

Founded in 1974 to promote interest in the history of Prahran and to foster appreciation of Australia's national heritage of history, the environment, architecture and the arts.

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**Warm welcome to our new members**

M.Patrikeos of W.A., K.Harrison, A.Reynolds

**We give a warm welcome to our renewed members for 2012**

J.Doherty, N.Seymour, Dr Fleming, R.Oakman, Mr.G.Smith, Judi--ann Leggetts CA

**MEMBERSHIP FEES**

Individual \$13 Family \$20 Pensioners \$5 Student \$9 Life \$100 Donations .....



**Welcome!**

Any member who has an email address please let us know [pahranhistoricalsociety@yahoo.com.au](mailto:pahranhistoricalsociety@yahoo.com.au) – we can then forward newsletters and other correspondence directly to your email.  
Don't forget to renew your membership for the year 2013!

**FUTURE EVENTS**

**SUNDAY OCTOBER 14th – 11 A.M.**

**“Spring into Gardening” to be hold at the Victoria Gardens. Event commences at 11a.m. to 4 p.m.**

**Volunteers required to assist the manning of a stall - whatever time you can spare.**

**Contact Gabriel 9529 7442 – leave message if necessary**

**OCTOBER** – Wednesday 24th at 7.00p.m. Annual General Meeting of PHAS - Held at Prahran Community Centre 40 Grattan Street, Prahran. Supper will be served.

**NOVEMBER** – Friday 23rd at 7.00p.m. CHRISTMAS DINNER

Held at the Ground Floor, Prahran Mission, Chapel Street Prahran. 3 Course meal – cost \$45 per head

Please advise Gabriel 9529 7442 if you are attending – numbers need to be finalised as a deposit is required.

**THANK YOU**

Mrs Doherty, Mildura, for her kind donation of a book “History of the City of Prahran”. Bendigo Bank Windsor for their ongoing sponsorship of the Newsletter.



**Bendigo Bank**

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We would like to thank the Windsor Branch of the Bendigo Bank for their Sponsorship of the printing of this newsletter.

## ST. KILDA CEMETERY

### Visit by PHAS members 19<sup>th</sup> August 2012

Members of the Prahran Historical and Arts Society visited the St. Kilda Cemetery and undertook an hour and a half tour with a "Friends of St. Kilda Cemetery" guide Mrs Pearl Donalds. Mrs Donalds explained the early history of the Cemetery and stories of individual graves. Residents of Prahran, South Yarra and Windsor were interred in the St Kilda Cemetery. The history and aesthetics of the many monuments indicated customs and attitudes over the 150 year life of this cemetery.



*Pictured: Mrs Pearl Donalds and members of the PHAS.*

St. Kilda Cemetery is one of Victoria's oldest Cemeteries and was included on the Heritage Register on 14 October 2004. In March 1853, a government grant was allocated for the opening of the St. Kilda Cemetery. Originally a much larger allotment that was reduced to eighteen acres of land bound by Dandenong Road, Alma Road, Hotham Street and Alexandra Street. It was divided into compartments for the major religious denominations of the time but was later overlaid by a less formal system of winding paths, inspired by the contemporary garden cemetery movement.

The official opening of the cemetery was on 9<sup>th</sup> June 1855 however the first burial occurred on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1855 and was the funeral of Charlotte Green who was ten years of age and had died of cholera. The oldest human remains are the re-interred remains of three men from the fever ship Glenhuntly which were originally buried at Point Ormond (Elwood) in April 1840. Some graves were permanent and others were re-used



*St Kilda Cemetery entrance, circa 1890*

Within 10 years local residents attempted to restrict burials to existing and pre purchased grave sites. Strong population growth around the time of the Gold Rush era increased the number of local residents and raised concerns about the impact of a cemetery located in the middle of a highly populated area. In 1900 grave sites were finally declared exhausted and the cemetery closed for the sale of new graves.

The Cemetery was re-opened in 1928 in an attempt to raise income for maintenance. An additional 250 graves were made available by narrowing roads and pathways. Over the years the cemetery suffered various degrees of neglect particularly in the 1950's. In 1966 the cemetery sold its last five grave sites and faced financial crisis. In 1968 Trustees of The Necropolis Springvale were entrusted with the management responsibility of the St. Kilda Cemetery.

In 1970 the caretaker's lodge was removed and the Michaelis Lawn burial area was established. Wall niches and a memorial rose garden for cremated remains were also established in the garden.

In 2005 the Cemetery underwent major re-development and as a result provided the local community to recommence use of the cemetery. New burial sites were available for the first time in well over 20 years.

#### **Prominent individuals within the St. Kilda Cemetery:**

Alfred Deakin – politician and Prime Minister

Ferdinand Von Mueller – world famous botanist who had significant influence on design of the gardens at Melbourne General Cemetery

Albert Jacka – World War 1 Victoria Cross recipient

Matron Mary Finlay – World War 1 nurse in charge of army hospitals in Egypt and France

Christina McPherson – provided the music for Banjo Patterson's Waltzing Matilda

Janet Templeton – early pastoralist

## A Brief History of the Establishment of the Victoria Gardens, Prahran

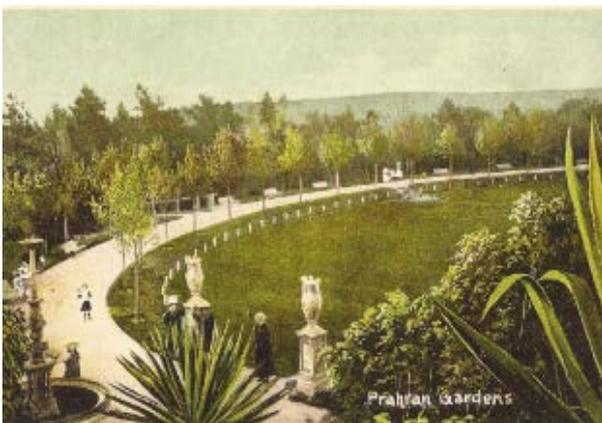
Michael Fleming Ph.D

*This Article is Part 1 of a 2 Part Series – the 2<sup>nd</sup> Part will be published in the next Newsletter*

J. B. Cooper, in his History of Prahran (Cooper, J.B. *A History of Prahran*, Melbourne 1924 (Revised edition), describes the controversy which surrounded the establishment of that City's parks and gardens. It is a curious fact that, although the City of Prahran was declared in 1856, no parklands or reserves were created until the 1880s. That this was the time of "Marvellous Melbourne" was of course no coincidence. However the attempt to give Prahran parks and gardens was not all smooth sailing!

The Prahran Chronicle of Friday, 11th July 1884 reported a 'Special meeting' of the City Council the previous Wednesday evening. Council normally met every second Monday and the full minutes were published in the Chronicle. At this special meeting the mayor (W. Templeton, Esq.) moved on notice that the council 'contract a loan for the purchase of lands for parks and pleasure grounds within the City to the amount of £12,500. It was also resolved that Mr .E .J .Dixon (councillor) be asked to attend the sale of lands in High-street on 22nd inst. and bid on behalf of the Council.'(Prahran Chronicle, 11 July, 1884) On the evening of 14th July 1884 a meeting was held in the Prahran Town Hall to protest at the council's proposal to secure the loan. The protest meeting drew up a petition to Council that the money would be better spent on other things and was formally handed to Council.

The following Monday, 21st July, Council handed down a recommendation that the Parks Committee proceed with the floating of the loan for 'parks and pleasure grounds.' There were soon rumours abounding that Council had made secret purchases, using the names of people rather than the council. That council had already published its intention to bid for the High Street property on 22nd July seems to have been ignored by both the opposition of the time and J. B. Cooper! As a result of this controversy, and Council's refusal to confirm or deny these rumours, a campaign was started to defeat the incumbents at the next election. Thus it was that the campaign of 1884 for Prahran City Council was a contest between the 'Loanites' and the 'Anti-Loanites'! The Loanites would appear to have been confident in their cause as there was a separate ballot in the poll directly relating to the loan proposal. In the event they were proved right and the loan proposal was agreed to by the citizens of Prahran. However of the three candidates who stood as Loanites, two were defeated! It is never easy to analyse the motives of the voting public (Cooper, op. cit. p.287).



*View of Victoria Gardens showing the 1885 London Plane Trees and original 1888 fountain and vases  
Photo Circa 1900.*

*Reproduced from Jenny Happell Postcard Collection.*



*In 1888 Cr. George Taylor presented to the City of Prahran a fountain, statue and vases. By the 1980's the urns and statue had been vandalised but were replaced with copies cast in bronze in 1990.*

*This picture is of the original statue and vases.*

*Reproduced from Jenny Happell Postcard Collection*

## The 1954 Royal Visit Florin – Gabriel Hermes

Everybody today carries decimal coins in their pockets, but in 1954 we were still using Pounds, Shillings and Pence. In 1954 when young Queen Elisabeth II was welcomed on the steps of the Prahran Town Hall, the Melbourne Mint struck a special florin coin (20 cent coin) to honour this visit. The mintage was restricted to one year and four million coins. The head of Queen Elisabeth II on one side and the reverse displaying a kangaroo with a lion in the foreground. (pictured) The design created controversy at the time of issue.



Ironically this coin lay to rest a previous controversy over the 1953 and 1954 general florins. The 1953 and 1954 general florin had the F.D. removed from the obverse side. F.D. signifies "Defender of the Faith" and as it had been removed from these coins they became known as the "Godless" florins and created uproar.

The F.D was restored to the special Royal Visit Florin.

The 1954 Royal Visit Florin was "hoarded" by the population. Your Grandmother, Uncle or other relative may have several of these florins in a shoebox or Red Head matchbox. These coins have increased in value and may be worth up to \$15.00 each. Happy Hunting!

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## Generous Assistance for the TROVE Project

Readers will be aware that the Prahran Historical and Arts Society Inc. (PHAS) are contributing to the TROVE project. The TROVE project is responsible for copies of the **Prahran Telegraph** being scanned, at a cost of \$2.00 per page, by the National Library from the microfilm masters and hosted on the Trove Website.

It is hoped at this stage to scan the period from 1866 to 1889. This will depend on funding availability. The Malvern Historical Society is also contributing to this project.

PHAS has already contributed \$3,000 to this worthy project and now, thanks to very generous donations from Tom McCarthy of **Biggin & Scott Real Estate** and Phillippe Batters of **Williams Batters Real Estate** a further contribution has been made. In total this will ensure that close to two thousand pages will now be scanned and available to the public.

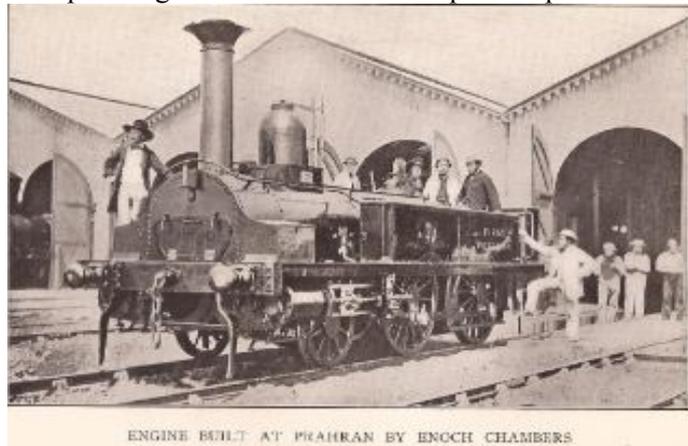
**MANY THANKS** to **Biggin & Scott** and **Williams Batters** Real Estate for their generous financial contribution.

I have personally gone into the website and searched material. It was a fascinating experience that I recommend to our readers. Here's the link..... <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/home>

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## Windsor Railway Accident – Wednesday May 11, 1887 – *History of Prahran 1836 – 1911 (Cooper)*

One of the most sensational occurrences in Prahran was the Windsor railway accident, which took place shortly before six o'clock on Wednesday, May 11, 1887, when the 5.40 p.m. express overran the 5.30 p.m. ordinary passenger train. On approaching the Green Street overhead bridge, on the Prahran side of the Windsor Station, the driver found the semaphore against him. He therefore pulled up in the cutting to await the signal "Line Clear" to proceed on his journey.



ENGINE BUILT AT PRAHRAN BY ENOCH CHAMBERS

After some delay the "Line Clear" signal was given, but on attempting to release the brake a pipe burst, and the driver found it impossible to move the train. While he and the guard were trying to discover the cause of the blockage, the express, which left Flinders Street ten minutes after they did, dashed round the curve and crashed into the standing train. An awful scene of carnage followed, full of the horrors that usually attend such railway accidents. The noise of the impact could be heard in Chapel Street, and over 10,000 people were soon on the scene. Four persons were taken from the wrecked train, dead, and over 100 passengers were more or less severely injured.

# Loreto Mandeville Hall

Loreto Mandeville Hall, 10 Mandeville Crescent, Toorak, is a Catholic school for approximately 900 girls from Prep to Year 12.



**Mandeville Hall's Wallpaper** – Steve Stefanopoulos, Heritage Collection & Records Manager, Mandeville Hall.

With the constant adaptive re-use of the first floor of the mansion since 1924, new and exciting treasures reveal themselves in the most unsuspected nooks and crannies.

From the time the school moved into *Mandeville Hall* in 1924 until 1973, the first floor rooms were used for their intended purposes – as bedrooms. But during those fifty years, the walls covered with luxurious wallpaper and boarded by decorative timber beading, copped a severe battering, to the point where the wallpaper had to be removed.

Only one photograph taken for the 1930s prospectus shows the intricate wallpaper, albeit in sepia tone. No colour photos of the wallpaper appear to have been taken or survive in our Heritage Collection.

Small remnants of the wallpapers survive behind some of the timber beading and a more substantial, but still small portion survives behind the servant's bell in the second dressing room. But even that small sample is far too small to ascertain the extent and repeat of the pattern of the paper.

In 2005, the Music School expanded into the first floor of the mansion. This necessitated additional electricity, and the only way to provide this was to lift the floorboards in the first foyer. Upon doing so, small rolls of wallpaper were discovered by the workmen. The papers appear to have been deposited in 1877 when the mansion was under construction.

Fortunately, the embossed papers had been rolled inwards, thus protecting the outside layer. But unfortunately, viewing the papers wasn't going to be as easy as unravelling them, especially considering they had been kept firmly together for almost 130 years. Over the next six months, conservators at the University of Melbourne painstakingly cleaned the exposed surfaces by brush vacuuming and using a smoke sponge; followed by relaxing and separated the papers using deionised water. At times, the water temperature of the water was raised to help soften the adhesive which had resulted in some pieces sticking together.

Once separated, the papers were flattened between blotters and felts under glass and then dried. Repairs, as required, were undertaken with Japanese tissue and wheat starch paste. Finally, the surviving papers were mounted onto archival quality mount board and sheathed in a film of Mylar to allow easy access and viewing.

These recently discovered blue and gold samples, match the small fragment surviving behind the servant's bell. This allows us to categorically determine the wallpaper used in at least 1 dressing room. Further investigation will still need to be taken, by removing some of the remnant timber beading in other rooms, to determine if this luxurious blue and gold paper was applied to any other rooms. Some of the wall papers are now in a showcase on the landing of the main staircase of the mansion.

*Note: Unfortunately a photo of this Wallpaper was not available. A Tour of Mandeville Hall will take place on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2012 – for further information contact Steve Stefanopoulos at Mandeville Hall, 10 Mandeville Crescent, Toorak 3181.*

## **Prahran in the Early Days (No 4) By “Squint”**

*Squint was a “non de plume” of a gentleman who lived in that period. We don't know who he was or what profession he practised. He seemed to be able to move around in the social circles. His essay captured the life style and events, not only were they accurate but also fascinating to read. .*

Turning down Palermo Street, from Chapel Street, one comes to a three-roomed, iron cottage, where resided Edward Young and his family; subsequently the home of one Dimpley Tom, from the fact that he had two large dimples on his cheeks and one on his chin. For many years Tom was a great favourite, always ready at the call of charity. He was a splendid mimic, and one who rendered great and valuable assistance in the days when Penny Reading Concerts were given in Prahran. He subsequently joined the Lynch Family of Bellringers, and travelled with them for years. Tom Margetts died in Bendigo a few years back. The next house was occupied by Edward Cox and his family. This name was a household word, for Cox was the best cow and horse doctor in or around Melbourne. Nothing came amiss to him, and he never spared himself in his efforts to alleviate the suffering of any dumb animals. He was well known as a dairyman for very many years, and those of his family, both boys and girls, who now live in the district, are almost as good as any vet in treating the ailments of cattle. Just below Cox's place, Alexander Mc Manus had his dairy and market garden. He, like Cox, was noted for the good cows that he bred, Palermo Street ended where Clara Street now is. It was a regular Slough of Despond at this end. Later it was cut up, although imperfectly drained, and a street that was known as Karlsburg Road (subsequently known as the Valley of Death,) was formed there. I have seen cattle absolutely lost in this road. Having got into it, they found it impossible to get out

Another old identity here was Richard King, who had a large garden on the opposite side. There were two brickyards in the locality, one kept by Mr Allen, the other by Mr Myers; but

they were abandoned in a few years, as the clay was not good, whilst the holes were left for the boys to learn to swim in. John James Modrall, who was clerk of works for the building of the new town hall, also lived in this street. Coming back to Chapel Street, just beside where the malt-house now stands, Joseph Thomas Crook, Snr. had his dancing rooms. Although a man most remarkably bow-legged, he was an excellent teacher, and as light a dancer as a girl of sixteen.

Around the corner of Garden Street, gold old John Sutton lived, and next to him was, and is still, the home of Mr William Baron. This gentleman had resided in the one spot, next to the Foresters' Hall, for 50 years. Up to the time of the railway extension to Prahran, Mr Baron used to talk to the General Post Office, where he was employed, every morning in the very early hours. He retired some years ago, but is still seen about daily, well and hearty, and must be somewhere about 80 years of age. For many years he was superintendent of the St Matthew's Sunday school. Where the Foresters' now stands, stood the old Baptist Church, erected at the expense of a few of the old identities. Here, for many years, Mr Joseph Wilson preached, he has a numerous family who were all ardent supporters of the church, One of his daughters (Eliza) married Mr Thomas Always, of Malvern; and Cr Always is one of his grandsons,

Where the Baptist Church now stands, used to be an embankment ten feet high on which was erected three wattle and dab huts. Here Joseph Wilson, Jnr used to gather the boys at nights and, by kindness, generosity, and example try to promote their own better welfare. Behind the church there was a market garden that ran almost half of the length of Wilson Street. Wilson's grocery establishment was, in after years carried on by Mr Francis Williams and his stepsons, a few yards further along on the other side, Gardner's blacksmith's forge was nearby, and there is hardly a boy or girl of those days that does not remember his curly-headed son, Willie. Next to them stood a butcher's shop; this was occupied by Mr Thos Blandshard first, and by Mr Watson afterwards, the last-named being the father of ex-councillor John Watson.