

CEMETERY CONVERSATIONS

The Newsletter of the Friends of St Kilda Cemetery Inc

Issue 12

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THE DOWSE CHILDREN

Shirley Knight, Wilma Warren and Bruce Dowse have recently joined 'The Friends'. Their father, Mr. F.R. Dowse, became Curator of the Cemetery in 1930, and they spent their childhood living firstly in the house adjoining 'The Lodge' before moving into 'The Lodge' where they lived until 1943.

Shirley Knight (nee Dowse) of Tahunanui, Nelson, New Zealand, has sent 'The Friends' a detailed account of her life at that time, and has included photographs of the family, the Cemetery and staff.

Shirley recalls a wonderful childhood in an unusual setting which held few fears for the Dowse children who rather saw it as a magical place with magnificent gardens.

See next issue of "Cemetery Conversations" for more photographs and Shirley's recollections.



Shirley Dowse outside her St Kilda cemetery home

SCHOOLS' TOURS

This year 'The Friends' has expanded into the local community with our 'ART, ANCESTORS AND ANTICS' tour program offered to local primary schools, and which was made possible by means of a grant from the City of Phillip through its Cultural Development Fund. Meyer Eidelson has conducted these very successful and fun tours which commenced in December, 2002. Participating in the program, so far, have been St Kilda Park Primary, Elwood Primary, Port Melbourne Primary, Albert Park Primary and the Council Holiday Program. Any schools wishing to participate in this popular program should contact 'The Friends'.

Friends of St Kilda Cemetery

Office Bearers Contacts

President	Freda Erlich
Vice President	Kay Rowan
Treasurer	John Hulskamp
Secretary	Geoff Austin
Committee Member	Pearl Donald
Committee Member	John Hawker
Committee Member	Sherryn Danaher

www.vicnet.net.au/~foskc/ www.foskc.org.au

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Telephone Contact 9527 2387 or 9531 6832



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FRIENDS' RECORD-BREAKING TOURS

THE FRIENDS ARE THRILLED WITH THE POPULARITY AND RECORD-BREAKING NUMBERS IN ATTENDANCE ON OUR TOURS THIS YEAR.

THIS YEAR'S PROGRAM COMMENCED IN FEBRUARY WITH OUR 'HISTORY AND MYSTERY TOUR'. THIS TOUR WAS ADVERTISED AS A TRANQUIL ALTERNATIVE TO THE HULLABALOO OF THE ST KILDA FESTIVAL HELD ON THAT DAY. THIS MAY HAVE PROVED MISLEADING ADVERTISING, AS 140 PEOPLE CHOSE TO JOIN US ON THIS TOUR. THANKS TO GEOFF AUSTIN, WHOSE RADIO PRESENTATIONS PRIOR TO THIS TOUR MAY HAVE PLAYED A LARGE PART.

IN MARCH, 60 ATTENDED THE ALWAYS POPULAR, 'FULL MOON TOUR'. CONSEQUENTLY WE WILL PRESENT ANOTHER FULL MOON TOUR LATER THIS YEAR. WE WERE TREATED WITH TREASURED MEMORIES FROM BRUCE DOWSE AND GUS ALLEN, WHO LIVED IN THE CEMETERY AS CHILDREN.

A SECOND MARCH TOUR WAS CONDUCTED BY JOHN HULSKAMP TO COINCIDE WITH THE 2003 SENIORS' FESTIVAL ON TUESDAY 18TH. 30 SENIORS ENJOYED THIS OCCASION.

IN APRIL, AS PART OF THE ST. KILDA HERITAGE DAY CELEBRATIONS, GEOFF AUSTIN LED 30 PEOPLE THROUGH THE CEMETERY ON THE 'SHIPWRECKS, SAILORS & THE SEA' TOUR. WE WERE PRIVILEGED TO HAVE A GROUP OF DIRECT DESCENDANTS OF THE 'GLEN HUNTLY' JOIN US ON THIS TOUR.

JOHN HAWKER'S SUCCESSFUL 'VON MUELLER AND HIS FRIENDS' TOUR ON 18TH MAY MARKED THIS YEAR'S 150 YEAR CELEBRATION OF THE MELBOURNE HERBARIUM.

THE 'NOTABLE WOMEN' TOUR, CONDUCTED BY KAY ROWAN IN JUNE, 'UNEARTHED MANY OF THE FASCINATING FEMALES BURIED IN THE CEMETERY. WE PLAN FURTHER 'NOTABLE WOMEN' TOURS WHICH WILL UNCOVER OTHERS.

IN ADDITION TO THESE SCHEDULED TOURS, THE FRIENDS ALSO UNDERTOOK TWO PRIVATE TOURS IN THE FIRST HALF OF THIS YEAR.

- GEOFF AUSTIN TOOK A GROUP OF ABOUT 30 DELEGATES OF THE 10TH AUSTRALASIAN CONGRESS ON GENEALOGY AND HERALDRY. GEOFF WAS CHALLENGED BY VOLUMES OF GENEALOGICAL QUESTIONS FROM PARTICIPANTS, MANY OF WHOM WERE FROM INTERSTATE AND HAD FAMILY CONNECTIONS WITH THE CEMETERY.
- A SECOND PRIVATE TOUR WAS CONDUCTED FOR THE NARRÉ WARREN FAMILY GROUP BY PEARL DONALD AND FREDERICK ERLICH.

A WELL-DESERVED THANK-YOU AND CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL WHOSE DEDICATION AND HARD WORK CONTRIBUTED TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR FIRST HALF YEAR'S TOURS.

MEMBERSHIP

We would like to thank the members of 'The Friends' for your continued support and understanding this financial year when, regrettably, due to rising costs, such as postage and public liability insurance, we had to increase the annual subscription to \$15.00. We are delighted to announce an increase in membership to a total of 84.

We remind you of the benefits of membership:

- A waiver, or reduction, in the cost of tours and activities.
- Copies of the newsletter "Cemeteries Conversations"
- The opportunity to participate in special events and activities only available to members.
- A say and involvement in the running of the organisation
- The knowledge that your contribution will assist the Friends in its objective of promoting the conservation and appreciation of the St Kilda Cemetery.

Book Review

by John Hawker

CONSERVING OUR CEMETERIES

Edited by Celestina Sagazio

National Trust of Australia (Victoria), 2003

4 Parliament Place, East Melbourne 3002

Cost: \$29.00 (incl. GST), plus \$4.00 post & packing

This book took a long time to publish but it was worth the wait! It is full of important practical advice on the conservation of cemetery structures, objects and landscapes. *Conserving Our Cemeteries* is based on the Australian Council of National Trust's *National Guidelines for the Conservation of Cemeteries* and published online at www.nsw.nationaltrust.org.au/cemsappb.html.

The publication arose from a seminar held by the National Trust on cemetery conservation and in response to the Trust's concern about the poor condition of many historic cemeteries. The Trust receives many requests from the public inquiring about cemetery conservation techniques and there was clearly a need for good and accurate information on cemetery conservation. This publication has been written by many leading experts in the fields of architecture, history, stone and metal work, conservation, botany and horticulture. *Conserving Our Cemeteries* includes the extensive practical knowledge of heritage practitioners, and techniques and advice from interstate and overseas.

Heritage groups have long recognised the historical significance of cemeteries and the need for ongoing conservation. Some of the threats include inappropriate maintenance practices, vandalism, and the effects of weathering, general decay, weeds and pests. *Conserving Our Cemeteries* provides information on how these threats can best be dealt with and repaired. There is information on the preparation of a Conservation Plan (which should ideally be prepared for all cemeteries), site recording, plant and landscape surveys, control of weeds and pests, monument repairs and cleaning including treatment of different materials, timber, stone and metal, and lettering. Advice is also provided on the conservation of buildings, structures, fences, gates, paths, drainage and plants. Each section is well illustrated with drawings and photographs, including before and after conservation works. In Appendix 1 there is a table which has been prepared to assist in the conservation of monuments. Problems are identified, reasons provided, and in the third column conservation solutions are given.

The publication includes an extensive list of references (3 pages) and is arranged under major headings, and some include website addresses. The Appendices includes a list of plants often found in cemeteries, examples of cemetery report cards and a list of useful contacts, internationally and Australia wide.

Conserving Our Cemeteries will be a valuable guide for grave owners, cemetery Trusts, heritage professionals, historical societies, cemetery Friends, and those with an interest in cemeteries. It is a complementary publication to *Cemeteries Our Heritage*, also edited by Celestina Sagazio and published by the National Trust in 1992. Both publications are highly recommended and are crucial in gaining a wider appreciation of the heritage value of cemeteries and what is necessary to ensure their conservation for future generations.

Annual General Meeting

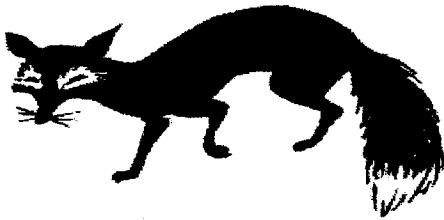
'The Friends' AGM will be held at the Port Phillip ECO House
near entrance to St.Kilda Botanic Gardens

Corner Blessington and Herbert Streets, St.Kilda

Sunday 7th September, 2003

at 2.30pm followed by

a fascinating slide presentation of Italian Cemeteries at 3.00pm



GRAVEYARD GUMSHOE

Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Renard. I am the unofficial Graveyard Gumshoe for the St. Kilda Cemetery, which is where I reside. I am privy to many happenings at the Cemetery. Some unkindly folk call me a scavenger but I prefer to be seen as a gleaner. However, I am known for always keeping my nose to the ground, my eyes bright and, of course, my tail bushy. So, through this column, I have been given the opportunity to report back on anything I see or smell, and which I think may be of interest to you. I also invite readers to feed me with interesting Cemetery tidbits - stories, snippets, scraps or snaps - my survival may depend on your contributions, or at best, they will provide a sumptuous feast. Enjoy your new column!!!

- I have discovered that there are over 22 grave sites in the Cemetery which can be classified as 'Kelly-related' - Ned that is. With renewed interest in the Kelly story, I suspect that a Kelly Cemetery Tour may be brewing in December.
- I observed Albert Jacka's WW1 ethereal presence once again, on the occasion of our March Full Moon Tour. Thanks to Keith Dudley.
- 'The Friends' and I were delighted to have Miss Nancy McHaffie and her sister, Mrs. Meg Davis, assist John Hawker in presenting our March 'von Mueller and His Friends' tour. Miss McHaffie and Mrs. Davis are descendants of Euphemia Henderson, who was engaged to be married to Baron von Mueller, and their family anecdotes added spice to this tour. Thank-you both for your valuable contribution.
- I was pleased to see that the grave of Police Commissioner, Sir George Steward, and who I've been told started ASIO, has been restored to its previous splendour. Thanks go to the Police Historical Society.
- 'COPP THIS' is a new series on community-based television CHANNEL 31, funded by the City of Port Phillip and local traders. It is produced and presented by well-known identity and local resident, TRACY HARVEY. The program looks at events, places & personalities in the municipality. Viewing times are Mondays 9.30pm and repeated Saturdays 10.30pm. Tracey was recently seen in the Cemetery asking lots of questions, and it seems she was so captivated by 'The Friends' that we will be featured on the show on Monday 10th November and then again on Saturday 15th November.
- Don't be surprised to see the Melbourne-born, New York-based actor Zoe Caldwell snooping around the Cemetery. I have it on good authority that, while in town, she may wish to visit to her Great Grandpa Hivon who rests here.

Regards from Renard