable Geelong Residents

Captain Foster Fyans' Chair

Captain Foster Fyans' portable desk

Stovepipe hat like that worn by Fyans

Information board 1

Information board 2

Book – Memoirs of Captain Foster Fyans

Mayor's Chair South Barwon – 20th Century

The E.C. DeGaris Shield for Geelong Women's Debating Association 1936

Library

Photographs, Pictures & Maps

Eastern Beach construction

Eastern Beach

Children and adults bathing at Eastern Beach c. 1900

Port of Geelong from Eastern Beach c. 1850

Port of Geelong from Western Beach c. 1850

Freemans' certificate

HMS Barwon 1946

Parish of Barrabool Property Owners Map

Smythe's 1838 plan of the town of Geelong

Opening of Federal Parliament picture presented to the Geelong Mechanics Institute Incorporated (1907)

A picture board of the 1904 to 1907 Borough Council of Newtown and Chilwell presented by Cr. H. Bloomfield – Mayor

Choir collage 1903

A slide show of Geelong scenes is played continuously on the TV.

Small front room



Our Special Display Items – Geelong Heritage Centre

Geelong Regional Library Open Tuesday to Friday 10 am to 4 pm

Some items are too precious and too valuable to transport to our Exhibition, so part of the Geelong Historical Society's collection is housed at the Geelong Heritage Centre.

You can view two sets of items, plus many others, at the Heritage Centre. Entry is free. It is on Level 3 of the Geelong Regional Library on Little Malop Street.

- **1790 2 x china teacups, saucer, teapot etc. – Donors – Rhind/Spence Family**

Images of Tea set



- **Joseph H Scammell (*ship – sank 1891*) 19th Century French Crystal Bowl and ruby cranberry enamelled glass tumbler**



Crystal Bowl



Joseph H Scammell, sank at Point Danger in 1891



Tumbler

Acknowledgements

The Geelong Club and Geelong Historical Society thank many people for their assistance in mounting our Exhibition.

Geelong Historical Society Inc

Exhibition

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Denise Feldman

Coral Turner

Julia Thompson

Freda Craddock

Pauline Fairfoot

and

General Committee

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Mark Thomas (Vice President)

Tony Cust (Treasurer)

Peter Fogarty

Lana Capon

Harry Roberts (President)

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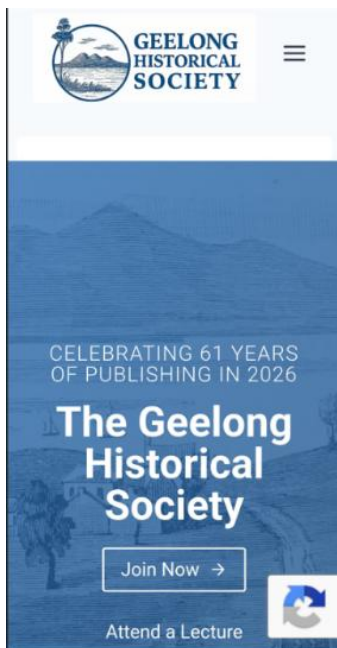
The Geelong Club

Harry Roberts

President

Geelong Historical Society Inc

Become a member of Geelong Historical Society



View our award-winning website

<https://www.geelonghistoricalsociety.org.au>

Click on the **Join Now** link

Join us and help promote stories of Geelong's past. Our modest annual membership fee of **\$40** entitles you to receive four *Investigator* magazines, access to our members' section of the award-winning Society website and monthly updates on events.