



St Kilda Times

Patron: Sir Zelman Cowan

Issue No. 189

February–March 2008

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

email: info@skhs.org.au
www.vicnet.net.au/~hsosk

CoPP awards SKHS for 'My St Kilda' Project

INSIDE

Committee Details Page 2

President's Letter

Irene Johnson

St Kilda Walks 2008 Page 3

SKHS Talks 2008 Page 4

Local History Matters Insert

- ◆ *Luna Park's 95th & Triangle Review*
- ◆ *The Astor and*
- ◆ *St Michael's Grammar School*

Podcast

Members may now download the 10 June 07 talk – given by ALGA (Australian Gay & Lesbian Archivists) from our website or as a podcast.



SKHS Committee 2007-2008
L-R: F. Bader, J. Hulskamp, M. Eidelson, C. Stals, P. Donald, D. Lobert.

SKHS received the City of Port Phillip's 'Civic Project of the Year Award' at the Awards Event held at the Esplanade Hotel on International Volunteers' Day, 5 December 2007.

The \$1,000 Award was granted for the publication of 'My St Kilda' – a limited edition collection of 150 poems created and colour-illustrated by 150 pupils from grades 3–6, Brighton Rd Primary School.

'My St Kilda' was the culmination of SKHS's 2006–2007 inaugural children's arts-heritage project – an initiative with the ultimate aim of raising children's awareness that 'today is tomorrow's history'; and to commemorate Don Taggart who as SKHS President, gave twenty five yrs

voluntary service to the community; as well as to mark the 150th anniversary of the Proclamation of St Kilda as a separate municipality from the City of Melbourne in 1857.

The Principal and Teachers of St Kilda Rd Primary School, Biggin & Scott Real Estate, Elwood Community Bank, and Chisholm & Gamon Real Estate, supported the initiative as did the City of Port Phillip.

And, in August 2007 during Children's Book Week, Linda Todd, CoPP Children's Librarian, arranged a display of and readings from the original poems in St Kilda Library.

'My St Kilda' may be reserved at all CoPP libraries.

End-Year Event

There was a full house as members and friends came from far and near to SKHS' end-of-year get-together at the St Kilda Community Centre, St Kilda Library on Sunday, 9 December 2007.

However, the event was tempered by the loss of valued member Irene Johnson as Meyer Eidelson paid tribute to her and those present bowed their heads for a minute's silence in her memory. (See also p2) Afterwards, Elaine Miller, St Kilda's first ever female mayor in 1982,

talked of this experience before launching SKHS' latest publication, Naming St Kilda. Its author, Frances Bader then spoke briefly about the genesis of her work before she and Elaine cut the scrumptious chocolate cake marking St Kilda's 150th municipal anniversary.

SKHS Details

President's Letter

Vale Irene Johnson

General Information**Emails:**

info@skhs.org.au

Inquiries:

Ph: 9690 9584: 9537 1967

Mail:

PO Box 177, Balaclava 3183

Publications:

www.skhs.org.au

Website:

www.vicnet.net.au/~hsosk

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT**President: Meyer Eidelson**

meyereidelson@yahoo.com

9690 9584: 0408 894 724

Vice President:**Peter Johnson**

pjarchitectsj@gmail.com

Secretary: Dorothy Lobert

lobertdp@optusnet.com.au

Treasurer: John Hulskamp

info@skhs.org.au

Committee Members:

info@skhs.org.au

Fran Bader

Pearl Donald

Carol Stals

Mark Barry

SKHS OPERATIONS**Archives:**

info@skhs.org.au

Mark Barry**John Kissane****Maureen Walker****Frances Bader****Kitty Barclay****Marilynn Fahey****Displays:****Carol Stals**

info@skhs.org.au

Heritage:**Peter Johnson**

pjarchitects@gmail.com

Hospitality & Welfare**Joan Charlton**

info@skhs.org.au

Library:**Dorothy Lobert**

lobertdp@optusnet.com.au

Newsletter: St Kilda Times

info@skhs.org.au

Frances Bader**Dorothy Lobert****Pearl Donald****Sheila Harris****Webmaster:**

info@skhs.org.au

John Hulskamp

Greetings and I hope you all had a happy transition to the New Year.

We have a great program of events already planned for the next eleven months of 2008 and the committee is holding a meeting in February to coordinate our activities. So let us know if you have any ideas for projects or activities that we can add or include.

The annual memorial service for Albert Jacka was well attended on 20 January and our Society presented a wreath arranged by Pearl Donald. This event continues to expand in size with every year. Not quite as large though as the day of Jacka's funeral 76 years earlier where 30,000 people lined the streets in 42 degree heat.

Mayor Janet Cribbes paid tribute not only to his record of military feats but to his record of compassion as a councillor and Mayor of St Kilda and his advocacy for the unemployed.

Shortly before the ceremony I conducted a heritage walk which passed Jacka's former home at 23 Murchison Street only a few hundred yards away. In fact you can clearly see the cemetery from the house. Ironically it was built at the rear entrance to the former German embassy.

Jacka's sojourn at this house from about 1925 to 1930 represents perhaps the best and worst time of his life. It was part of a brand new estate on a now beautiful shady street. He moved in with his wife Vera Carey and soon after adopted a baby daughter, Elizabeth. His business prospered, he became President of the Army and Navy Club at the Mem and Mayor.

Then came the depression. His business was destroyed, bankruptcy ensued, his house was sold, the marriage collapsed, his war injuries re-surfaced. Yet Jacka still fought on to assist the unemployed in his public duties until his death in January 1932.

Jacka was part of an unlucky generation that experienced two depressions and two world wars in fifty years. We may bemoan house and petrol prices and the stockmarket dive but, lest we forget, most Australians have enjoyed peace and the good life since World War Two. Time to give back.

Meyer Eidelson

SKHS is deeply saddened by the loss of Irene Johnson, a highly-valued member since 1979, a committee member from 1990–2000, and our gracious hospitality officer, 2000–2007. She unexpectedly passed away while hospitalised after an unfortunate accident on public transport, early in December 2007.

SKHS meetings won't be the same without her. Her fine-featured face and unobtrusive, gentle manner were well-known to most of us. Since 2000, she unfailingly turned up to each of our meetings on the 2nd Sunday of each month to dispense cups of tea, coffee and conversation, sometimes consolation. She will be greatly missed.

Members who attended Irene's funeral at Springvale were touched by the moving eulogies delivered by two of her nephews with whom Irene had great affinity. They spoke with obvious affection for her and expressed gratitude for her many quiet kindnesses to them over several years.

Mourners were told that Irene was born near Bendigo in 1917 and grew up with two sisters and a brother. After finishing school she took up a clerical career where she held posts in various aspects of this field, and was very highly regarded by her employers. On becoming a self-funded retiree in the late 1970s, she moved beachside to the St Kilda area and purchased a house in Sycamore Grove.

Soon after settling in her new home, involved herself in local activities and joined SKHS.

Over the years, Irene maintained a deep interest in St Kilda's heritage as well as in current affairs and politics. And, after being inducted into *Probus* (Professional Business Retirees) she participated in their programs of lively talks and trips.

Gardening was her lifelong passion. For many years she was a keen member of St Kilda Gardening Club. Indeed, she won several certificates for her green fingers. Her friends and relatives were the lucky recipients of her generous gifts of seasonal home-grown fruits and flowers.

Playing bowls with the Prahran Club became her favourite sport. Of course, anyone who gets involved with bowls soon finds out that it requires skill and agility as well as concentration and serious application. [Legend tells us that Sir Francis Drake could not be distracted from his game of bowls in Plymouth Hoe - not even by the Spanish Armada.]

In her spare time Irene attended the movies and performances at the Arts Centre, as well as concerts put on by the British Music Society. She also travelled across Europe accompanied by a friend.

In SKHS's pantheon, Irene Johnson has earned a permanent place for her long-time active service and commitment, and is one of only a handful awarded Honorary Life-membership. Her dedication and loyalty will long be remembered with fondness and with gratitude for the many years she was such an integral part of our society. *SKHS Committee*

Committee Meetings

6.30pm-9.00pm 1st & 3rd Tuesday each month (except January). SKHS office, St Kilda Library. Meetings are open and all financial members are most welcome to attend. Should you wish a particular item or suggestion included on the agenda, do notify the Secretary prior to meeting. Email: lobertdp@optusnet.com.au or phone 9537 1967 and leave a message.

St Kilda Times is produced every two months and welcomes emailed items of local interest: e.g., news, event notices, short articles on our heritage, brief biogs. & autobiogs., family histories, and the like. Deadlines for publication are last Wednesdays of Jan, Mar, May, Jul, Sept, Nov.

SKHS Display March 2008

During March, a few of the architects who designed some of St Kilda's notable buildings will be displayed in the Foyer Showcase of St Kilda Library by Carol Stals, our Exhibition Officer.

FREE GUIDED NEIGHBOURHOOD WALKS

Bookings essential on 9209 6229 or walking@portphillip.vic.gov.au
Meeting place provided at time of booking. Limited to 20 places.

Neighbourhood: St Kilda & Elwood

The Century of the Triangle: Leader: Meyer Eidelson

Sunday 13 April 2008, 10.00am–12.00noon

We trace one hundred years of development on the 'The Triangle' from the foreshore strategy 1906 to the 'Edge' strategy 2006 using old photos, paintings and memories including Palais Pictures, Palais Theatre, Palais de Danse, Little Luna Park, Casino Optical Stage, Comedy Theatre, Returned Soldiers Lounge, Stardust and Palace.

Lost Schools of St Kilda: Leader: Meyer Eidelson

Sunday 10 August 2008, 10.00am–12.00noon

Since the early days of St Kilda, over thirty schools, often for 'young ladies and gentlemen', have educated students then disappeared. Visit the sites of famous lost schools such as Miss Ries Boarding College, Hofwyl Academy, Wattle House, Northampton Buildings, the Priory, and Oberwyl where the granddaughters of Charles Dickens attended.

Street Poetry in the Poetry Streets: Leader: Meyer Eidelson

Sunday 9 November 2008, 10.00am–12.00noon

Join our tour of the amazing 'Poets Corner' of Elwood. Group members may take turns to read the poetry of the thirty or so authors and poets whose names are borne aloft on street signs such as Byron, Browning, Barrett, Dickens, and Gordon.

Neighbourhood: Port Melbourne

A Microcosm of Port. Leader: Janet Bolitho

Sunday 24 February 2008, 10.00am–12noon

Our walk explores the small precinct of working class cottages bounded by Evans, Bridge and Farrell Streets and Williams town Road. This precinct was the subject of a recent award-winning CD recording the historic images, lives and stories of its residents, homes, two former dairies and Church.

Neighbourhood: South Melbourne/Albert Park

Supply and Demand – 140 Years of the South Melbourne Market. Leader: Kay Rowan

Sunday 16 March 2008, 10.00am–11.00am

Our one hour walk and talk includes viewing an historical exhibition about the South Melbourne Market in the former town hall followed by a walk to the South Melbourne Market itself.

The Great Art Deco Walk. Leader: Robin Grow, Art Deco Society

Sunday 4 May 2008, 10.00am–12noon

Take a walk along Clarendon Street and experience the wide range of residential and industrial art deco buildings describe in a new walking guide published by the Art Deco Society

Self-Guided Walks Available St Kilda Library

See Walks in Port Phillip: A Guide written by Meyer Eidelson. It describes various walks in Port Phillip City, and comes with maps, trail notes, local history and details of the animal inhabitants you might see along the way.

Local Treasures

SKHS extends its gratitude to Anita Gilham, a City of Port Phillip staff member, who has so kindly processed some more hand-written accounts for SKHS files and website. Many years ago, next-door neighbours Edith Yates and Neville Govett, who lived in 102 and 104 Westbury St, wrote their Memories of St Kilda (Balaclava 1920s) and of the St Kilda Cricket Ground, probably at the request of SKHS.

Thanks to Anita, their memoirs may now be downloaded from our website, or phone Dorothy (9537 1297) to arrange a time to drop in to the SKHS office and read the hardcopies.

Congratulations

to Sue & Mark Barry on the safe arrival of their baby, Liam Murray, on 13 January 2008. Mark has been a member of our archival team for several years now. Each 3-D item being catalogued is photographed by him before it is boxed, and he also helps prepare displays for SKHS open-days. In addition, Mark uploads the St Kilda Times and various Articles on to our website and contributes to the development of our Database. Well Done all.





St Kilda Historical Society

Free Public Events 2008



Members meet 2.30p.m. Speakers at 3.00p.m.	Unless otherwise stated, meetings are held the second Sunday of each month at the St Kilda Community Room, St Kilda Library, 150 Carlisle Street, St Kilda, 3183. SKHS Publications available for sale. Afternoon tea provided. Agenda is subject to change. Public are welcome.
17 FEBRUARY 2008 Members meet 2.30p.m. Speaker at 3.00p.m. Community Room	HARD JACKA Author Michael Lawriwsky talks about his recently published novel based on the life of Australia's greatest frontline soldier and former St Kilda Mayor.
16 MARCH 2008 Members meet 2.30p.m. Speaker at 3.00p.m. 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 2.30p.m. Speaker at 3.00p.m. 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 2.30p.m. Speaker at 3.00p.m. Community Room	St Kilda Library Opened to Public, May 1973 After a prolonged and energetic campaign by local residents, a new library was designed by renowned architect, Dr Enrico Taglietti, erected 1972 and opened to the public in May 1973. Guest Speaker(s): To be announced. If you answer 'yes' to any of the following, do contact a SKHS Committee member. Did you take part in the library campaign? Were you at the opening? Have you been a member for a long time? Are any long overdue books causing you angst?
15 JUNE 2008 Members meet 2.30p.m. Speaker at 3.00p.m. Community Room	150th Anniversary of Footy One of the earliest (arguably, the first) games 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 2.30p.m. Speaker at 3.00p.m. Community Room	MEMORY & 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 2.30p.m. Speaker at 3.00p.m. 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 th anniversary of the arrival of the American Great White Fleet in 1908.
14 SEPTEMBER 2008 Members meet 2.30p.m. Community Room Tour at 3.30p.m.	AGM and COLLECTION OPEN DAY Tour the unique and diverse collection of the St Kilda Historical Society, located St Kilda Library Basement.
12 OCTOBER 2008 Members meet 2.30p.m. Speaker at 3.00p.m. 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 2.30p.m. Speaker at 3.00p.m. 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 th anniversary, Aaron describes the traumatic events of the war.
14 DECEMBER 2008	END-of-YEAR GET-TOGETHER