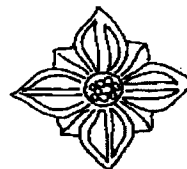

CEMETERY CONVERSATIONS



The Newsletter of the Friends of St Kilda Cemetery Inc

Issue 15

August 2004

News of the Friends

During 2004 the Committee has had discussions with The Necropolis, Springvale over plans to re-open the St Kilda Cemetery for further burials. A report on recent discussions is contained in this newsletter.

The Necropolis has also recently established a Heritage Committee comprising a number of members of the Cemetery Trust. We have recently held a very positive meeting with the Heritage Committee. It is pleasing that The Necropolis appreciates the heritage values to be found in the three cemeteries which it manages - Springvale, Melbourne General and St Kilda - and that it has established this Committee.

In an exciting development, we have learnt that the St Kilda Cemetery is proposed for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register. This would mean that the Cemetery was one of a handful which were considered to be of special significance to the State of Victoria. The Cemetery would also enjoy protection under the Victorian *Heritage Act*. More on this subject can be found in the newsletter.

Next year is looming as a very important anniversary in the history of the cemetery. It's the 150th anniversary of the opening. The Committee is already thinking of events to celebrate this significant milestone. Stay tuned for further details.

On a sadder note our wonderful newsletter editor, Sherryn Danaher has announced her retirement from this publication. Sherryn has put together the last six issues of "Cemetery Conversations". We thank Sherryn for her good humour and dedicated efforts in bringing the newsletter to you. We now seek the services of another budding editor. If you are interested in volunteering your time to assist with this task, please contact Geoff Austin on 9527 2387. Proficiency with a Personal Computer and access to email would be desirable. ■

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Friends will be held on Sunday 5 September 2004 at the Port Phillip Ecohouse, corner of Blessington and Herbert Streets, St Kilda commencing at 12.00 PM.

A light lunch will be provided for those attending the AGM. The AGM will conclude in time for interested members to travel to Box Hill Cemetery for Susan Johns' tour of this wonderful suburban burial ground.

If any members attending the AGM would like return transport to Box Hill from St Kilda, please contact Geoff Austin by Friday 3 September 2004 on 9527 2387. ■

Box Hill Tour

Sunday 5 September 2004 at 2.00 PM
Box Hill Cemetery Tour

Cyril P Callister is one of many notable people buried at Box Hill Cemetery. Who was he? Well, there is a fair chance that he has had some influence on your life.

Dating from 1873, Box Hill Cemetery is also the burial place of the poet C J Dennis, retailer Sidney Myer, businessman William Angliss, artist Joy Hester as well many early pioneers of Box Hill and surrounding areas.

This tour will be led by FOSKIC and Box Hill Historical Society member Susan Johns and leaves at 2.00 PM from the cemetery gates at 395 Middleborough Road, Box Hill (Melways 47 G10).

A small prize will be offered on the Box Hill tour to the first person who correctly identifies Cyril Callister's contribution to our national history.

To whet your appetite for the forthcoming tour, two significant features of Box Hill Cemetery have recently been included on the Victorian Heritage Register. They are the Columbarium and Sidney Myer Memorial.

The following is an extract from the entry in the Victorian Heritage Register for the Columbarium which was erected in 1929.

"The columbarium is historically significant as an early and unusual means of storing cremated human remains at a time when cremation remained a minority practice. It is believed to be the only example of its kind in Victoria. The columbarium is architecturally and aesthetically significant as a wonderfully august and refined example of the Byzantine style, and evokes the early Christian church. The building was designed to terminate vistas along narrow avenues of trees, and give the landscape a strong visual focus."



Box Hill Cemetery Columbarium

The entry in the Victorian Heritage Register for the Sidney Myer memorial reads:

"The Myer memorial is of aesthetic significance as an austere but elegant memorial with unusual integration of planting into the design. It has historical significance as one of only two memorials in Victoria designed by the eminent architect Edwin Lutyens. The memorial has social significance for its association with one of the greatest Australian businessmen and philanthropists of the twentieth century."

The Edwin Lutyens referred to above was one of the most significant English architects of the early twentieth century. Lutyens also designed the monument to his friend Nellie Melba, who is buried in the Old Lilydale Cemetery. ■

Tour Program

Our program of events for the remainder of 2004 is presented below. Unless otherwise indicated, tours of St Kilda Cemetery leave from the Dandenong Road entrance gates at 2.00 PM.

Sunday 3 October 2004 at 2.00 PM Marvellous Melbourne

Melbourne was a booming city in the late nineteenth century built upon the proceeds of gold mining and pastoral wealth. Many of those associated with the creation of "Marvellous Melbourne" are buried at St Kilda. This tour will be led by Dr Judith Buckrich, historian and author of books such as "Melbourne's Grand Boulevard - The story of St Kilda Road" and "The Long and Perilous Journey - A history of the Port of Melbourne".

Sunday 7 November 2004 at 2.00 PM Military tour

In the lead up to Remembrance Day, join Keith Dudley on this tour which will focus on the lives of various military people buried in St Kilda Cemetery.

Sunday 5 December 2004 at 2.00 PM Eureka and Gold

This tour coincides with 150th anniversary of the Eureka rebellion. The tour visits the graves of a number of people associated with the gold rushes in Victoria including some who were involved with the Eureka uprising at Ballarat such as Colonel Robert Rede (Resident Gold Commissioner) and Richard Ireland (defence Barrister for the Eureka rebels). ■

Works Update

Visitors may have noticed that works have begun in preparation for the reopening of St Kilda Cemetery for further interments. A number of improvements have been made to the cemetery entrance including the removal of the unused brick columbaria walls. The removal of the brick columbaria has enhanced views to the impressive Robb monument.

The Cemetery works have also resulted in the removal of a number of eucalypts which were planted in the 1970s. In hindsight, the planting of these trees was not well suited to the historic Cemetery. The shedding of branches posed a threat to the public, to cemetery monuments and the timber shelter.

The impressive Fir Tree will remain as a feature of the existing Michaelis lawn cemetery. The Fir Tree is probably better known as the Christmas Tree which was planted by Cemetery Friend, Gus Allen's family.

The Friends understand and supports the objectives of The Necropolis in its plans for the Cemetery namely:

- To improve the visual amenity of the Cemetery.
- To generate revenue for the purposes of ensuring the long term upkeep and maintenance of the Cemetery.

The Friends also appreciate the efforts to which The Necropolis has gone to ensure that the proposed works are in keeping with the historic 19th century character of the Cemetery.

A submission has been forwarded to The Necropolis making certain suggestions for landscaping works; plantings and for the treatment of the island in the centre of the Cemetery. The Necropolis proposes that the island will be essentially used for lawn burials, a treatment which is largely in keeping with the current character and appearance of this area. ■

Cemetery Accolade

A public notice appeared in the newspapers in July 2004 advising that the St Kilda Cemetery had been recommended for addition to the Victorian Heritage Register. If added to the Register, St Kilda would join a select group of cemeteries - including Melbourne General, Williamstown and Bendigo - which were considered to be of significance to the State of Victoria. Registration would also mean protection under the Victorian *Heritage Act*.

The reasons for St Kilda Cemetery's proposed inclusion on the Heritage Register are spelt out below. These details will be confirmed following the close of the period for public comment.

Provisional Statement of Significance:-

"St Kilda Cemetery, which opened on 9 June 1855, has historical significance as one of Victoria's oldest public cemeteries, and for its remarkable collection of monuments and memorials. The oldest human remains in the cemetery are the re-interred remains of three men from the fever ship Glen Huntly, which were first buried at Point Ormond (Elwood) in April 1840.

St Kilda Cemetery is of historical and aesthetic significance for its rich and remarkable collection of monuments dating from the 1850s onwards, which demonstrate changing customs and attitudes associated with the commemoration of death. Many monuments are notable for their fine or unusual design. The collection charts the lives and deaths of many ordinary as well as prominent Victorians. The large number of graves to notable Victorians reflects the development of the south-eastern suburbs as a relatively prosperous area in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

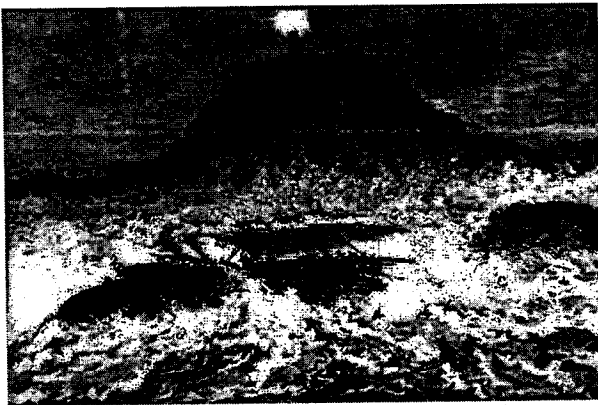
St Kilda Cemetery has aesthetic and architectural significance as an early and sophisticated example in Victoria of cemetery planning that was inspired by Picturesque notions of beauty. The influence of the garden cemetery movement is particularly evident in the layout, curving paths and roadways, plantings, ornamental fence and gates, shelters, as well as the memorials which form a major visual element of the cemetery landscape.

St Kilda Cemetery is of aesthetic significance for its landscape with its collection of significant trees including several large and outstanding Bhutan cypress; three large Camphor Laurels; Flowering Gum; a large London Plane; Himalayan Cedar; an Irish Strawberry Tree; Chinese Windmill Palm; a Velvet Ash, an unusual planting for a cemetery; and a Western Red Cedar. A major landscape feature is a hedge of Golden Privet planted behind the palisade fence along Dandenong Road and Alma Road."

We are very excited by this recent announcement and will be supporting the proposal to add the Cemetery to the Heritage Register. The recommendation has been publicly advertised and submissions may be lodged with the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, Level 22, Nauru House, 80 Collins Street, Melbourne. Submissions are due by midday on 16 September 2004. ■

The Ly-ee-Moon Disaster

Green Cape is a long promontory which juts out into the Pacific Ocean on the far south coast of New South Wales near Eden. In 1883, a lighthouse was built on Green Cape to warn ships travelling north from Victoria and Tasmania of this projection.



Shattered hull – Ly-ee-Moon & Green Cape Light
Courtesy: State Library of New South Wales

The Cape is a lonely windswept place. Standing at the lighthouse and looking south, the visitor sees the vast sweep of Disaster Bay terminating at Cape Howe on the Victorian - NSW border. Apart from the lighthouse and its associated cottages, the view is largely devoid of any signs of habitation.

On a clear night in May 1886, the steamship Ly-ee-Moon, on a voyage from Melbourne to Sydney, inexplicably sailed onto the rocks beneath the lighthouse. Of the 86 people on board, only 15 survived the wreck. Those who survived included the third officer, who was on the bridge at the time, and the ship's Captain.

Twenty-four bodies were recovered from the wreck and were buried in a small cemetery, carved out of the tee-tree scrub, just a short distance from the lighthouse.

So what is the connection with St Kilda Cemetery?

Mrs Flora McKillop (nee McDonald) was one of the Saloon Passengers onboard the Ly-ee-Moon. Flora McDonald had arrived from Scotland aboard the Glen Huntly. She married Alexander McKillop at St Francis Church Melbourne and was later to give birth to eight children. One of her daughters, Mary, was to become Mother Mary McKillop.

A second daughter, Annie, is buried beneath an impressive marble monument in the Roman Catholic 'A' Compartment of the St Kilda Cemetery along with her aunt and uncle.

Flora McKillop was aboard the Ly-ee-Moon on her way to visit Mary at her Sydney convent. Flora's body was one of the few wreck victims to be identified and was taken to Sydney for burial in the churchyard of St Charles Borromeo Catholic Church at Ryde. The remains have since been removed to another location.

Also drowned in the wreck was Mrs Elizabeth McIntyre. Although her body was never found, the names of Elizabeth McIntyre and the Ly-ee-Moon may be found on a monument in the Presbyterian 'A' Compartment of the St Kilda Cemetery.

On the west side of the main gravel path running parallel to Hotham Street is a 2 metre tall pointed, octagonal, bluestone column which sits atop a square bluestone dice and base. On three sides of the dice are marble panels, one of which records:

*Also in
memory of
Elizabeth Winter
beloved wife of
Alexander McIntyre
who was drowned in the
wreck of the S.S. Lyeemoon
on the 30th May 1886
aged 50 years.*

If you're travelling the Princes Highway to Sydney, a turn off before Eden will take you along dirt roads to Green Cape. The lighthouse is open at appointed times for tours and two of the cottages may be booked through the NSW National Parks Service. ■

Office Bearers & Contacts

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