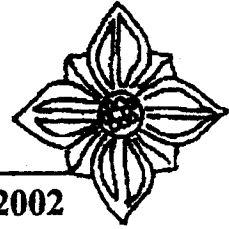


CEMETERY CONVERSATIONS

The Newsletter of the Friends of St Kilda Cemetery Inc

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October 2002

Book Review: **“City of the Dead:
A History of the Necropolis,
Springvale”**,

By Don Chambers, Hyland House.

Review by Debbie Williams

Don Chambers takes us through the years of the development of the Necropolis which was opened on 28 February 1902. The author has scoured the Trust Minute books, annual reports, as well as researching cemeteries and burial practices elsewhere in Australia and overseas. He details the struggles to establish the cemetery, its administrative history and the problems faced over the years. Also the many changes, the coming of the motor hearses, the war cemetery and provision for non-Christian burials. One chapter is devoted to the Necropolis trustees' responsibility for Melbourne General Cemetery and the St. Kilda Cemetery.

The dignified beauty of the Necropolis is shown throughout the book with illustrations, a number in colour. The book is a worthy commemorative publication for the Necropolis.

**Copies of this centenary history
are available for \$49.95 from:-**

The Necropolis,
P.O Box 1159, RMDC
Clayton...3169.
or email enquiries@necropolis.com.au

Diary Dates for 2002

Sunday 27th October at 2.00pm

Horticultural Tour

Join horticulturalist and Committee member John Hawker for this tour which focuses on gardeners, botanists and horticultural features of St.Kilda Cemetery.

Sunday 24th November at 2.00pm

Notable Women

Join the Friends on this tour focusing on notable women buried in St.Kilda Cemetery and the contributions that they have made to the community and the nation.

Cost of tours: Adults \$5.00 members. Children free.

39 New Members

We welcome 39 new members to the Friends this financial year. Thank-you to all who responded to our request for membership, in the last newsletter.

We remind you that benefits to members include:

- * Continued receipt of Newsletters
- * Waiver or reduction in costs of tours in 2002
- * A say in the running of the organisation
- * The knowledge that your contribution is directly assisting the work of the Friends.
- * A discount on the price of “Nation Builders” (reduced from \$15 to \$10)

“ART, ANCESTORS AND ANTICS”

The Friends of St Kilda Cemetery Inc has been successful in obtaining a grant of \$5,000 from the City of Port Phillip's Cultural Development Fund to undertake a series of tours for local primary school students.

Entitled “Art, Ancestors and Antics”, the project will involve local actors and presenters conducting a series of eight tours in early 2003 focusing on the St Kilda Cemetery. These tours will feature drama and art activities for the participating students.

The Friends of St Kilda Cemetery is particularly grateful to the City of Port Phillip for its assistance with this project.



This project has been assisted by the City of Port Phillip Cultural Program Board through its Cultural Development Fund.

A Granddaughter Recalls

By Susan Hudson with Freda Erlich and Pearl Donald



Photograph of PATTIE DEAKIN

A descendent of Alfred Deakin invited some of the 'Friends' to afternoon tea in March.

Granddaughter Judith Harley had delivered one of the Deakin Lectures during the centenary of Federation and lives quite close to the site of the original Deakin family home - 'Llanarth' - in Walsh Street, South Yarra.

Deakin fathered three children - all daughters. The third - Vera - born in 1891 was Judith's mother. An accomplished musician, Vera had studied the cello and singing in Europe before marrying Thomas White in 1920. The couple embarked on a rather high profile public life with Thomas as the member for Balaclava (now Goldstein) and later a Commonwealth minister. After being knighted Sir Thomas became Australian High Commissioner in London. Vera was also very socially aware and among other things began *Music in Mental Hospitals* in the 1950s.

Born 10 years after Deakin died in 1919, Judith never knew her grandfather but she did have Pattie Deakin (Browne) as her grandmother until she was five and remembers her with great love and affection.

At the time her father was standing for Balaclava, Judith recalls the hotels closing at 6pm but polling booths at 8pm. Many voters were often the worse for wear.

Judith remembers going with her father to St Kilda Beach in the 1930s when Thomas was president of the Royal Life Saving Society, and recalls her mother picking flowers to lay on Deakin's grave on his birthday each year. (Deakin was born 3 August, 1856, in a cottage at 90 George Street, Fitzroy).

Vera would tell the small Judith stories about her 'famous' grandfather. One was of how Deakin rose early each morning to walk the dogs, tucking an apple into his pocket first for the milkman's horse. He loved all creatures and one of his earlier Bills introduced into parliament concerned the prevention of cruelty to animals.

She also told her about the wondrous Women's Work Exhibition held in Melbourne in 1907. Thousands of entries came from around the world - china painting, woodcarving and textiles and there was chariot racing, choirs and a model kindergarten. Schoolgirls cooked meals for the patrons of the exhibition.

It was after this event that Pattie Deakin and others decided to begin Melbourne's *Lyceum Club* for university educated women. (On a later visit to the *Club* we saw a rare picture of Pattie - a handsome, spiritual-looking woman).

'I think my grandfather treated his daughters with an open mind,' Judith told us as we bade goodbye. 'And I even like to think my sons share some of his characteristics - fun, sense of humour and the simple enjoyment of other people.'

We noted as we walked back to the car a plaque on a nearby fence that marks the site of the home of a man three times Prime Minister of Australia and now buried in a modest grave in St Kilda Cemetery.

ADDENDUM: Deakin's first daughter Ivy was born in July 1883 in his parents' house. The next year he and Pattie took a house in St Kilda while their house was built in Walsh Street and Stella was born in 1885. Vera was born in 1891 - well after the family had moved into *Llanarth* and died in 1978 aged 87. The house no longer exists in its original form.

Victoria's Finest Gardeners and Horticulturists

By John Hawker

Some of Victoria's finest gardeners and horticulturists are buried in the St Kilda General Cemetery. They include the influential Armytage family who acquired *Como* in 1865, Sir Federick Thomas Sargood, who created from 1868 the magnificent Rippon Lea garden, and his gardener, Englishman Adam Anderson who arrived at Rippon Lea in 1882.

The leading gardener and designer, William Sangster, is buried in the Cemetery. In 1855 Sangster was the head gardener to John Brown, the first owner of *Como* and in 1866 he formed a nursery and landscape design partnership with William Taylor. Taylor was formerly gardener to the governor, and the Vice Regal Nursery, was developed on the corner of Toorak Road and Wallace Street, Toorak. The business was extended in 1875 with a branch at Mount Macedon. Sangster went onto design several gardens at Mt Macedon and at Rupertswood, Carlton Gardens, Stonnington, Rippon Lea, Daylesford Botanic Gardens and Victoria Gardens, Prahran. He also wrote a number of articles on these and other gardens, in the *Australasian*, under the name 'Hortensis'.



*Sketch of Ferdinand von Mueller
possibly by J.A. Panton (RHSV collection)*

Australia's finest, and one of the worlds most influential nineteenth century botanists, Baron Ferdinand von Mueller is also buried in the Cemetery. Dr Mueller arrived in Adelaide on 15 December 1847 with his two sisters Bertha and Clara. In 1853, he was appointed to the recently created position of Government Botanist after his interest in botany attracted the attention of Governor Charles La Trobe. he served in this position with great distinction until his death in 1896.

In 1857 Mueller was appointed to the honorary position of Director of the Botanic Gardens. Following an inquiry in 1870, (William Sangster was one of three commissioners) Mueller was removed from the Directorship and replaced by William Guilfoyle in 1873. He remained Government botanist and suffered no pecuniary loss but felt injustice of his dismissal from the Gardens. He reputedly never entered their gates again.

Mueller was largely responsible for the international recognition given to Australian scientific endeavors. Much of his work has never been superseded and is a lasting contribution to botany. An indefatigable worker, Mueller's correspondence sometimes reached 3000 letters a year; he published over 800 papers and major works on Australian botany and lectured on subjects ranging from rust in cereals and the culture of tea in Victoria, to an historical treatise *On the advancement of the Natural Sciences through ministers of the Christian Church*.

He had little private life, his time, energy and finance being devoted to his work. Mueller never married, although he was engaged to Euphemia Henderson (who is buried in the St Kilda Cemetery) in 1863 but gave reasons of ill health and pressure of work for breaking off the engagement. He died 10 October 1896 in South Yarra.

**JOIN THE FRIENDS AT THE CEMETERY FOR JOHN HAWKER'S HORTICULTURAL TOUR
ON SUNDAY 27 TH OCTOBER, 2002 at 2.00PM**

Constable Johnston Remembered a Century Later

By Sherryn Danaher

* Constable
Richard Johnston, 4536
Died 12th October, 1902 — Aged 36

Richard Johnston's plaque on the recently erected Victoria Police Memorial in St Kilda Road Melbourne. (Dedicated 5th July 2002)

Crime and violent death were unknown in St.Kilda in the early twentieth century. The community was totally shaken by an event on the 12th October, 1902.

Mary Allan of Moore Street, rushed to the home of her neighbour Constable Richard Johnston, to complain that a man had just attempted to assault her eight year old daughter. Even though Johnston had just finished night shift, he jumped on his bicycle, pedalled down Tennyson Street into Milton Street. Here the alleged offender stepped out of a gateway and, unprovoked, pulled out a revolver and shot the constable in the chest. Johnston remounted his bicycle and reached Brighton Road before he fell to the ground and died.

As a crowd gathered around, the murderer put the revolver back in his pocket and casually walked from the scene, crossing Brighton Road into Chapel Street. He was followed by a couple of courageous bystanders to the corner of Rosamund Street where he was approached by Constables Youdan and Willett, who had been alerted. The murderer took out a small knife, stabbed himself in the throat and then shot himself in the head with his revolver. He fell dead in the gutter in Rosamund Street.

Local police suspected that he was George Shaw, a suspect for the recent murder of Constable Guilfoyle in Redfern, N.S.W. Since fingerprint identification was unknown in Australia at the time, Detective Mitchell was sent from Sydney to prove the identity, but denied that this was Shaw. "The Argus" reported that the body was preserved in a formalin bath, and over the next week it was viewed by several thousand people. No doubt many came out of morbid curiosity, but still the identity remained unclear.

After a fortnight, John McKenzie, Deputy Coroner, Darlinghurst Gaol, viewed the body and established Shaw's identity beyond doubt. He had a long criminal history and had spent most of the previous 20 years in gaols in N.S.W. and Victoria. His involvement in an eleven thousand pound robbery in Collingwood in 1885 saw him arrested, but he then secured his own release by testifying against his co-offenders. This act earned the wrath of the underworld which never forgave him. This was probably the reason his took his own life, as another gaol term would have meant certain death at the hands of those he had wronged.

Richard Johnston was interred at St.Kilda Cemetery. With a police contingent of 300, it was reported to be the largest muster of police and public assembled for a funeral.

It was proposed that one shilling be donated by every Victorian policeman to erect a memorial over the grave. Johnston's widow and children were entitled to a pension of 100 pounds per annum. A significant memorial marks the grave of Johnston to this day.

Friends of St. Kilda Cemetery Office Bearers and Contacts

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Vice President:
Treasurer:
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John Hulskamp
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Committee Member
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NEXT ISSUE JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2008.....
Look out for listings of exciting new tours!!!