



# Newsletter Friends of St Kilda Cemetery Inc

January 2020

## In This Issue

- Call for Newsletter Contributions, 1
- Committee News, 2
- Featured articles, Sir George Steward 2; Joseph Davies 4
- Recent news, 6
- Future Tours & Events, 6

**FIND US ON  
FACEBOOK:**



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Friends of St Kilda  
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**Reg No. A0038728J  
ABN: 69 718 923 799**

**SUMMER HAS ARRIVED...Happy New Year  
to all members**

**Volunteers needed...**

**COME AND HELP THE FRIENDS BE A WONDERFUL  
HISTORICAL GROUP.**



**Printing of newsletter**



Printed copies of our newsletters are provided courtesy of SCOTSBURN  
NURSERIES

[www.scotsburn.biz](http://www.scotsburn.biz)

The Friends thank Scotsburn. Their kind assistance is most appreciated.

**Contributions to our newsletter are  
welcomed. Email for further information  
to info@foskc.org**

COMMITTEE FOR 2019-2020

Elizabeth Hore,  
President (RESIGNED  
NOVEMBER 2019)

Rob Douglas, Treasurer

Gabriel Hermes,  
Secretary

Claire Barton, Ordinary  
Committee Member



FACEBOOK

Our Facebook page *Residents and Friends of St Kilda Cemetery* has become very popular. As well as news about FOSKFC, other items of interest and news from other Cemetery Friends Groups, both here in Australia and also in UK are included, as well as shared pages providing details of WW1 veterans' bios and graves, newspaper articles and so much more. We have special featured posts from time to time with bios and photos of historic persons buried at St Kilda Cemetery and elsewhere on our born this day/died this day posts.

We can't put everything into a newsletter, but try to include up to date news and events on our Facebook page on a daily basis.

Why not Follow us on Facebook and see for yourself

## Committee News

In November Elizabeth Hore resigned for personal reasons as President and Committee Member of Friends of St Kilda Cemetery. She had been working for the Friends for over 14 years both on committee and leading tours in the Cemetery and writing and editing this newsletter over many years.

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## Featured Articles

### SIR GEORGE CHARLES THOMAS STEWARD

1865 -1920

**Public Servant, Military Man and Chief Commissioner of Police**

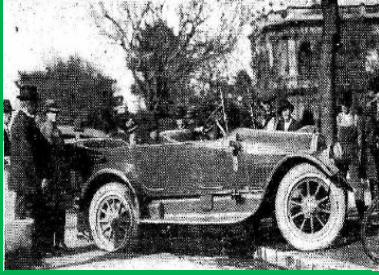
**“Pickle the Spy”**

**Buried 13 May 1920**

**OD D 96A**



Sir George Charles Thomas Steward's life makes a wonderful story of dedicated public service and intrigue. Born on 18 March 1865 at St George in East London, son of George Steward, labourer, and his wife Susannah, née Barnes, in July 1880 he joined the London Post Office as night messenger and was a sorter of foreign parcels, 1st class, by 1890. A sculler and an amateur middleweight boxer, he was living at Stepney when he married at the parish church Edith Jermyn, a fishmonger's daughter, on 27 December 1885. They came to Tasmania in 1892, but the marriage was unhappy and in 1894 Edith returned to London with their two sons. Steward had then a brilliant career in the colony's civil service. A clerk in the Railway Department (1892), chief clerk and accountant in the Education Department (1893), secretary to the premier and clerk of the Executive Council (1894), he was under-secretary for Tasmania in 1896. He also held additional offices, including chief inspector of explosives and supervisor of totalizers, and was briefly town clerk of Hobart (1897).



Steward's car at site of accident St Kilda Road

Photo: Weekly Times Saturday 15 May 1920, page 40



Police contingent at Steward's funeral  
Photo: Weekly Times, Saturday 22 May 1920, page 34

#### Steward Sources:

Chris Cunneen, 'Steward, Sir George Charles Thomas (1865-1920)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/steward-sir-george-charles-thomas-8657/text15137>

The Argus 15 May 1920

Herald, 13 May 1920

Weekly Times 15 May 1920, 22 May 1920

In January 1901 Steward transferred to the Commonwealth Department of External Affairs, expecting to be its head; but when Alfred Deakin secured that billet for Atlee Hunt, Steward became chief clerk. In January 1902 he conveyed to Brisbane customs officers Barton's secret instructions for administering the immigration dictation test. Uneasy working under Hunt, in December 1902 Steward became official secretary to the governor-general, Lord Tennyson, and secretary of the Executive Council. Except for six weeks in 1910, when he was Victorian land tax commissioner, for seventeen years Steward was right-hand man to five governors-general, responsible for official correspondence, including coded dispatches, and official expenditure. He was appointed C.M.G. (1909) and K.B.E. (1918).

His success however did not improve his reputation and he was criticised by some as having 'no knack of getting men to work for him otherwise than by driving them' and being 'too big for his boots', but his relations remained good with the majority of governors-general. Although Sir Ronald Munro Ferguson described him as an 'exceedingly jealous and domineering character', he also found him 'reliable and very efficient', particularly in the first weeks of World War I when the official secretary was the conduit for secret communications between Australia and Britain. Steward was described as distinguished, with a 'military bearing, his moustache rampant a la Emperor Wilhelm, and his air of hauteur', but he was as 'brusque and decisive in manner as in mind'. An enthusiastic citizen soldier, Steward claimed to have joined the Royal Engineers in 1882 and to have been a 'special duty officer'. Commissioned lieutenant, Tasmanian Auxiliary Forces, in March 1898, he had raised and commanded the Tasmanian Mounted Infantry and was captain from March 1900. He joined the 10th Australian Light Horse in 1905; as a major (1908-12), he served in the Australian Intelligence Corps. In 1915-19 he commanded the 50th Infantry (St Kilda) Regiment (as honorary lieutenant-colonel from 1917).

In 1919 Steward was appointed to succeed Sainsbury as Commissioner of Police (Vic). At the time of his appointment he had no police experience to guide him, however, he realised that apart from training in drill, the recruits should be given some elementary instructions in police duties, and he may be said to have laid the foundation of the present course of recruit training. Championing better working conditions for his men, he was popular with the force and an efficient administrator, but his health was overtaxed by his new post. He held the position of Chief Commissioner for 15 months.

More shadowy was his other role. In 1916 Steward founded and headed the Counter Espionage Bureau, Australia's first secret service, whose agents pursued International Workers of the World and Sinn Fein activists. Munro Ferguson was as unenthusiastic about these duties of his secretary (whom he dubbed 'Pickle the Spy') and the unsavoury characters who consequently lurked about Government House as he was with the secret political work which Steward sometimes performed for Prime Minister Hughes.

An 'adept' water-colourist and a temperance advocate, Steward enjoyed working on his farm at Cranbourne. He died of heart disease while driving his Cadillac in St Kilda Road on 11 May 1920 and was buried in St Kilda cemetery 'amid

manifestations of widespread mourning'. The funeral departed from his late residence, 'Raith' Alma Road, St. Kilda to the cemetery with mounted police and a large contingent of police on foot leading the way. Lady Steward was chief mourner.

He had divorced Edith in 1907 and was survived by their sons, and by his wife Anne Lucas Synnot whom he had married in Holy Trinity Church, East Melbourne, on 20 February 1908. His estate was sworn for probate at £19,071.

## **Joseph Davies 1810-1885**

**Buried 14 July 1885**

**IND C 125**

**Contributed by Kay Middlemiss, Qld**

With thanks and appreciation to Kay Middlemiss, Qld who kindly provided us with the information about the Davies family.

GRAVE INSCRIPTION  
TO THE SACRED MEMORY  
OF MARY  
THE BELOVED WIFE OF  
JOSEPH DAVIES  
LATE OF ONEHUNGA NZ  
AND FORMERLY OF THE  
CITY OF LONDON  
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE  
JULY 25 1871 AGED 60  
YEARS  
JOSEPH DAVIES WHO  
DIED AT SOUTH YARRA  
JULY 14 1885 AGED 75  
YEARS  
ALSO THEIR DAUGHTER  
MARY BORN IN LONDON  
10 NOVEMBER 1852  
DIED AT CAULFIELD 23  
DECEMBER 1895 AGED 43  
YEARS.



Joseph was born to parents Joseph Davies, a shoe and boot manufacturer of High Street Shrewsbury, Shropshire England and Mary Tabor.

He was one of six children who were all baptised at the Swan Hill Independent church of Shrewsbury. Only Joseph and his brother Charles left Shrewsbury and ventured to London, studying to improve their chances of becoming established in their respective fields

Joseph worked in London in 1830 employed by a well-known Chemist Mr John Bickerstaff and later Mr Edward Eamus at Aldgate Within London. It is during this time Joseph attends Quaker meeting houses where he met widow Mary Batger with three small boys Thomas, William and John, marrying Mary in 1843. Another three children were born Ellen, Mary and Joseph Tabor Davies in London.

By 1851 the chemist store now owned by Joseph Davies had expanded and was employing 12 men and was sold as a thriving business. The blended family of six children soon left London to sail to Auckland by 1855. New Zealand was home



Photo: Courtesy of Kay Middlemiss

Sources from Kay Middlemiss:  
Auckland Council Library,  
Whangarei District Council  
Library for Davies History,  
Onehunga History Group  
and Terry Sutcliffe for  
Chemist information &  
medical Hall Onehunga  
photos, Family Search and  
Ancestry websites and my  
own family history archives.

for the next 11 years. After a short time at Whangarei, the family then settled in Onehunga, Auckland. This town was known to be secure as one of four Fencible settlements. Retired soldiers left England and enlisted in exchange for land to build a house and protect newly arrived settlers. In 1855 Joseph Davies established a chemist store on the corner of Queen Street, Onehunga. A son Joseph Tabor Davies 1845-1864 enlisted to serve in the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment of the Waikato militia and unfortunately drowned while serving in New Zealand.

Joseph's brother Charles Davies, by this time in history, was a qualified solicitor and his services were needed to continue with land acquisitions having Maori chiefs sign papers forfeiting their rights and continuing the conditions of a North Island Treaty that had begun years earlier. The two Shrewsbury brothers lived on the North Island of New Zealand for the next 10 years. Charles took his young family to Melbourne, Victoria, but Joseph Davies stayed on in New Zealand eventually selling his shop in Onehunga to a Mr Henry Thomas Watts, to continue trade in what was known as the Onehunga Medical Hall. Joseph's brother Charles died suddenly in 1869, East Melbourne, leaving a widow Margaret, with 13 children. This may have been the reason for Joseph and his family to leave New Zealand.

It is in 1871, when the death of Joseph's wife Mary is recorded, the family were living in Caulfield and later South Yarra. Two spinster daughters Mary and Ellen were the major beneficiaries of Joseph's will, as were his three stepsons who by this time have travelled far and wide, William Batger went to Sandhurst, Victoria to live, Thomas Batger to Fremantle Western Australia and John Batger lived out his days in Mount Eden, New Zealand. All gentlemen were greatly admired for their contributions to the towns they lived in. The last known address for Joseph Davies was 114 Toorak Road, South Yarra, in Victoria, Australia. A daughter Ellen Davies returned to New Zealand to live at 9 Bourne Street, Mount Eden with her step-brother John Batger and family. Ellen is buried in Purewa Cemetery in 1933 along with two nephews Arthur and John.

Joseph Davies died in 1885 and ten years later his daughter Mary Davies, late of Caulfield was deceased. St Kilda Cemetery is the final resting place of a remarkable Davies family.

Joseph my Great Great Uncle and his brother Charles my Great Great Grandfather journeyed far away from all that they knew in England to make a difference, not only in their lives, but in the lives of others, one by dispensing medical help to the sick and the other to help administer legislated changes to the New Zealand colony.

Religion featured greatly in the Davies brothers lives and they stayed true to their non-conformist beliefs from an early age in Shrewsbury, to then move away from home to study in London and as adults impart knowledge and skills overseas. New Zealand was where their fortunes were realised. Joseph could at last retire in Victoria, Australia as a Gentleman of means. Through tragedy and triumphs, adversity and celebration, they navigated an amazing history and embraced wonderful opportunities to leave a lasting influence for future generations to admire and which to be immensely proud.

### Private Group Tours for 2020

We hope to do some tours for private groups in 2020. If your group is interested, please email [info@foskc.org](mailto:info@foskc.org) or tel 03 9529 7442 for more details. We charge \$10 per head for group tours and if possible, an afternoon/morning tea will be provided.

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ON OUR TOURS IN 2020. WON'T YOU COME AND JOIN US!**

Become a member of the Friends...

**PLEASE COME AND JOIN US...**

Membership costs \$15, includes free tours throughout the year and newsletter. Email [info@foskc.org](mailto:info@foskc.org) for a membership form.



St Kilda Cemetery is located on the corner of Dandenong Road and Hotham Street, ST KILDA EAST

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## Recent /news/tour/events highlights

Elizabeth Hore attended the Association of Significant Cemeteries in Europe Conference in Ghent, Belgium in October 2019. This was a wonderful collegiate event with over 150 attendees from UK, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, Greece, Italy, Slovenia and other European countries, all of whom love cemeteries. The theme of the conference was Heritage Cemeteries in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Use, reuse and shared use, a very relevant topic for all cemeteries in Victoria and Australia. It was wonderful opportunity to hear and share experiences with like-minded people.

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## Future Tours and events

**PLEASE NOTE: The new toilets in cemetery are near front gate and now operational for future tours. Please ask tour leader for the code to open door.**

### **FUTURE TOURS AND EVENTS FOR 2020:**

**Please note that tours for 2020 are still in the planning process.**

**PLEASE FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK OR LOOK AT OUR WEBSITE FOR NEWS OF ALL FUTURE TOURS AND EVENTS**

**Tour Cost \$15; members free. Afternoon tea included. Bookings: email preferred [info@foskc.org](mailto:info@foskc.org) or Tel 03 9529 7442.**

**All our tours leave from the main entrance to the cemetery in Dandenong Road. Please wear suitable clothing and footwear as we go all weathers, rain, hail or shine.**

**AND FINALLY,**

**SOMETHING FOR THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS IF YOU ARE VISITING SYDNEY ... DON'T FORGET ...if you are visiting Sydney this summer that there is a wonderful FREE exhibition at the State Library of New South Wales, Sydney**

**DEAD CENTRAL**

**Thousands of people travel through Central Station every day, but how many know what once lay beneath it? Dead Central will take you on a journey back to 19th century Sydney, to rediscover a place you thought you knew and the Devonshire Street Cemetery.**

<https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/exhibitions/dead-central>