



# St Kilda Times

Patron: Sir Zelman Cowan

Newsletter of the  
St Kilda Historical Society,  
PO Box 177, Balaclava 3183

email: [info@skhs.org.au](mailto:info@skhs.org.au)  
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## Quirky St Kilda Limericks: SKHS Quiz 11.11. 2007



A lovely young Aussie Matilda,  
Fell in love with a boy from St Kilda,  
They met at the Pier,  
Billed and cooed without fear,  
Another fine win for St Kilda.  
The Fabulous Fareham Five

There was a triangle of land  
That aroused one unhappy band  
A Chaddy, no way!  
The locals did say,  
We really can't settle for bland.  
Anon I

Variety makes up St Kilda,  
All sorts & conditions have filled her.  
With the sparkling bay,  
Luna Park, the Palais,  
And the nightlife – enough to  
bewilder.  
Anon 2

There was a pensioner from St  
Kilda,  
Who searched in vain for a builder,  
He was looking for Bob,  
To just do the job,  
But instead ended up with a Hilda.  
The Fantastic Female 5

Members and Friends who were unable to attend Quiz07, email your Limericks to [info@skhs.org.au](mailto:info@skhs.org.au) or bring to the end-year meeting, 3pm Sunday 9 December 2007.

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## Chartered Scoundrels, A Brief History of Port Melbourne Hotels

Author: Pat Grainger, Port Melbourne Historical & Preservation Society, 2007

A review in History News, by the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, utterly commends Pat Grainger's new book, Chartered Scoundrels to readers.

RHSV say it places Port's hotels in their historical and social context and each hotel is detailed in alphabetical order, including name changes. It also has many contemporary and recent illustrations along with an excellent location map, and the size of the book and robust paper make it a really

accessible guide for Port Melbourne walkers. RHSV also comments that the book is an excellent model for focused local histories on aspects of the built environment.

Copies may be purchased for \$20 directly from PMHPS at Port Melbourne Town Hall, at 333 Bay St on Tuesdays (10am–1pm) or during office hours at the CoPP Assist Desk, also at the Town Hall. Publications may be ordered via mail as well. Please add \$3.00 for p&h within Australia.

Cheques (in Australian Dollars) should be made out to Port Melbourne Historical & Preservation Society and forwarded to PO Box 552, Port Melbourne 3207.

Note: Chartered Scoundrels complements Pots Punks and Punters: A History of the Hotels of St Kilda, by Becky Aizen, published October, 2004 by the St Kilda Historical Society, and on sale at the front desk, St Kilda Branch Library.

NB: Pat Grainger has kindly agreed to give a talk to SKHS members on 16 March 2008. (See 2008 Events, P4).

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## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

The end of the 150th anniversary year of the municipality of St Kilda draws near. Appropriately our last meeting on Sunday 9 December 2007 will be an opportunity to light the candles on our 150th year birthday cake. It will also be the launch of our book on St Kilda's origins: 'The Naming of St Kilda' researched by Fran Bader. Don't miss this event!

As members are aware, this is our second book celebrating the 150th anniversary. The first was 'My St Kilda. Poems and Pictures from the Children of St Kilda'. This project has received a nomination for the City of Port Phillip Civic Project of the Year. All the nominations will be publicly acknowledged at the Esplanade Hotel on 5 December 2007.

Recently we received 160 works of art submitted by the students of St Kilda Park Primary School for the 2007 SKHS Don Taggart Memorial Arts Awards. Every student from grades three to six submitted an entry. The chosen subject of their art is their celebration of the 125th anniversary of their school this year. Our judging panel – Carol, Fran and Dorothy – are currently assessing the winners of the \$500 in cash prizes which will be presented at the school assembly at 9.00 am on Friday 7th December. The artworks will go on public display at the St Kilda Library during Children's Week on 23 July 2008 when the next round of the SKHS Don Taggart Arts Awards will be launched.

How wonderful it is for our Society to be engaged with the energy and enthusiasm of the beautiful children of St Kilda. Your Committee also wishes all SKHS members and friends our very best wishes for the coming holiday season and thank you for your outstanding support in 2007.

Meyer Eidelson

## Thanks for the Memoirs

Anita Gilham, an incredibly productive volunteer recorder has kindly typed up a fabulous article from SKHS archives on recollections of early St Kilda – particularly life at Jacksons's Manor around 1915 – written by Kingsley Evans, and submitted to us over 30 years ago!

Mark Barry recently downloaded it on to our home website: (Articles page) <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~hsosk/home.html>

Anita is currently typing more articles on life in Balaclava, and the activities of the St Kilda Cricket Club during the 1920s.

## Carmel Shute

SKHS thanks Carmel Shute, Media Officer, Port Phillip City, for promoting our public events and circulating notices regarding our guest speakers, and publications.

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

If there is a red sticker at the top of this newsletter, it is to remind you that your membership of SKHS has not been renewed.

Unless we receive your subscription, February's newsletter will be the last you will receive.

We do hope that you will rejoin us as we value your support.

(D. Lobert)

## Congratulations

SKHS congratulates Mr Michael Danby on his re-election as the federal representative for Melbourne Ports.

SKHS also thanks the staff at Mr Danby's office, Fitzroy Street, for photocopying this newsletter.

The next St Kilda Times will be issued in February 2008.

## SKHS WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

This year we welcome ten new members to the Society. They are:

Rose Banks	Monique Cadariu	Gene Verstraeten
Marilynn Fahey	Andrew Gaynor	Marylyn Verstraeten
Robyn Foy	George Florence	Margaret Wells
Gillian Taylor	Joan Sutherland	Zoe Browning

Benefits of SKHS membership include a bi-monthly newsletter, free monthly meetings with interesting speakers, a Heritage Officer to answer your local history queries, associate membership of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria who offer reduced price entry to all their talks and events as well as access to their library (by appt).

We hope you will join us at our meetings .

## Gay & Lesbian Display

The latest SKHS exhibition (we have three a year) in the St Kilda library foyer, is from the Gay and Lesbian Archive.

This group gave a great talk at one of our Sunday meetings this year and agreed to work with us on an exhibition. Much of their history is centred in St Kilda and some of their photos come from our Collection. They also supplied the wonderful "clutter" of postcards and badges for the display.

The Indian Clubs, as depicted in the panel about Miss Elphinstone Dick, who ran a Women's Gym, were kindly lent to us by Callisthenics Victoria. She and her friend are also mentioned in our book *Flood, Fire & Fever, The History of Elwood*, written by Meyer Eidelson.

It is great to work with other groups in our community who have a shared history of St Kilda. (C.Stals)

### Answers

Oct–Nov Quizrobics

SBS's RockWiz is filmed  
in which St Kilda hotel?

The Esplanade Hotel

Which year did St Kilda's  
VFL team move to Moorabbin?

Decision 1964, Admin. 1965, Team 1966

Name three (current)  
St Kilda Bookshops.

(1) Boat Books (2) Chronicles (3) Readings

Elster Creek becomes Elwood  
Canal. Where does it rise?

In Brighton

### New Year's Resolution

Should members happen  
to read about, or hear of  
any activities that SKHS  
might be able to adopt  
or adapt in 2008,  
or you would like to  
see initiated,  
phone Dorothy straight  
away on 9537 1967  
or email:  
info@skhs.org.au

## National Theatre Classification

Robert Taylor, manager of the National Theatre, St Kilda recently let us know that the theatre has been classified by the National Trust and added to the Victorian Heritage Register.

It is now recognized for its 87 years of unbroken operation as a working entertainment venue and for its mix of classical & art deco architecture. The National's links with Frank Thring Snr, Gertrude Johnson and the National Theatre Movement, John Cargher, and EssGee contributed as well.

Built in 1920 (architect Cecil J. H. Keeley) the existing building is substantially the 1928 renovation of the Victory Theatre (by then a Hoyts Cinema) undertaken by part-owner, Frank Thring Senior, a pioneer of both film making and film distribution in Australia. The current foyers, grand staircase, barrel vaulting and auditorium date from that renovation – believed to have been prompted by the opening of the Palais Theatre, mid-1920s.

Beneath the National, in what were the original stalls, are two of Australia's oldest performing arts schools, the Drama School which began in 1936, and the Theatre School begun in 1939.

The theatre was converted to a live performance venue in 1972-1974. In addition to staging commercial stage shows and events, it also functions as a community arts centre for over 70 groups, including various dance companies, musical comedy, light operas, multi-cultural events, and school groups.

SKHS members may also be interested in knowing that the National is currently fundraising to have a conservation plan completed and hopefully carry out some serious restoration. (F.Bader)

### Main Sources:

**Convery, P.**, *Gertrude Emily Johnson 1894–1973*, St Kilda Times, No 176, Insert, Nov–Dec 2005.

**Taylor, R.**, *Correspondence*, 2007.

**WWW**.nationaltheatre.org.au.



# St Kilda Historical Society

## 2008 Free Public Events 2008

Members meet 2.30 pm. Speakers at 3.00 pm	Unless otherwise stated, meetings are held the second Sunday of each month at the St Kilda Library Community Room, 150 Carlisle Street, St Kilda, 3183. Public are welcome. Publications available for sale. Afternoon tea provided. Agenda is subject to change.
20 JANUARY 2008 2pm St Kilda Cemetery 3pm Afternoon Tea St Kilda Town Hall	JACKA MEMORIAL SERVICE Members are invited to attend the annual public memorial service for Albert Jacka VC at St Kilda Cemetery where SKHS will also lay a wreath in his memory. The service will be followed by afternoon tea at St Kilda Town Hall. (Further details:CoPP)
17 FEBRUARY 2008 Members meet 2.30 p.m. Speaker at 3.00 p.m. Library Community Room	HARD JACKA Author Michael Lawrisky talks about his recently published novel based on the life of Australia's greatest front line soldier and former St Kilda Mayor.
16 MARCH 2008 Members meet 2.30 p.m. Speaker at 3.00 p.m. Library Community Room	PAT FROM PORT Author, activist and historian Pat Grainger played a pivotal role in the struggle to preserve Port Melbourne's identity during a period of unprecedented social change. Pat discusses the attitudes, values and events that have influenced her vocation.
13 APRIL 2008 Members meet 2.30 p.m. Speaker at 3.00 p.m. Library Community Room	THE GREAT ST KILDA CANOE MISSION In 1877 St Kilda's Rev. Fred Fairey launched Australia's first canoe named 'The Evangelist' from St Kilda Pier on a Christian mission of 200 kilometres. Members of the Victorian Sea Kayak Club talk about their re-enactment of this historic voyage 130 years later.
18 MAY 2008 Members meet 2.30 p.m. Speaker at 3.00 p.m. Library Community Room	SKHS recalls the opening of the St Kilda library to the public in May 1973. After a prolonged and energetic campaign by local residents, the library was designed by renowned architect, Dr Enrico Taglietti, and erected in 1972. Guest Speaker: To be announced
15 JUNE 2008 Members meet 2.30 p.m. Speaker at 3.00 p.m. Library Community Room	SKHS celebrates the 150th anniversary of the birth of Footy. One of the earliest (arguably, the first) game of Victorian Football with modified rules was played in June 1858 between St Kilda Grammar School (cnr. Acland & Fawkner Sts, later Pembroke Hotel) and Melbourne Grammar. Guest Speaker: To be announced
13 JULY 2008 Members meet 2.30 p.m. Speaker at 3.00 p.m. Library Community Room	MEMORY and EPHEMERA DAY All of us own precious objects that may not have material value but are lodestones of memory that mark significant events in our life journeys. We invite members and the public to bring along valued objects and images to our meeting and share their meaning with others.
10 AUGUST 2008 Members meet 2.30 p.m. Speaker at 3.00 p.m. Library Community Room	THE GREAT WHITE FLEET IN PORT PHILLIP The Australian Naval Historical Society joins us to commemorate a major event in St Kilda's maritime history, the 100 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of the American Great White Fleet in 1908.
14 SEPTEMBER 2008 Members meet 2.30 p.m. Library Community Room Tour at 3.30 p.m.	AGM and COLLECTION OPEN DAY Tour the unique and diverse collection of the St Kilda Historical Society, located under St Kilda Library.
12 OCTOBER 2008 Members meet 2.30 p.m. Speaker at 3.00 p.m. Library Community Room	STUDENTS IN DISSENT In 1968 a secondary school student was expelled from Melbourne High School for being a member of a movement printing underground protest newspapers. Forty years later former underground students gather to recall the times.
9 NOVEMBER 2008 Members meet 2.30 p.m. Speaker at 3.00 p.m. Library Community Room	SURVIVING THE YOM KIPPUR WAR Elwood resident Aaron Eidelson migrated to an Israeli kibbutz as an idealistic teenager to find himself in the trenches on the Suez Canal during the 1973 Egyptian invasion. On the 35 <sup>th</sup> anniversary, Aaron describes the traumatic events of the war.
14 DECEMBER 2008 Members meet 2.30 p.m. Library Community Room	END OF YEAR CELEBRATION Celebrate another great year with fellow historicals, food and entertainment.