



St Kilda Times

Issue No. 190

April–May 2008

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

Patron: Sir Zelman Cowan

Open-House in St Kilda Library

to celebrate its 35th birthday
from 4.30pm Thursday 15 May 2008

Everyone welcome. See flyer inside for details.

[see also reverse of flyer for advance notice of 'Fine Tunes']

Flashbacks

Names, Addresses, Phone Nos, Email Addresses

SKHS is seeking to contact members, their families, relatives or friends, as well as any information, memorabilia, documents or images connected with:-

St Kilda Athenaeum (1857 onwards>)

St Kilda Mechanics' & Literary Institute (1859>)

First St Kilda Public Library (1863–1910)

If you can assist,	Balaclava Mutual Improvement Society (1910)
do phone Fran:	St Kilda Library Promotion Committee (1950s)
b/hrs 9593 6513	Library Establishment Committee (1960s)
e: info@skhs.org.au	Council & Community Library Sub-C'tee (1969>)
	Foundation Members St Kilda Library (1973>)

St Kilda Library Advisory Committees (1980s–90s)

Friends of Port Phillip Libraries (mid-1990s>)

SKHS Collection

City of Port Phillip

Colour reproduction of Vardy Maps.

Friends of Port Phillip Libraries (FoPPL)

Collection of committee records donated by Hans Lofgren and Marie Dowling.

Graham Taggart:

Range of historical books, notes, cuttings, SKHS records, photos, photocopies and framed images from the late Don Taggart's estate.

A huge thank you to each of those listed below who have so kindly contributed the following items to our collection.

Gillian Upton:

Singed timber fragment from 2003 fire, St Kilda Pier Kiosk.

Meyer Eidelson:

Malvern Star Bicycle.

per Sheila Harris:

Framed image of City of St Kilda Municipal Crest (also refer col.3, p2)

Laura Hallsworth:

Range of Shipping Lists c.1839–1851.

Fran Bader:

Pair black leather ice-skates.

Dorothy Lobert:

'St Kilda Symphony', A recently released DVD by photographer Bill McAuley.

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Local History Matters	Events Flyer
<i>35th Birthday St Kilda Library</i>	& Insert

Correction: Feb-Mar Insert

'The Astor' (feature p2, col.1)
The Empress Theatre bldg in Windsor was not demolished in 1958 — it may just have closed down as a cinema.
(See also p2, col. 3.)

SKHS Details

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Windsor Empress

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I recently attended a memorial service at Sacred Heart Church in Grey Street for Donleavy Fitzpatrick who passed way after a long illness. Like the hundreds of other attendees I was moved by the tributes to Donleavy. His enormous passion for St Kilda combined with his entrepreneurial talents for many enterprises such as the renovation of the George Hotel played a major part in the resurrection of St Kilda in the last two decades. Our Society extends its sympathies and warmest regards to family members.

I recently descended into the underground cellar of the St Kilda Town Hall through a trapdoor in the former ASSIST centre. The stairs lead to a three room brick basement without windows in which reputedly a hall-keeper once lived with his ten children. Amongst the dusty shelves, staff person Melissa Hayes and I found an old wooden ballot box and old record tins, one of which Melissa generously donated to our Society. This was Melissa's attempt to educate me for my role in preparing and running tours on the Open Day of St Kilda Town Hall and Annexe on 29 March 2008.

William Pitt's 1890 vision of a boom Victorian palace has never eventuated but the new complex now housing up to 350 staff is certainly a stunning achievement in its own way and continues to make the 118 year old building a living civic centre of Port Phillip. One of my favourite changes includes the new Gallery which allows our city to host significant exhibitions for the public. The new entrance leads directly into the internal arcade with three levels of falling light is a spectacular space.

Congratulations to Mike Todd, one of our Port Phillip library staff who has 'escaped' by obtaining a new position and a new lifestyle in country Victoria. Mike has been our liaison contact in the library for several years, regularly passing on our newsletters and other correspondence to all the library staff. We wish him and his family a great treechange. *Meyer Eidelson*

Honorary Life Member

At our February meeting SKHS presented **Pearl Donald** with Honorary Life Membership in appreciation of her many years service to our Society. Pearl is a priceless source of information about St Kilda and a reference point for many people.

New Members

A warm welcome to two new members:

Kirsten Emes
Eric Svirskis

We hope they will join us at our monthly meetings.

Many thanks to Robert Taylor, General Manager, National Theatre, St Kilda, for letting us know that the 'National Theatre Movement' purchased the Windsor Empress Theatre building in 1969, with a view to refurbishing it as a live theatre venue.

By then its stalls were being used as squash courts but before renovations could commence, an electrical fire destroyed the internal structure. (Robert still has the plans.)

The National Theatre Movement subsequently sold the Empress building, purchased the Victory Theatre, cnr Barkly and Carlisle Streets and converted it to the National Theatre between 1972–1974.

Framed St Kilda Crest

The Society was recently presented with a framed copy of the City of St Kilda Crest by Des and Alva Pickett who featured in SKHS's 'Voices of Elwood' oral history book. It was acquired by Sheila Harris, one of our long serving members, and we thank her.

Sheila prepared this provenance of the item which reads: "Before Amalgamation, we used to have the St Kilda Garden Festival in the St Kilda Botanical Gardens. All the local Community Groups would have a stall along with commercial people. I was a member of the Elwood Gardening Group so I used to help out on their stall.

"The Council would invite the leaders of the community groups to lunch and one year they had a raffle and our leaders, Jack and Peg Dorain won it. As they lived in Chelsea, they thought that it only right that someone from the St Kilda/Elwood area should have it, so they gave it to Des and Alva Pickett. A few months ago when I visited Des and Alva they asked if I would like give this item to the Society."

SKHS thanks Des and Alva for their donation and Sheila for her part in its acquisition. The Society is always happy to receive any memorabilia of St Kilda to add to our collection.

Committee Meetings
6.00pm–8.00pm
1st Tues ea month.

SKHS is grateful to the staff of
Mr Danby's office for
photocopying *St Kilda Times*.

St Kilda Times is produced every two months by volunteers. We welcome any constructive suggestions/ideas and emailed items of local interest: e.g., notices, events, news, short articles on our heritage, brief biogs or autobiogs, family histories, and the like. Deadlines for publication are last Wednesdays of Jan, Mar, May, Jul, Sept, Nov.

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, Oberwyl where the granddaughters of Charles Dickens reputedly attended.

Street Poetry in the Poetry Streets: Leader: Meyer Eidelson

Sunday 9 November 2008, 10.00am–12.00noon

Join our tour of ‘Poets Corner’, 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 Barrett, Browning, Byron, Dickens, and Gordon.

Neighbourhood: South Melbourne/Albert Park

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 described in a new walking guide published by the Art Deco Society. (Robin will be SKHS’ guest speaker, 15 June, see p4)

Tours of St Kilda Cemetery

Conducted by Friends of St Kilda Cemetery (FoSKC).
Members free. Non-members: adults \$10. Children free.
Numbers limited. **Pre-Bookings: phone 9531 6832**

2pm Sunday 6 April

Horticultural Tour of Cemetery

2pm Sunday 11 May

Judges, Juries & Justice

7.30pm Saturday 21 June: (\$15 Adults)

Winter Solstice Moonlight Tour

History of St Kilda Botanical Gardens

Friends of St Kilda Botanical Gardens (FoSKG) are conducting guided walks on the history of the Gardens. Meet at glasshouses near EcoCentre entrance. Cost of walks are \$10 each which goes towards FoSKG’s contribution to the Gardens.

Saturday 19th April, 2.00pm

Wednesday July 16, 10.30am

Saturday 18 October, 2.00pm

RSVP appreciated: foskbg@hotmail.com

Tel: Gaelene Snelling 9534 5287

VIC Women’s Suffrage

The June–July issue of *St Kilda Times* will include an article by SKHS member, Maureen Walker — to mark the 100th anniversary of the passing of Victoria’s Adult Suffrage Bill, in 1908.

SKHS’s next Historical Display will feature some of the trailblazing local women who pioneered gender equality. The display will be co-ordinated by Carol Stals and mounted in the showcase, St Kilda Library Foyer.

Lest we Forget: Anzac Day Remembrances

The exhibition, *Lest we Forget*, is on at the Postmasters Gallery 321 Exhibition St, until 14 June. It “traces the continuation of expressions of remembrance in both the personal and public space ... in various media, artefacts and guises.”

Many items are from Melbourne’s Anzac House (RSL) Collection. They include photos, artefacts, illuminations of stained glass windows, postcards from the front and images of monuments. Also on display are official philatelic commemorations of Australian military and defence engagements from WWI to the present.

Free Entry. Open: Mon–Fri 10–6, Sat Noon–5. Enq. 9204 5021.



St Kilda Historical Society

N.B.
changes in
May & June

Free Public Events 2008

<p>Members meet 2.30p.m. Speakers at 3.00p.m. St Kilda Community Room, St Kilda Library</p>	<p>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. Free Entry. Public are welcome.</p>
<p>13 APRIL 2008 (Sun.) Members meet 2.30p.m. Speaker at 3.00p.m. Community Room</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>15 MAY 2008 (Thursday) From 4.30p.m. St Kilda Library</p>	<p>ST KILDA LIBRARY OPEN TO PUBLIC, 15 MAY 1973 <i>St Kilda Branch Library and St Kilda Historical Society invite members, families, and friends to celebrate our library's 35th birthday.</i> [refer flyer for details]</p>
<p>18 MAY 2008 (Sunday) no meeting/talk</p>	<p>Please note that due to St Kilda Library's Birthday Event on Thursday 15 May, there will be no Sunday meeting or talk in the Community Room.</p>
<p>12 JUNE 2008 (Thursday) From 6.30p.m.</p>	<p>LIVE PERFORMANCE & LAUNCH MARK WHITTY'S "FINE TUNES" <i>St Kilda Branch Library and St Kilda Historical Society invite members & friends to the launch of 'Fine Tunes'.</i> [See reverse of flyer for advance details.]</p>
<p>15 JUNE 2008 (Sunday) Members meet 2.30p.m. Speaker at 3.00p.m. Community Room</p>	<p>150TH ANNIVERSARY 1ST GAME OF MODIFIED RULES, 3 JUN 1858 130TH ANNIVERSARY FORMATION OF ST KILDA F'BALL CLUB 1878 Guest Speaker: Robin Grow: SKHS member, raconteur, and one of the authors of 'More Than a Game: An Unauthorised History of Australian Rules Football'.</p>
<p>13 JULY 2008 Members meet 2.30p.m. Community Room. Memories & Ephemera 3p.m.</p>	<p>MEMORY & EPHEMERA DAY: MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS 2008-2009 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.</p>
<p>10 AUGUST 2008 Members meet 2.30p.m. Speaker at 3.00p.m. Community Room</p>	<p>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 100th anniversary of the arrival of the American Great White Fleet in 1908.</p>
<p>14 SEPTEMBER 2008 Financial Members to meet 2.30p.m. Community Room Tour of Collection at 3.30p.m.</p>	<p>AGM and COLLECTION OPEN DAY Financial members meet 2.30pm for annual general meeting 2007-2008 and election of 2008-2009 committee. Tour the unique and diverse collection of the St Kilda Historical Society from 3.30pm</p>
<p>12 OCTOBER 2008 Members meet 2.30p.m. Speaker at 3.00p.m. Community Room</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>9 NOVEMBER 2008 Members meet 2.30p.m. Speaker at 3.00p.m. Community Room</p>	<p>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 assault on Israel by Egyptian and Syrian forces in 1973. On the 35th anniversary, Aaron describes the traumatic events of the war.</p>
<p>14 DECEMBER 2008</p>	<p>END-of-YEAR GET-TOGETHER (suggestions invited)</p>