

CHARACTERS OF ST ALBANS



Joseph Ribarow

2024

Published by

historyofstalbans.com
5 Harding Street
Ascot Vale Victoria 3032

Copyright

Copyright © 2024 Joseph Ribarow. The sources of information and images appearing in this publication have been acknowledged where possible. Any copyright owner who believes they have not been properly acknowledged should notify the publisher so that corrections can be made.

The information in this publication may be copied without fee for personal and not for profit use provided that the content is neither used for any malicious or detrimental purposes nor for commercial advantage and the origins of the material are acknowledged in the reproduced material. Individual copyright holders and suppliers of documents and images may reproduce their own material unreservedly.

Disclaimer

The information in the document is based on historical records and oral history and is presented in good faith, but the authors, publishers and copyright holders do not guarantee the accuracy of the information nor accept any responsibility from any errors in the document or for any consequences arising from them. Every care has been taken in compiling this information, but errors and gaps in the source data, including the possibility of mistaken identities, have made the verification of some data very difficult. Readers are advised to make their own judgment about accuracy and relevance.

Corrections and amendments

If you wish to correct any errors in this publication, or want to suggest any other amendments, please contact the publisher at the above address or leave a message for the author at www.historyofstalbans.com/contact

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the people who helped make this publication possible. Evelyn Mullenger wrote about Martha Arms and the first kindergarten. Nick Szwed is a collaborator on St Albans history and his earlier contributions about teachers from the High School have been further developed. Alie Missen supplied the article about Colin Missen's talk to the history society. Mark Fry provided a much-appreciated copy of Wilhelm Stein's auto-biography. Images sourced from the collections of Kon Haumann, Mary Smith, Terry Vyner, Norma McKay, Evelyn Mullenger, Emily Hall, Frank Farrugia, Alie Missen, Nick Szwed, Jeff Barlow, David Dusting, Wendy Taylor, Joe Ribarow, old St Albans High School archives, State Library Victoria and National Archives Australia. The images of Pino Calati's art are from the St Albans Tin Shed collection and Joe Ritchi. The followers of the HistoryOfStAlbansVictoria Facebook page have been helpful with information and images.

Front cover

People of character at St Albans Mechanics Institute Hall 1950s @ Norma McKay

My journey began and circled back to St Albans, and it is my sense of place that I get identity and belonging, my sense of purpose, and my muse. As I see them [my students] sit up straighter, I smile with pride, looking forward to witnessing their journeys out into the world buoyed by their St Albans upbringing.

Amra Pajalic
Why I came back to the melting pot.
The Age 9 May 2023

Table of Contents

1835 – Joseph and Sarah Solomon	1
1909 – Thomas and Annie Burton.....	10
1910 – Osborne Wilson	12
1920 – Charles and Doris Dennis.....	13
1925 – Willy and Lena Stein.....	15
1926 – Claude and Elsie Cox	20
1928 – William and Ada Lodge.....	22
1930 – Vincent Carr.....	24
1934 – Daniel and Delia Gavaghan.....	26
1935 – Stephen and Pearl Webb	30
1935 – Irene Doherty	34
1940 – Joyce Riley	35
1942 – Colin Missen	38
1943 – Beverley Godfrey	41
1948 – Giovanni and Onorina Forte	43
1950 – Frederick Francis Barnard	44
1951 – Bazyl and Warwara Dalinkiewicz	46
1951 – Leopold and Maria Hofman	48
1951 – Alexander Duchovs	50
1952 – Jan and Anna Mikula	51
1953 – Mary and Bill O'Brien.....	52
1953 – Fr Joseph Krasocki.....	54
1954 – John and Evelyn Gigacz.....	56
1954 – Thomas Arthur Evans.....	58
1956 – Robert Malcolm Dusting	59
1956 – George Beris.....	60
1957 – Anton Utri.....	61
1958 – Nancy and Cliff Snooks	62
1959 – Harry and Edith Unger.....	63
1959 – Edite Sturesteps	66
1960 – Mary Burden	68
1960 – George Strauss	69
1961 – Martha Cameron Arms	72
1961 – Victor and Veronika Gross.....	75
1961 – Emilija Kriksciunas.....	76
1961 – Nicholas Bolvari.....	78
1961 – Frances Hewitt.....	80
1961 – Elizabeth Fielder.....	82
1961 – Tom Scarff	84
1962 – Erasts Ziemelis	85
1962 – Norm MacLeish	87
1963 – Arnold Shaw	89
1963 – Ivan Patrick Mathews	91
1963 – Alison Gliddon.....	94
1966 – Albert Tilton.....	96
1967 – Fred and Meryl Scheurer.....	97
1967 – Raymond Fehmel	98
1970 – Adair Bunnett.....	100
1970 – Irene Wescott.....	101
1974 – Pino Calati	102

1835 – Joseph and Sarah Solomon

The original inhabitants of St Albans in the pre-St Albans days were the First Nations people of the Marin Bulluk clan, but Joseph Solomon was the first British-born squatter in the pre-St Albans district from 1835 – he came before Watson and Hunter (1839) and William Taylor (1849) but has not received the historical acclaim that they did. Solomon occupied land along the Maribyrnong River at Kealba, St Albans south-east below Main Road East, and at both ends of Furlong Road – between McIntyre Road and the river at the eastern end, and two blocks at the western end on the corner of Station Road.¹ Solomon was also the first person of Jewish heritage in the district.

Joseph “Johnny” Solomon was born in London, England in 1818. He was the ‘ex-nuptial’ son of Joseph Solomon snr (1780-1851). The Solomon family origins go back to Isaac Jacob Solomon who was born in 1669 in Amsterdam, Noord-Holland, Netherlands, who moved to London, England, in the early 1700s. Joseph jnr’s mother was Sarah who is not further identified in the family genealogy.



The young Joseph’s stepmother was Harriet Lazarus who had married Joseph snr in 1805 in Sheerness, Kent, England. Harriet’s family origins go back to 1763 and Henry Lazarus who married Esther Davies. Between them, Joseph snr and

Harriet Solomon had six surviving children, with one still-born and two dying in infancy.



Joseph Solomon snr and his brother Judah were shopkeepers from Sheerness, London. In 1819 they were charged with conspiring to commit a burglary. They were lucky to survive, because the judge sentenced each prisoner

“to be hanged by the neck until he be dead,” which was later commuted to transportation for Joseph and Judah Solomon, but a third accused was executed. The Solomon brothers were transported to the Colony of New South Wales in 1819 and then to Van Diemen’s Land

(Tasmania) in 1820.

Despite their now convict status, the Solomon brothers soon became successful businessmen in Hobart and Launceston.

Joseph “Johnny” Solomon, who was also known as Joseph Solomon junior or Joseph Solomon the younger, arrived in Tasmania in 1831 to be reunited with his father who was rebuilding his life. Joseph snr had divorced his first wife Harriet prior to his transportation, and in 1883 married the widow Eliza Backas née Graves (1810-1905) who originally was from Waterford, Ireland.

The Solomon brothers were supporters of John Batman and the Port Phillip Association’s aspirations for land acquisition in Port Phillip Bay (Victoria). Because the Solomon brother were convicts, their role as investors in the Association was generally not disclosed, so the family’s public connection was through extended kin, including Joseph jnr, Michael Solomon, Anthony Cotterell, and Edmund Ferguson. However, Batman kept an anonymous share for them in the Association so that they could acquire their allocation of land in the groups’ risky venture. In one mark of recognition he named “Mount Solomon” after Joseph Solomon of Evandale, but the name did not survive.

Batman wanted land and he decided to bypass the authorities in Sydney. He and his entourage came to Port Phillip from Tasmania to explore the landscape and they trekked through the future St Albans. He explored along the Saltwater (Maribyrnong) River and described the grassy plains as the most beautiful sheep pasture he had ever seen. The party crossed from Sunshine North to the vicinity of the junction of Furlong Road and the railway line, and then turned east into St Albans proper and back towards Keilor.² A map of his journey indicates that they crossed the river south of Keilor on what might have been a ford on one of Solomon’s later selections.

In June 1835 Batman faked a ‘treaty’ with a few local Aborigines, and by exchanging gifts with the group he claimed to have acquired 600,000 acres of land. His main purpose in creating the treaty documentation was to convince the British authorities that he had a legal claim to land because of his dealings with the native people, despite acting without the authority of the Colonial powers in New South Wales. Despite lobbying by the Port Phillip Association, the fabricated deal was not approved by the Britain government. The Association knew it was a dodgy deal – even one of their main supporters, John Helder

¹ Two blocks near the Station Road intersection were owned by Joseph Solomon in the 1850s but it has not been verified if he was someone else with same name.

² Hugh Anderson Saltwater River History Trails: Sunbury to the Sea; Red Rooster Press, Ascot Vale, 1984 p31.

Wedge, wrote about their doubts and thought they should be kept secret.¹

The First Nations people of St Albans were the Marin Balluk (people of the big water) who occupied the land between the Kororoit Creek and the Maribyrnong River and from Sunbury in the north to Maidstone and Williamstown in the south but did not extend to Port Phillip Bay. They were part of the Woiworung language speakers and thus members of the Kulin nation. The clan consisted of about 100 members whose daily life centred around smaller family groupings.



Aborigines North of Keilor by S T Gill c.1850s
From the archives of State Library of Victoria

The Port Phillip Association's manoeuvres started a land grab on the mainland that soon led to the British settlement around the Yarra Yarra River (where Melbourne was built) and along the Merriburnong River that would later become the districts of Braybrook, Keilor, and St Albans.

Joseph "Johnny" Solomon came to Port Phillip late in 1835 as part of John Batman's Port Phillip Association and occupied the land allotted to the Solomon family in the division of the "Duttigalla and Geelong Estate."

In 1835 the name "Merriburnong" was given to the sheep station on the Salt Water River, which must have been Solomon's station, so it seems the family had adopted the Aboriginal name for the locality.

In December 1835 Edmund Ferguson and Joseph Solomon, accompanied by Mrs Ferguson and three servants, brought a flock of 500 sheep and settled locally to look after the interests of Joseph Solomon snr and his brother Judah Solomon. They would later bring many more sheep.

It's been said that Joseph jnr was the earliest settler in the Braybrook district, and a review of the literature indicates he was also

the earliest-known squatter-settler in Keilor and what was later to become St Albans. So, parochially speaking, he was the first European pioneer of St Albans, from 1835.

The Solomons were some of the earliest and most significant settlers in the district as revealed through historical research:

One of the largest flocks, in the care of one of the Solomons and their agent, E. D. Ferguson, was in the Brimbank area by the end of 1835, a total of 2,700 sheep. Joseph Solomon's station was initially in Kealba-North Sunshine, near the natural crossing later known as Solomon's Ford. However, by 1849 his head station was on the land that is now Medway Golf Course, Maidstone. His son Alfred later recalled some of the dangers - eagles from the ranges taking off the lambs and the great bushfire of 1851, when many of the terrified stock drowned in the tidal river in their attempts to escape the fire. In the flood of 1849, many settlers' sheep drowned in the swollen waters of the Maribyrnong River.²

The earliest settlers in the district included convict servants and their employers. Michael Solomon and his sister Sarah (wife of her cousin Joseph Solomon) were in the Sunshine-Keilor area by the late 1830s. The words "Mr Solomon's Station" are marked on a map by Robert Hoddle, drawn in 1840, in the Kealba-North Sunshine area.³

Some records indicate that Joseph Solomon's original house was built where the Medway Golf Course is now located, others suggest it might have been the property of Michael Solomon. However, they were both teenagers at the time so they were just starting out as pastoralists.

Joseph Solomon jnr was aged 17 and Michael Solomon was 16, while their older relative Edmund Ferguson was aged 32. Most likely they were collaborating in property management on behalf of the extended Solomon families of Tasmania. Quite obviously, Joseph and Michael as teenagers were not yet of "legal age" so Ferguson must have managed their legal affairs when required. It's been said that both Joseph and Michael "served their apprenticeships" during this time on grazing runs of more than 50,000 acres (but the family's holdings diminished substantially over time).

Edmund Ferguson was born in 1804 in Tyrone, Northern Ireland, and came to Australia about 1830. In 1833 at Launceston he married Maria Graves, who was the daughter of Eliza Backas nee Graves, who had married Joseph Solomon snr in 1833.

¹ David Beswick, *Anthony Cottrell: a background figure of significance in the settlement of the Morven district and Port Phillip.*

² Brimbank City Council Post-contact Cultural Heritage Study

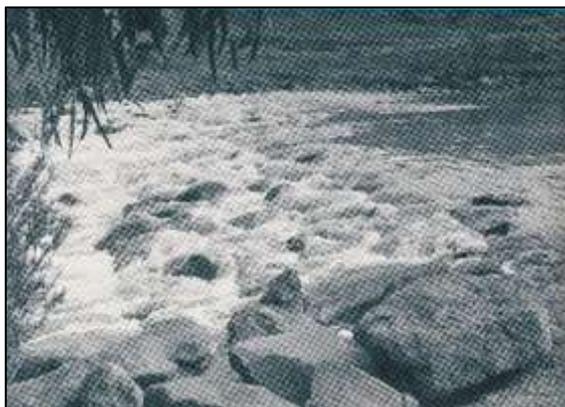
³ Brimbank City Council Post-contact Cultural Heritage Study



Michael Solomon was the second son of Judah and Esther Solomon. Michael was born in England in 1819 and arrived in Hobart in 1829 at age ten. In December 1835 at the age of 16 he moved to Solomon's Station in Port Phillip.

Edmond Ferguson and Michael Solomon were partners in runs on land near Solomon's Ford,¹ but, clearly, Michael was too young to be the leading partner of the team, and it's likely that Edmund was acting as his agent through to the early 1840s.² Michael married his cousin Sara who was a niece of Judah Solomon in 1840 and from then Michael was more involved with grazing leases at Dandenong and Mordialloc. When the price of sheep fell, he became insolvent and lost his property.³

It has been said that Michael Solomon was the licensee of a run at Solomon's Ford, "Keilor" between 1835 and 1841, which raises the question which ford was Solomons Ford, as has been debated by several local historians. There were possibly three river crossings that were referred to as Solomon's Ford - Canning Street Ford, North Pole Ford, and McIntyre's Ford, the latter being less documented but nonetheless possible as the McIntyres had bought their property from the Solomons. The river crossing name might have morphed into a property name, as during the 1870s Solomon's farm was cited as "Solford".



Solomon's Ford from Valantyne Jones' book

Michael Solomon had returned to Hobart in 1840 and married Sarah Solomon

¹ solomonsofsolomonford.pdf

² R. V. Billis and A. M. Kenyon *Pastoral Pioneers of Port Phillip*

³ Rick Keam, *Keilor to Footscray: Mr Solomon's Maribyrnong*, Australian Scholarly Publishing P/L, North Melbourne, 2020 p42

who was the daughter of Henry Solomon. They came back to Port Phillip Bay in 1841/42 at which time there was a recession and Michael became insolvent. Misfortune then followed as the marriage collapsed and Michael returned to Hobart where in 1847 he was arrested for burglary and sentenced to 15 years. He stayed in Tasmania for the rest of his life; he divorced, remarried twice and died in 1898 aged 80. It is clear that he did not have a long-term presence in Braybrook.

Joseph Solomon reared sheep, cattle and horses on his property near the Saltwater River and was the first settler-squatter to bring sheep to the district. His neighbours the McIntyre family were also horse breeders. Some other settlers such as Thomas Burge Derham and Stephen "The Colonel" Margrett would fatten horses in the district and ship them to India for the British Army.

The Port Phillip Pioneers Group confirms that Edmund Ferguson arrived at Port Phillip in late 1835 and commenced farming on the Salt Water River in partnership with the younger Solomon family members. The 1836 Port Phillip census listed the head station of Solomon, Cotterell and Ferguson as being located in the Keilor area about five miles north of the "rocks across" ford. The station was known as "Merriburnong" which was probably the Aboriginal name for the district or the river. For most of his time at the Salt Water River Edmund was in partnership with Michael Solomon. Kenyon says this partnership finished in February 1839. When Ferguson later decided to retire from farming he instructed Anthony Cottrell to auction his right of station known as "Merriburnong".⁴



Anthony Cottrell was an investor in the Port Phillip Association. He was born in Ireland in 1806, the son of Ellen Crispe and William Cotterell who had emigrated to Tasmania in 1824. Anthony was appointed Chief District Constable of Launceston. In 1835 he married Frances Solomon who was the daughter of

⁴ <http://www.portphillippioneersgroup.org.au/pppg5s.htm>

Joseph Solomon snr and thus Joseph jnr's stepsister. In 1835 Anthony and Sarah moved to Port Phillip as some of the original settlers and Anthony helped the Solomons with their property settlements. In 1839 he was working as an auctioneer in William Street, Melbourne. Anthony and Sarah returned to Tasmania in 1840 and spent their later years in Hobart. They had nine children. Anthony died in Hobart 1860 at age 54, and Frances died in New Zealand in 1886 at age 69.

In 1836 the southern part of the Colony of New South Wales below the Murray River became a semi-autonomous jurisdiction named as the Port Phillip District, which operated until 1850 when it was formally separated from New South Wales as the Colony of Victoria.

An interesting discovery is that in 1836 the first "Constitution" of Port Phillip was written in the book of the minutes of a meeting held at Yarrow, Port Phillip, on the 1st June, 1836. The Argus report of 1882 states that: "Among the names appended thereto were those of Mr. Batman and Mr Solomon. So far as he was aware Mr. Solomon was the only one who signed the document who was now alive. The number of residents in the settlement, all told, at that time was 77 — 34 adult males, 12 adult females, and 31 children."¹

In 1836 the first Port Phillip census in November 1836 listed the head station of "Solomon, Cotterell and Ferguson" as being located on the west bank of the Saltwater River and Ferguson was described as an agent for himself and Solomon. It was home to eight males, two females, 3,700 sheep, thirteen cattle and four horses. A weatherboard house had been built and 20 acres of wheat, oats, barley and turnips were under cultivation.²

In November 1837 Joseph Solomon bought the block of land on which the Coles and Garrard store was later in Bourke Street, so the family was dabbling in real estate in city centre as well as farming on the outskirts – but was the land bought on Joseph junior's behalf or by his father?

When Joseph junior was living at Merriburnong on the Salt Water River, the homestead paddock had a fine cluster of the native trees and the bucolic setting was later described by Joseph's son, Alfred Solomon:

At Hampstead ... there was a grove of timber, about a square mile in extent, where she-oaks, gums, and blackwood flourished and provided cover for the opossum and native bear. The river teemed with fish in the season and like the swamp - which then existed near the site of

Maidstone - was covered with wild fowl. Though not in very large numbers, plover, quail, snipe, native companions, turkeys, and occasionally a flock of emus were found on the plains. Cockatoos, parrots, and pigeons, with many smaller birds lived in the trees and scrub. At night the weird cry of the curlew could be heard. The river valley was the haunt of the kingfisher, and there merry companies of laughing Jack-asses loudly announced the approach of morn and evening."³

In mid-1838 Solomon and Ferguson reportedly had 4,000 sheep, two horses and 13 free men, and Cottrell had 2,600 sheep, five horses and four free men.⁴

It was the year that Joseph Solomon returned to Van Dieman's Land and married Sarah Solomon the daughter of Juda Solomon, at Evansdale. They returned and settled in Maribyrnong, Port Phillip Bay, in February 1839. With them came Sarah's brother, Michael Solomon, who was the son of Juda and his first wife Esther Solomon.

In 1839 Edmund Ferguson auction off the Merriburnong property because he was retiring from farming. At that time James Watson had come to Keilor as part of the Watson and Hunter pastoral group and bought some of Ferguson's Merriburnong property which was in the area later known as Keilor.⁵ (In fact it was James Watson who named the area as Keilor because of family connections to a property of that name in Scotland.)



Watson & Hunter station at Keilor on Saltwater River
Painting by George Alexander Gilbert c1845
Archives of State Library of Victoria

Ferguson's retirement created other changes. In February 1839 Joseph Solomon jnr advertised that his business relationship with Fergusson was dissolved.⁶ In June 1839 the "Solomon" properties on the Salt Water River that were in the name of Edmund

¹ Argus 5 June 1882 p5

² Keam p28

³ Footscray Independent 5 December 1908 p3

⁴ Keam p30

⁵ Keam p32

⁶ Port Phillip Gazette 9 Feb 1839 p4

Ferguson were auctioned off.¹ There were three contiguous properties along the river. It was inevitable that the business relationship had to be dissolved, because Edmund Davis Ferguson died soon after on the 28th September 1839: "Edmund Davis Ferguson, Esq., of the Salt Water River, deeply regretted by a large circle of respectable friends."²

In 1840 the land marked "James McIntyre" was still part of Solomon's grazing lease.³ Solomon's station house was west of the river in the area now known as Kealba.

The 1841 census of New South Wales reveals that 20 people were living on Joseph Solomon's Salt Water River station - eight were shepherds, four were domestic servants, and two were other agricultural workers.⁴

In 1844 the Aboriginal population was still evident in the district and one report indicated there was a gathering of several hundred men assembled at Keilor.⁵ Maybe they were congregating for ceremonial purposes or because they had been dislocated from their traditional meeting areas. Port Phillip was never terra nullius. As the British colonials arrived in greater numbers they pushed aside the native population. The earlier rhetoric of people living in harmony and cooperation did not last a decade, but changed into displacement and segregation. Before long the Aborigines were banned from Melbourne in the nighttime and had to move to outer areas such as Footscray in the evenings.

Joseph's son Alfred interacted with the local Aborigines from the 1840s and later talked of his positive recollections and his father's treatment of the natives:

It was his rule not to allow them to bring their weapons, when visiting the homestead to receive food and presents, but they rarely showed any signs of hostility. A good deal of consideration was exercised towards them. They were very much interested in the ways of the white people, and nothing seemed to astonish them more than to, see his father shave. ... They appeared to be always on the move from one part of their tribal territory to another in search of food. He has witnessed the Corroboree and others of their customs, and was, when a boy, very much in touch with the tribe. He has often seen a black fellow stand in the river and display his quickness of eye and sureness of stroke by striking fish with his spear as they swam around him.⁶

¹ Port Phillip Gazette 19 June 1839 p2

² Port Phillip Gazette 2 October 1839 p3

³ Keam p38

⁴ Keam p41

⁵ City of Keilor Centenary Souvenir p32

⁶ Extract from Thomas Flynn's *A History of Braybrook District* (1906) as published in Footscray Independent 5 December 1908 p3

In 1849 William Henry Taylor (1818–1903) bought 13,000 acres at Keilor, which he named the Overnewton Estate, and James McIntyre bought 326 acres, Lot 129 in Cut Paw Paw and named it Riversdale – this was part of Solomon's original property.

September 1849 was also memorable for a dramatic weather change, as Alfred Solomon witnessed what the district has never known since:

The plains were covered with snow a foot in depth, and the hills and ranges shrouded in a mantle of white, which brought back vividly to him the winter scenes of the land of his birth. The rapid melting of the snow caused a heavy flood in the river. Two years later he had a very different experience. The summer had been very dry; fresh water for household purposes was scarce, and had to be brought from a distance. This was not seldom the case, and on one occasion his son relates that milk, which was profitless, but had to be taken from the cows, was used for the making of mortar.⁷

1850 brought more changes. Keilor was declared a township, the Gold Rush era started with a population surge, and Joseph Solomon snr died at Evansdale.

In the 1850s some Aborigines were still occupying their traditional land along the Saltwater River, Braybrook, according to the memories of the Alfred Solomon and some of the McIntyre boys. However, the population numbers had been declining substantially. According to some estimates, in 1851 there were about 2,700 Aboriginal people in Victoria, whereas by 1861 the number had dropped to 1,700 people.

Although William Thomas reported that none of the Woiwurrung died at the hands of Europeans after 1839, only 59 survived by 1852.⁸ In 1863 the population of the Woiwurrung tribe was only 22 men, women and children.⁹ They were removed from their traditional lands and resettled in the Corranderk reservation in 1863.¹⁰

There was even more dramatic and disastrous weather:

The morning of 6th February, 1851, afterwards called Black Thursday, was very hot, with not a breath of wind ... As the day advanced fires sprang up on the distant hills, and clouds of smoke began to fill the air. Soon the fire reached the plains, and the flames swept over them but as there was little else besides grass to feed them the

⁷ Footscray Independent. 5 December 1908 p3

⁸ Barwick 1998: 30. Maribyrnong Aboriginal Heritage Study, Report for City of Maribyrnong, 1999, p78.

⁹ City of Keilor Centenary Souvenir 1863 to 1963 p42

¹⁰ <https://www.quora.com/What-is-the-difference-between-Wurundjeri-and-Woiwurrung>

*danger of his situation was not so great as that of the bush settlers. No attempt was made to save the stock, and they rushed madly about, plunging themselves in the tidal river and in the muddy waters of the Maidstone swamp, where they were joined by the native animals, as terror stricken as themselves. Many thus escaped the flames to find death by drowning. Birds were destroyed in vast numbers by the fire and suffocating smoke or were drowned in the river, where they fled to escape the fearful heat. Towards noon the landscape was hidden in darkness, and the dull yellow glare of the sun above, as it struggled through the gloom, filled their hearts with dismay, and the household thought the end of the world was at hand. In the heated, stifling atmosphere they could hardly breathe.*¹

In July 1851 the Port Phillip district up to the Murray River separated from New South Wales and became the Colony of Victoria. According to some sources, Joseph Solomon was an active supporter of the agitation for separation from New South Wales.²

In 1852 Joseph Solomon junior leased his property and returned to Tasmania to manage the properties left by his father, Joseph Solomon senior, who had passed away in May 1851 at Morven near Evansdale, Launceston. Joseph jnr remained in Tasmania for a decade, and though retaining his connections with Braybrook he auctioned off his stock and some of his properties.

In 1853 the auction at the horse market offered: "the whole of his first-rate stud of horses, numbering from 25 to 30 head, all in first-rate condition. There are several powerful staunch draught horses, and mares, such as are rarely to be met with; and the remainder of the lot consists of superior hacks and light harness horses, and a few unbroken colts and fillies."³

The 1860s brought new developments to the region when the Braybrook Road District Board was declared in May 1860. The municipality comprised of 95 square miles with 258 ratepayers and a population of 1,126.

In 1862 Solomon came back to Victoria to his old home – the publication "Victoria and its Metropolis" states the Joseph Solomon re-occupied his original homestead near Solomon's Ford, which he had under grazing and general cultivation.⁴

In 1866 Joseph Solomon was elected

to the Albion School Committee⁵ which is the first published note in the Argus, Melbourne main newspaper at the time, of his involvement in broader community activities.

In 1867 a meeting of the Braybrook District Road Board was held at which Messrs. Joseph Solomon and Alexander Blair⁶ were re-elected as auditors for the ensuing year,⁷ and they were both elected again in 1869,⁸ so presumably there was more history of involvement in municipal affairs. Unfortunately, more details have not been found.

It was a time of change in local land usage that would lead to the development St Albans. Solomon's specific role in this has not been discovered, but he was part of the municipal leadership that implemented the changes and would have shaped the formation of St Albans. In 1868 the Keilor-Braybrook Commons (which later would become the core part of St Albans) was subdivided into 68 farms and sold through the Closer Settlement Scheme. Though much of this land was on the Keilor side of the municipal boundary, about a quarter was under the jurisdiction of Braybrook.⁹ This area was often referred to as being part of the Keilor Plains.

In 1868 The Australasian reported on an address of royal proportions:

*... from the "old colonists" of Victoria" which has been in course of signature for the last few days in Melbourne, Geelong, Ballarat, and Sandhurst, was presented to the Duke of Edinburgh at noon yesterday, in the Public Library. The signatures of nearly 600 gentlemen, whose colonial residence dates back, in accordance with the limit prescribed, not less than twenty-five years, have been attached to the address, and the document is the most interesting of the kind that the Duke has yet received. ... (including) Joseph Solomon, December, 1835.*¹⁰

The Braybrook Road District became the Shire of Braybrook in January 1871. The population was 1,161 (marginally larger than in 1861) and the number of ratepayers had increased from 258 to 380.

The name "Solford" for the property at Solomon's Ford first appeared in advertising in The Australasian in May 1874. At this stage Solomon was offering "133 good Grazing and Agricultural land sale in one or two lots, within seven miles of Melbourne for particulars apply Joseph Solomon, Solford, Salt Water River,

¹ Footscray Independent 26 December 1908 p1

² Footscray Independent, 5 December 1908 p3

³ Argus 9 May 1853 p7

⁴ Alexander Sutherland 1888, Victoria and its Metropolis Past and Present Volume 2 The Colony and Its People in 1888 2 p503

⁵ Argus 1 February 1866 p6

⁶ Alexander Blair was the brother of William Blair who bought the Solomon property in 1885.

⁷ Argus 2 March 1867 p6

⁸ Bacchus Marsh Express 6 March 1869 p2

⁹ St Albans Pioneers: Settlers and Speculators from the 1850s.

¹⁰ The Australasian 4 January 1868 p20

near Maidstone.”¹

1881 was a tragic year as Sarah Solomon, wife of Joseph “Johnny” Solomon and daughter of Judah Solomon and Esther Russell, died in March 1881 at the age of 61, when she fractured her skull after being thrown from a buggy being driven by her husband:

*The accident which happened to Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Solomon, of the Saltwater River, on Saturday week, has resulted fatally to one of the sufferers, Mrs. Solomon having died from fracture of the skull on Saturday night last. The unfortunate lady was almost entirely unconscious from the time of the occurrence. Mr. Solomon sustained a fracture of the ankle, and will be confined to his bed for some weeks. The deceased, who had reached the age of sixty-one years, was one of the earliest colonists, having settled at the Saltwater River in the year 1838.*²

In 1881 some of the early colonist of the colony decided to commemorate the life of John Batman. John Batman was born in 1800 at Paramatta, Sydney, and died in Melbourne in May 1839 at the young age of 39 years, and was buried in an inconspicuous grave. In 1881 it was decided to erect a monument on the grave in recognition of his contribution to the colony. Many people subscribed to the cause and at the commemoration ceremony one of the oldest colonists, Joseph Solomon of the Saltwater River, was specifically mentioned for his warm-hearted assistance.

During the 1882 memorial ceremony it was noted that Mr Solomon was the only signatory of John Batman’s book of minutes from 1 June 1836 who was still alive.³

In 1882 Solomon was aged 64, a widower, and was probably contemplating retirement or simplifying his life. He advertised for sale his property Solomons Ford on the Saltwater River, six miles from Melbourne, “Solford”, comprising 113 acres agricultural and grazing land, with large river frontage suitable for factory purposes, with seven roomed weather-board house, stable, and out offices, cemented tank.⁴

In 1884 he held a clearing sale:

... to sell by auction, on the premises, near the State school, Braybrook, in consequence of his having disposed of the property, and leaving the district, the whole of his farming stock, implements, consisting of 3 horses, X grand buggy horse, well known in the district, 3 cows (2 in full milk), heifers and fat calves, poultry buggy and harness, spring cart and harness, cart harness, hay dray and frame, tip dray, ploughs, harrows, tanks, saddles and bridles,

¹ Argus 14 May 1874 p8

² Weekly Times 26 March 1881 p21

³ Argus 5 June 1882 p5

⁴ Argus 29 April 1882 p5

*the usual dairy utensils, sundry tools, ladders, etc etc. Also, a quantity of surplus furniture.*⁵

In 1885 Joseph ceased farming, sold his homestead to William Blair⁶ and moved to Melbourne and then South Yarra.⁷

In 1888 during the land boom era Joseph Solomon sold his land on the Kororoit Creek to investors who developed it as part of the Sunshine township. The land was surveyed and became the Railway Station Estate. This was the basis of the growth of the settlement of Braybrook Junction.⁸

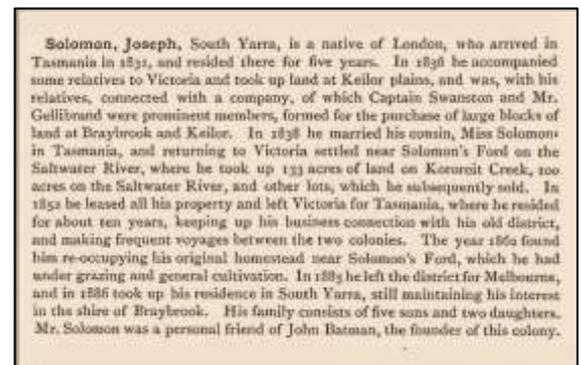
Joseph “Johnny” Solomon, long-term Braybrook resident, died at South Yarra in April 1890 at the age of 71; he had a colonist of 52 years, having arrived in 1835.⁹

In 1890 Solomon’s home, a brick villa in Moffat-street, South Yarra, was auctioned off to a good attendance, and after some spirited competition the property was sold for £740¹⁰ but that was just a small part of his estate.

Joseph Solomon left an estate valued at £22,470 (£21,250 personally), to the members of his family.¹¹ A final sale of land was held in 1891 for more land, being part of Crown Portion 113 and 114, parish of Jika Jika, county of Bourke.¹²

Thus ended Joseph Solomon’s final link with his adopted home territories of Braybrook, St Albans, and Keilor, all located along the meandering Maribyrnong River.

His place in history was guaranteed a long time ago, because he was included in the ‘classic’ publication Victoria and Its Metropolis.



Entry for Joseph Solomon in Victoria and Its Metropolis Past and Present Vol 1, Alexander Sutherland 1888

⁵ Age 13 December 1884 p2

⁶ Rick Keam, *Keilor to Footscray: Mr Solomon's Maribyrnong*, Australian Scholarly Publishing and Footscray Historical Society, 2020.

⁷ Victoria and its Metropolis p503

⁸ McGoldrik p12

⁹ Bacchus Marsh Express 3 May 1890

¹⁰ Age 19 June 1890 p4

¹¹ Age 21 May 1890 p

¹² Argus 11 April 1891 p3



Solomon's Ford, Canning Street, Avondale Heights
Image by John Collins 1976 © State Library Victoria

Family matters:

Joseph and Sarah Solomon had raised thirteen children between 1839 and 1859:

- Joseph junior (1839-1854) was born in Hobart and died there of croup in May 1854 at the age of 16 years.
- Henry Laurence (1840-1903) was born at Melbourne in November 1840 and married Hannah Davis (1842-) in 1892. Henry died at a boarding house in Nicholson Street, Fitzroy, in April 1903 at age 63.¹ He had expressed the desire for his body to be cremated and the ashes were interred with his late parents in the family grave at the Melbourne Cemetery. No information has been found about Hannah Davis – she may have died before 1903 as Henry Solomon did not mention her or make any provisions for her in his will.
- Felix (1842-1844) was born in Hobart and died at age two years at his parents' home on the Saltwater River, Maidstone. In September 1844 he started vomiting and experienced severe pain and though treated by a doctor he died soon after. An inquest was held and concluded that he had swallowed poison that had been placed in an eggcup on the mantelpiece to be used against bedbugs – the incident occurred while Felix was with his brothers when his mother had momentarily left the room. It was not known how he reached the poison on the mantelpiece.
- Alfred (1844-1912) was born in Hobart in May 1884 and married Emma Barton (1844-1904) in Sydney in 1876 where he worked as a grocer. Emma's parents were Mary Ann Golding and Thomas Barton who was from Liverpool, England, and had migrated to Sydney by 1834. Alfred and Emma returned to Victoria by the early 1900s and settled in Fitzroy. Emma died at South Fitzroy in 1904 at age 60 years. Alfred then married Sarah Evelyn Davies at Brunswick in 1905. It does not appear that he had any children from either marriage. Alfred died in Melbourne in April 1912, at the age of 67 years and was buried at Carlton North. He is the best-known of the Solomon children regarding local history, because of his contribution to Thomas Flynn's manuscript about the history of Braybrook. Sarah Davies died in St Kilda in 1945, aged 86 years.
- Charles (1846-1866) was born on the Saltwater River, Tasmania, in October 1846 and died in 1866 at Melbourne aged 19 years. He had contracted scarlet fever in 1856 and from that time "he has always been very afflicted in his head". Sadly, it was another case of accidental poisoning in the family when he drank from a small bottle of essence that was kept in the pantry cupboard and he died as a consequence. An inquest was held and his father testified: "I believe it was not with intent to hurt himself but merely from his habit of tasting everything".² The jury returned a verdict that Charles had died from the incautious use of oil of bitter almonds.³ He was buried at Footscray cemetery.
- Louisa (1848-1853) was born on the Saltwater River, Tasmania, in June 1848 and died of scarlet fever at Hobart in September 1853, at age five years.⁴
- Jessica "Jessie" (1850-1923) was born in Hobart in March 1850 and married William Charles Phipps (1832-1916) in 1876 in Paddington, Sydney, New South Wales; they raised four sons and a daughter. William's heritage goes back to the 1770s in Gloucestershire, England, and his father Henry Phipps migrated to Sydney in 1818 and married Elizabeth Ivory in 1828. William Charles

¹ Australian 11 April 1903 p55

² <https://prov.vic.gov.au/archive/18482B2C-F1B8-11E9-AE98-DF406B42A06F?image=4>

³ Age 28 September 1866 p4

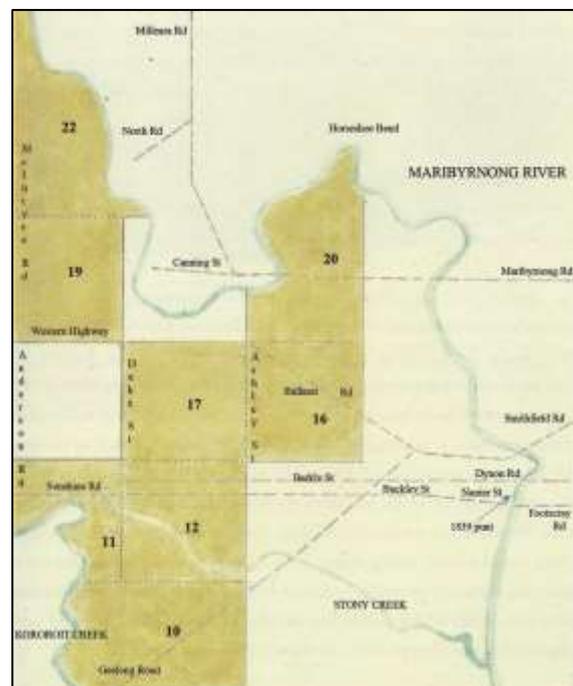
⁴ Launceston Examiner 6 September 1853 p6

Phipps died in Brisbane, Queensland, in 1916 at age 84 years. Jessie died in 1923 at the home of her son in Ascot Vale, Melbourne, at age 73 years, and was buried with her late husband at the Melbourne Cemetery.

- Francis (1851-1890) was born in August 1851 in Hobart and married Mary Jane Susan Trigge in Melbourne in 1874; they raised five children. Mary's family is traced back to William Trigge in Middlesex, England, in the 1720s – John William Trigge and Jane Smalley migrated to Victoria in 1852 and Mary Jane was born at Maidstone in 1852. Mary and Francis Solomon settled in Collingwood where he ran a confectionary business. Mary Jane nee Trigge died in 1882 in Collingwood at age 30. Francis Solomon died in 1890 in Melbourne at age 39. They had three surviving children (Albert, Sarah, and Charles), two others having died in infancy.
- Esther (1852-1853) was born in May 1852 in Hobart and died there of scarlet fever in October 1853; another infant death in the family.
- Arthur (1854-1908) was born in May 1854 at Hobart, and married Elizabeth Ann Richards in Melbourne in 1878. Her father was George Thomas Richards and trace their family to Montgomeryshire, Wales, in the early 1800s. George Thomas Richardson (sic) migrated and married Dinah Luke in Melbourne in 1859; Elizabeth Ann was their first child, born in 1859. Elizabeth and Arthur Solomon lived in Carlton North and raised four children. Arthur Solomon worked as a plumber and died at Footscray in October 1908 at age 54 years. Elizabeth Solomon nee Richards died in Melbourne in 1939 at age 76 years. They are buried at the Melbourne General Cemetery.
- Frances Elizabeth (1856-1955) was born in November 1856 in Hobart, and married Charles James Partridge (1847-1915) in 1881 at Melbourne. Charles was born in 1847 in Greenwich, London, migrated to Melbourne pre-1868, and worked as a cigar manufacturer in Russell Street, Melbourne. He married his first wife in 1868 and they divorced in 1874. Frances and Charles Partridge had a daughter, Frances Elizabeth, who was born and died in 1881. Charles died in Brunswick in 1915, aged 68 years,

and was buried at Fawkner. Frances Partridge nee Solomon may have died in 1955 aged 99.

- Albert Lionel (1858-1955), sometimes known as Lionel Albert, was born in September 1858 in Hobart and married Elizabeth Mary "Norma" Bonner in Melbourne in 1890.¹ Norma was born in 1863 in New Zealand. Her parents were Alexander Bonner and Monica Maria Glass, who were from Ireland and migrated to New Zealand pre-1849. Albert and Norma were living in Carlton in the late 1890s, and in the early 1900s they were in South Yarra. Norma died in 1931 and was buried at Carlton North, Melbourne, aged 68 years. Albert died in 1955 at age 97.
- Walter "Willie" Wilsmore (1859-1884) was born in Hobart in November 1859. He was establishing a career in the Victoria Police Force and in 1882 was appointed as a Constable for the Melbourne District.² His appointment did not last long as he resigned soon after³ most probably because of health issues. He died of consumption (tuberculosis) at the family home, Solford, Maidstone, in January 1884, at age 24 years, and was buried at the Melbourne General Cemetery.



Joseph Solomon's Occupation Licences 1845-1849
Rick Kearn: Keilor to Footscray: Mr Solomon's Maribyrnong

¹ Some ancestry records indicate they had married in New Zealand.

² Victoria Police Gazette 22 March 1882 p84

³ Victoria Police Gazette 3 May 1882 p1

1909 – Thomas and Annie Burton

Thomas James Burton and Annie nee Morrison were farmers at Taylors Road, St Albans, in the time of the Overnewton Estate; i.e., from the early 1900s. The sale of the Overnewton Estate occurred in 1905 when the Closer Settlement Board had acquired some of the late William Taylor's property and subdivided it into small farms.



Thomas John Burton was born in 1867 in Melton, Victoria, to Thomas James Burton (1828-1896) and Margaret Esther Knowles (1833-1905). The Burton family origins go back to the 1760s in Worthington, Leicestershire, England; Thomas snr and Esther

Burton emigrated to Victoria in 1857. The Knowles family heritage goes back to 1780 Whalley, Lancashire, England. Margaret Esther Knowles married Thomas James Burton in 1852 and after emigrating the family settled in Melton; they raised six children.



Ann "Annie" Morrison was born in 1872 in Romsey, Victoria, to James Morrison and Prudence Knox. James was born in Ireland in 1829 but his family history is unknown. Prudence Knox was born in 1834 in Dodgrey,

Tyrone, Ireland, to Thomas Knox and Jane Armstrong. Thomas was born in 1801 in Fermanagh County, Northern Ireland. Jane was born in 1808 in Fermanagh County, Northern Ireland. Thomas and Jane married about 1833 and emigrated to Port Phillip Bay in 1841.

The Burton family were farmers in Melton from the 1860s:

Melton in 1876. Adjoining Lidgett's place to the south is a farm of 380 acres, occupied for 11 years by Mr. Burton, latterly almost exclusively for dairy purposes. About 30 acres are under crop this season with barley and oats, but formerly a much larger area was cultivated. Cropping has, however, been gradually curtailed within the last six or seven years, as grazing was found to give a better return. Dairying for butter is now the chief occupation, a mixed herd of about 80 head of cattle being kept. There are also about 200 crossbred sheep.¹

Thomas James Burton jnr married Annie Morrison in 1890 at Monegeetta Victoria. They had seven children: Thomas (1891), Ada (1893), William (1895), Robert (1896), Percy (1899), Annie (1902), and Jimmie (1904).

- Thomas James jnr was born in 1891 in Melton and married Ada Blanche Rowell in 1916. They moved to Riverina in New South Wales. He died in Cargelligo NSW in 1968 at age 77. Ada died in Cargelligo NSW in 2000 at age 108.
- Ada Burton was born in 1893 in Toolern Vale and married George Edmund Robinson in 1915; they moved to Bendigo where George worked as an inspector of factories and public buildings. He was the son of Catherine and James Robinson who was the station master at St Albans for about 20 years. George enlisted in April 1942 and was rostered for part time duty with 15th Battalion Volunteer Defence Corps; he was discharged in September 1945.
- William was born in 1895 in Melton and died in January 1901 at age 6.
- Robert was born in Melton in 1897 and died in October 1897 aged 1.
- Percy was born in July 1899 and was admitted to the St Albans state school in June 1909 from Sydenham, and left school in 1913. He enlisted in 1918 but was discharged as medically unfit. Percy married Ivy Lavinia Mabel Stephenson in 1926 and they settled in Bendigo where he worked as a labourer and later as a driver. Percy died in March 1973 at Bendigo. Ivy died in December 1990.
- Annie was born in March 1902 and was admitted to the St Albans state school in June 1909 from Sydenham, and left the school in 1912. She married William James Robinson who was the son of James Robinson, the stationmaster at St Albans. Annie and William had three sons and a daughter. William died of prostate cancer in August 1962 at age 66. Annie died in September 1984 at age 82 and her remains were cremated at the Altona Memorial Park.
- Jimmie was born in June 1904 and was admitted to the St Albans state school in June 1909 from Sydenham, and left the school in 1913. He married Rita May Hughes in 1923. They initially settled in Footscray but in the 1950s were farmers at Dromana. Rita died in October 1976 at age 71 and was buried at Altona. Jimmie died in 1 July 1977 at age 75 and was buried at Altona Memorial Park Cemetery.

¹ Bacchus Marsh Express 27 January 1877

The Burton family must have arrived in St Albans in June 1909 as that is when their youngest children started at the primary school. Their "Bayview" farm consisted of two properties, totalling 566 acres, situated between St Albans and Deer Park with a frontage to Kororoit Creek. The first block was of 305 acres of "fine agricultural and grazing land", with about 100 acres of crops (oats and barley) with creek frontage and a nice house. The second block of 251 acres was "all first class agricultural and grazing land" with 51 acres growing crop and four-roomed concrete house.¹

The family received an excellent reception from the local community:

*A welcome by the Overnewton people to Mr T. Burton and family took the form of a social and dance in St. Albans Hall, on Friday evening of last week, which was attended by fully 200 people. Mr A. Fox, on behalf of the gathering, welcomed Mr and Mrs Burton and family to the district, and in the course of his remarks mentioned Mr Burton as just the stamp of a man they were looking for, as he had all the necessary appliances suitable for dealing with the land, being a practical man, and was thoroughly capable of giving his opinion of the future prospects of the plains, which was that it was good land, only wanting working.*²

Burton thanked the people for the very kind way they had received him and his family. He had come from a good district, sold out for a good price, and was quite satisfied with the prospects in front of him. Given a fair rainfall he knew the land would respond and in a very short time be as good as the place he had left.

The Burtons established a sheep farm and were raising comeback and merino varieties as well as crops. Soon enough he was complaining about the rain:

*Mr T. J. Burton, St. Albans, wrote, drawing attention to damage to his crop caused by flood waters from the Ballarat road, and suggesting that part of the bank be cut down and water carried on.*³

The Burtons were members of St Alban The Martyr Anglican Church and joined other local groups. Thomas joined the St Albans Cricket Club, possibly from its earliest days, and in 1912 was a Vice-President on the committee of management. They also took part in the annual sport and picnic events that were held in the Mechanics Hall and on Errington

Reserve. Thomas snr did well in 1913 but the report suggests he had some health problems:

*The next event of this last programme was interrupted by the word "tea is ready", but the now enthusiastic sports continued nevertheless, with a "putting the weight" competition; also a challenge affair won by Mr. Burton, a grey haired 17 stone farmer whose son won so many events of the afternoon, but who, in spite of sciatica, easily defeated all-comers.*⁴

Sadly, health issues overtook Thomas Burton a couple of years later, as in March 1916 he died at the young age of 48 years:

*The many friends of Mr T. Burton, of St. Albans (late of Toolern) will regret to hear of his death, which took place at the Alfred Hospital on Tuesday, the cause being meningitis. On the previous Tuesday he attended the Newmarket sales in his usual health. Returning home that evening he complained of a pain in his head. Next day he was so ill that an ambulance was called in, and he was taken to the hospital where he died as stated. He was 48 years of age, and leaves a wife and five children, to whom the sympathy of the district is extended.*⁵

The late Thomas Burton was buried in the Gisborne cemetery. He had died without making a will and it took a while to settle the estate.

In the meantime Percy Burton had enlisted in July 1918 at age 19 years. His mother wrote to the authorities objecting to Percy's enlistment, say he had had rheumatic fever twice and was the victim of a farm accident through which he sustained three broken and two fractured ribs, and a burst kidney: "If taken for active service, there will be one boy of 14 home with me, the said son being a married man with one child living elsewhere."

Dr John Anderson confirmed that Percy had a history of rheumatic fever and rheumatism. Percy was then discharged in November 1918 as medically unfit.

The family's "Bayview" farm was offered for sale in September 1918 and finally sold in 1922 to Sasella Brothers of Footscray who paid £9,500. The farming plant and machinery etc was auctioned off and it's interesting to see what a small farmer of St Albans in the early 1900s relied on:

Machinery-12½-h.p. portable oil engine (Pitt); travelling chaff cutter, 3 knives, single hagger (Cliff and Bunting); 4-h.p. Titan engine; 5in. centrifugal pump and 186ft 6in. double galvanised piping, steam separator (100 gal., Princess), 2 hand separators. Implements - 3 reapers and binders (Massey), 2 6ft 1 5ft McKay harvester, 3-furrow McKay disc plough, 4-furrow Mitchel disc plough, 8-

¹ Age 18 September 1918 p2

² Footscray Independent 13 November 1909 p3

³ Footscray Independent 16 December 1911 p3

⁴ Footscray Independent 18 October 1913 p3

⁵ Sunbury News 11 March 1916 p2

furrow McKay disc cultivator, McKay spring-time cultivator, 2 sets of 3-leaf harrows (Howden's), Buckeye mower, International 9ft roller, log roller, leveller, 15-hoe seed drill (Farmer's Favourite), 13-disc seed drill (Empire). Vehicles-Box waggon, tabletop waggon (Bunting), tip dray, R.T. jinker, buggy, tip dray body, 22 ft extension ladder. 19 horses, comprising 7 draught geldings, 4 draught mares, all splendid workers; 3-year-old filly, 3-year-old gelding, both unbroken; 2 yearling foals, 3 ponies, S. and H.; 2-year-old pony, unbroken. Harness for all horses, collars and hames, saddles and breechings, pulley chains, &c. 6 Cattle - 3 milkers, 1 young bull, 2 calves; 1 pig. Tools -Drilling machine and drills, large anvil, breast drill, grind-stone, portable forge, large bellows, vyce, &c. Furniture for 7 rooms. Cherry churn, washing trough, 12-gal. copper, incubator, hosts of sundries.¹



Annie Burton nee Morrison died at age 82 years in June 1954 at Tottenham, Victoria:

On June 11, at her daughter's residence, 38 Dempster street, Tottenham, loved wife of the late Thomas, dearly beloved mother of Thomas (N.S.W.), Ada (Mrs. Robinson, Bendigo), William (deceased), Robert (deceased), Percy (Bendigo). Annie (Mrs. Robinson), and Jimmy (Main Ridge), aged 82 years. Peacefully sleeping.²

¹ Argus 14 October 1922

² Argus 12 June 1954 p18

1910 – Osborne Wilson

Osborne Henry Wilson was born in 1897 in Melton, Victoria, to Alexander Wilson (1851-1932) and Selina Matilda Sarah Donnelly (1857-1940). The Wilson heritage goes back to 1809 in Newcastle, Northumberland, England. The Donnelly heritage goes back to 1787 in Orange County, Ireland. Alexander and Selina married in Sunbury in 1875 and raised eleven children between 1876 and 1899. They had settled in Sunbury but moved around; e.g. in 1908 they were in Gippsland with Alexander working as a ganger and Selina as the Post Mistress. In 1910 they were living in Henry Street, St Albans, with Selina doing Home Duties and Alexander was recorded as living on independent means. They were still there in the same circumstances in 1930s when in their 80s. Alexander died in Keilor in 1932 and Selina died in North Melbourne in 1940.

Osborne Wilson had a connection with St Albans from at least 1910, when he and his brother Alexander started at the primary school. Their father was a railway ganger and it was not unusual for such families to move where work was available; e.g., Joyce Wilson started at the school in 1928, left for Kyneton in 1930, was re-admitted to St Albans from Preston in 1932, and left in 1934.

Osborne "Obbie" Wilson enlisted in 1918 at age 20 and gave his permanent address as being St Albans. Unfortunately, he was declared unfit due to rheumatism. He had been working as a labourer, but started anew by establishing a grocery store on the corner of Amy Street and Main Road West:

About 1920, Mr Hobby [Obbie] Wilson had a green grocery next to the produce yard, which was later owned by Mr Paint [Peart] and later still by Mr Hasset.³

The produce yard referred to was Harrison's General Store in 1914 which became Perrett's General Store in 1923. Wilson's smaller store also had some mixed business and he acted as the local agent for the Broadway Boot Repairers of Footscray.

Osborne Henry Wilson married Lila May Booth in 1922. Lila was born in Allandale in 1902, the daughter of Henry Booth (1869-1945) and Ann Elenor Miller (1865-938). Henry was from Creswick Victoria, and Ann was from Daylesford Victoria. Their earlier histories are not known.

Osborne Wilson and Lila Booth raised four children: Elenor Jean, Kevin Maxwell, Shirley May, and Joyce. Elenor married George Edwin Morris Swenson and had a

³ *St Albans The First Hundred Years 1887-1897*, St Albans Railway Centenary Committee, 1986, p37

daughter. The other children's histories have not been traced.

The Wilsons were still in St Albans in 1929 and Osborne was lucky to be alive:

Motor truck crashes into tree. Occupants' lucky escape. Owing to faulty steering gear a Chevrolet truck, driven by Mr. O. H. Wilson, green-grocer of St. Albans, on Thursday morning, crashed into a tree in Ballarat road, near the tram terminus, and was smashed into fragments. Mr. Wilson, and Mr. R. Fallon who was with him, escaped with abrasions and shock.¹

According to Gavin Aiken, Wilson's grocery store changed hands a few times: during the 1930s it was run by Frederick Peart and later by Robert McCreery, and in the 1940s it was run by the Hassett family.

By 1938 Ossie and Lila had moved to Stone Street Yarraville, By 1942 they were in Williamstown Road, Footscray North, and Wilson was again working as a labourer.

Osborne Henry Wilson "gentleman" of Yarraville, died in August 1949 at the young age of 52 years, and was buried at the Footscray Cemetery;

The death occurred after a long and painful illness of a former resident of St. Albans in the person of Mr. Osborne Wilson (Obbie) at his home Williamstown Road, Yarraville, on 11th August. The Wilson family had been old residents of St. Albans, and Mr. O. Wilson had conducted a shop here at one time. He is survived by his wife, two daughters and one son. He was 51 years of age and was a brother-in-law of Mr. Robt. Mounsey, of St Albans. The funeral took place at Footscray Cemetery on Friday last. Walter A. Warne had charge of the funeral arrangements.²

Lila May Wilson nee Booth died in December 1965 at Footscray at age 63 and was buried at the Footscray Cemetery.



Harrison's General Store near Amy Street 1920s

1920 – Charles and Doris Dennis

Charles Retalick Henry Dennis was born in March 1889 in Eaglehawk, Victoria, to Charles Retalick Hodge Dennis and Henrietta Daugherty. The Dennis family origins go back to 1773 in Cornwall England; Matthew Dennis married Sarah Retalick Hodge in 1845, they emigrated in 1857 and bought land in Chewton, Victoria.

The Daugherty family heritage goes back to Henry Dougherty (sic) in 1883 in Belfast, Antrim, Northern Ireland; his daughter Henrietta Daugherty was born in 1858 in Pentridge, Victoria.

Henrietta Daugherty and Charles Retalick Hodge Dennis raised eleven children between 1881 and 1898 – Charles Retalick Henry was a middle child, born in Eaglehawk in March 1889. In 1914 Charles was living with his parents in Prahran and working as a bootmaker – he married Doris Catherine Gertude Bowen in St Kilda in 1914.

Doris's parents were Bingham Noel Bowen and Rosamond May Lees. The Bowen family is traced back to 1804 in George Town, Tasmania. Rosamond Lees was born in Richmond in 1866.

In 1931 Charles and Doris Dennis were living in St Albans and Charles was working as a bootmaker. Charles and Doris raised seven children: Alfred Charles (1914), Reginald Vincent (1916), Dorothy (1917), Nellie Beatrice (1919), Violet May (1920), Irene Ruby (1921), and Florence (1922).

- Alfred Charles was born in February 1914, was at the primary school 1920-1927 and then went to Williamstown High School. He served in the war. He died before 1996 at about 82 years.
- Reginald Vincent born in September 1916, was at the primary school 1922-1927 and then went to Williamstown High School; he worked as a rubber worker. He served in the war. He married Norma Eleanor Brown in 1940 and lived in Sutherland Street, Coburg. He divorced her and married Nancy Ida Downward in 1947. He was later living in East Brunswick. He died in February 1971 at age 54 years.
- Dorothy Henrietta Irene was born in November 1917, was at the primary school 1923-1931 and then worked at home. She married Albert Charles Weibrecht (qv) in 1941. He was of German heritage but was a second generation Aussie by birth, being born in Horsham in 1912. He enlisted in

¹ Sunshine Advocate 13 September 1929 p1

² Sunshine Advocate 19 August 1949 p1

June 1941 at age 39 years, and in 1943 was at Port Moresby.

- Nellie Adelaide Beatrice born in July 1919, was at the primary school 1925-1933 and then took up millinery duties. She married Alexander Vincent Hassett of Theodore Street, St Albans. Nellie died in 1992 at Indented Head at age 73 and was buried at Portarlington.
- Violet May was born in September 1920, was at the primary school 1926-1924 and then went to factory work. She married Andrew Alexander Wright and they lived in Keilor East. Violet died in 2007 at age 86. Andrew died in 2010 at age 89.
- Irene Ruby Pearl was born in September 1921 and was at the state school 1927-1934. During the mid to late 1940s she was with the local Girls Club and was Vice President in 1949. Irene and Marion McAuley were noted for their fine form. Irene became a ladies hairdresser and worked from the home in Victoria Crescent. She died in 1996 at 74 and was buried at Keilor.
- Florence Gertrude was born in October 1922 and was at the primary school 1928-1934. She married William Ernest Landers, who was a driver; they lived in Altona and raised two children. William died in 1984 at age 64. Florence died in 2012 at age 92 and was buried at Portarlington.

Charles Dennis is remembered as the bootmaker of St Albans, but he wasn't the only one. Mary Smith remembered the other bootmaker "was Mr James Dunne. Mr Seton Carr and Mr Charles Dennis also made boots from the house in Victoria Crescent. They measured your foot for length and width and made them on a shoe last and a large boot-sewing machine."

Frank Farrugia had fond memories of the family because they were neighbours:

Mr Charles Dennis was a shoe maker and the family used to live near us. They were diagonally across the road from us on the corner of Arthur Street and Taylors Road. When we were kids we had no radio so we'd run across there to listen to the kids' shows: Dad and Dave, Superman and all the other serials that would continue next week. Before you went into the house you'd put your feet up and pull out all the Bindi Eyes, because your feet were that tough from running around with no shoes on.

Mention should be made of the two older boys in the family because they served in the war. Alfred Dennis served in Egypt and received the Military Medal. He was welcomed

back very warmly and received excellent coverage in the local press:



Lance-Bombardier Alf Dennis honored for conspicuous gallantry in face of terrific opposition in Egypt. Lance-Bombardier C. A. (Alf) Dennis ... has been awarded the Military Medal. This brave young man, who is a son of Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Dennis, of St. Albans, enlisted just after the outbreak of the war, and was attached to the Field

Artillery. In the despatches describing the incident when he received recognition, it is stated that he acted as an observer post assistant to an officer who was ordered to neutralise mortar and machine gun fire near Tel el Eisa station. Soon after arrival at the point the officer was wounded, and though it was only his second day in action, and he had no previous experience of shooting with live ammunition, Alf Dennis took over under constant shelling and machine gun fire directed the troop until relief arrived two hours later. The message states that without the help that Dennis was able to give, the infantry could not have held the station. Lance bombardier Dennis is unmarried, and 30 years of age. He has resided in St. Albans for 23 years, and was well known in that and the Keilor districts.¹



Reginald Vincent Dennis enlisted for service in July 1940 – he was aged 23 and living in Coburg and his occupation was listed as a rubber worker. His application states that he had previously served for over two years as a Machine Gun Boy with the 32nd Battalion. This

time he served from August 1940 to October 1945 with the A.I.F. in the Middle East. He was awarded the Returned From Active Badge.

Doris Dennis nee Bowen passed away in 1948:

We have to report the death of Mrs. Doris Gertrude Dennis, who passed away at her home at Victoria Crescent, St. Albans last week. The deceased was born at Geelong and leaves a husband and grown-up family of seven children to mourn their loss. Her funeral which was largely attended took place on 10th Feb. from her home and the remains were interred in the Keilor Cemetery. ²

Charles Retalic Henry Dennis passed away in August 1969 at age 80 years and was buried at the Keilor East Cemetery.

¹ Sunshine Advocate 18 September 1942

² Sunshine Advocate 20 February 1948

1925 – Willy and Lena Stein



Wilhelm "Willy" Stein of St Albans from the 1920s was born in Germany in 1863 as Wilhelm Ferdinand Anton Paul Clemens von Stein-Liebenstein. His parents were Karl Franz Jérôme von Stein Liebenstein zu Barchfeld Ducal Grand Marshal Baron von Stein (1832-

1913), and Caroline Elise Von Stein Liebenstein zu Barchfeld nee MacDonell (1836-1915). The MacDonell line goes back to Angus MacDonald in 1689 in Aberchalder, Inverness, Scotland, United Kingdom. Karl and Caroline had six children: Franz (1857), Emilie Caroline Ida (1858), Josephine "Ina" (1859), Wilhelm (1863), Georg Feodor Edmund Franz (1873), and Ferdinand (died as infant).

As indicated above, the family had a "von" prefix to the surname, thus Wilhelm Stein (he dropped the "von" when he came to Australia) was from an aristocratic heritage and has written about his family's origins in his memoirs of 1935:

I have wandered from 1116 to the most modern days. I have come to the conclusion that the family von Stein-Liebenstein zu Barchfeld has had a number of great soldiers amongst its members. The only occupation suited for a nobleman in Germany, as well as other countries, was military service and going to war, not necessarily for your own country. This was so until the end of the Great War and the subsequent changes in the armies, which forced young men of noble families, by now mostly impoverished, to look to other sources for a livelihood.

Wilhelm grew up in an aristocratic family setting with his Austrian father and Scottish mother and, true to family history, he was sent to military college to train for his future career: "After spending a year or so in my parents' home visiting a local school I entered the Military Cadet College at Potsdam as one of his Prussian Majesty's youngest aspirants for future officership. It was a glorious time we boys had there."

However, the times were changing and Wilhelm was a bit of a rebel, so he later withdrew from military service. He had a discussion with his uncle Hugh McDonell who was the British Minister Plenipotentiary at the Royal Court of Bavaria, Munich, who advised him to go to Australia and "paddle your own canoe, as our boys do".

Wilhelm Stein emigrated to the "new world" of South Australia in 1883 and started

his new life outside the realm of European aristocracy. He had been able to leave Germany because he was in law a British subject, the children of Britishers (his mother) being British. In Adelaide he was laughed at, because he was now under British law but not recognised as a British subject until he was naturalised, which would have taken three years.¹ However, Wilhelm was not averse to the advantage of using social networks and spent time and money in the German club, dining with the Consul and Members of Parliament, mostly Germans, but the promised positions did not come forward and he "broke with them all and decided not to bother about Germans anymore."

His first Aussie job may have been as a drover for brothers Fred and Charlie Chapple who were some of the first shareholders in Silverton in 1885, before Broken Hill existed.

It seems that Wilhelm first came to Victoria in the late 1880s as he reports that between 1885 and 1892 he was a good deal on Kamrooka Station on the other side of Bendigo on the Picanini Creek:

"While I was there, I met the family McKay, who had a wheat farm in from Drummartin near Elmore. There were a number of boys and girls. At the time the sons, particularly Hugh, Victor and John, were just perfecting their first Harvester."

In 1896 he was planning to go to Western Australia where the Koolgardy gold fields were booming, but changed his mind and returned to Europe for a holiday and catching up with old friendships. While in Liebenstein he was approached to form a partnership with John Suhr to establish a health resort "Stahlbad Liebenstein". The spa attracted many customers, which is how Wilhelm Stein met Mrs Elizabeth Kob and her daughters, Emmy and Elsa:

Mrs. Kob was a lovely, lovable, dear old lady. Her daughter Emmy had been suffering for years from nervous and rheumatic trouble and a fortune had been spent on her without avail. There was little hope of her recovery. Elsa was single, the beautiful young woman with a lovely figure, healthy, happy. And we were only acquainted three weeks, when we decided to go through life together. Her mother had no objections, but the dear family upset earth and heaven to interfere in our union, all in vain.

The wedding took place in 1897 in the Calvinistic Reformed Church in Hamburg and lunch was at the Hamburger Hof hotel. Wilhelm

¹ Some Crown Ministers assisted him to get his naturalisation papers in November 1883 in the name of Wilhelm Ferdinand Anton Paul Clemens von Stein of Adelaide, with occupation listed as a merchant.

and Elsa's three sons were born in Liebenstein: Carl, Willy (who did not survive), and Alexi.

Stein sold his interest in Bad Liebenstein in 1903. The family headed for London in 1905 but when there they changed their minds and took passage to Auckland, New Zealand, where they arrived in October. They came to Australia about 1907. Having been absent when the different colonies had federated in 1901, Wilhelm had to become naturalised again under the Commonwealth jurisdiction.

Wilhelm's daughter Mary said that he aspired to be a merchant and joined the Barossa Valley people because a lot of German people had settled there, "*but he was a bad businessman and was always looking for something better.*" Mary said he left the Barossa in the early 1900s and went to Queensland where he became involved in a sugar plantation at the time when the industry used Kanakas for labourers. This created some difficulties, whereas Scandinavians and Germans had proved to be good colonists and were being encouraged to settle in Queensland and work the plantations. Wilhelm attended meetings with responsible ministers and was to be sent as a recruiting agent to Hamburg to further this cause. The German Government, having heard of the plans, informed the Queensland Government that anybody who would come to encourage their citizens to leave for foreign countries would be arrested and deported right away.

Wilhelm was still enjoying the utility of family connections:

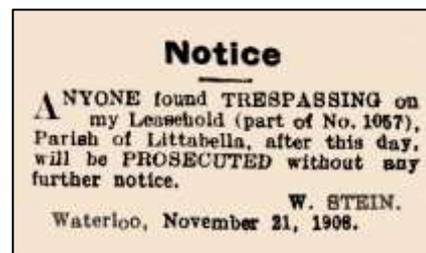
In Queensland I was befriended with the Wessels of Kalan River and the Young Brothers of Fairymead and was also acquainted with Lord Chelmsford, at the time Governor, and later Viceroy of India. His grandfather was a German Lutheran minister in Dresden who emigrated to England. Through a letter of introduction from my uncle Hugh MacDonell I also became acquainted with Lord Carrington, Governor of N.S.W. The Earl of Carrington belonged to the "Ward" family (as did Lord Dudley and one time Governor General) a member of which had bought the properties of the last Chief of MacDonells of Glengarry and Aros, when this gentleman decided to settle with a number of followers in America. Lord Ward is now owner of that estate in Scotland where my mother's family comes from.

The Steins settled at Waterloo,¹ Parish of Littabella, Bundaberg, where he was known as William Ferdinand Stein and Elsa as Elizabeth Stein.

Life in the cane fields was not without

¹ This was a cane growing district. Littabella is about 22 miles from Bundaberg. Adam Pringle started the Waterloo plantation in the early 1890s.

problems. In 1908 Stein advertised that anyone trespassing on his leasehold would be prosecuted.² Stein and his neighbours were asking when their road deviation would be opened as it was their only means of reaching the mill. In 1908 Stein wrote a letter alleging that the Waterloo Co. was allowing refuse molasses to pollute the waterways, adding that dozens of local people depended on the creek for their drinking water when the dry weather came.³ In 1914 he was asking for a road crossing to be made across Littabella Creek. In 1913 he impounded a team of stray bullock after having suffered several episodes of trespass and damage from stray stock, and his actions were upheld in court.⁴ Clearly he was a confident and assertive new settler.



In retrospect, it may not have been the best environment for Elsa Stein who has been described as a genteel lady who contracted cancer and returned to Germany where she died. Unfortunately, it is not known when Elsa left for Germany or when she passed away.

Wilhelm was likely a restless person at the turn of the century, as he reportedly travelled back and forth to Germany at least five times before the First World War, but after that he resided permanently in Australia. He probably returned with Elsa to Germany at the time of her illness but the details are not available.

Wilhelm Stein came back to Victoria about 1916 which he describes as being pretty happy days. He took up a selection of 110 acres, near Sugarloaf Creek, on the back road from Kilmore to Seymour "for the purpose of making a home for myself, when I was not on the ramble." He was befriended with Françoise de Castella, the son of Hubert de Castella of St. Hubert's Vineyard, Lilydale, and became particular friends with the Seymours and the Ryans. He worked for Din Ryan in fencing and ringbarking and later sold him his Sugarloaf selection. During the spring and summer seasons he would work on the big wheat farms north of Bendigo and found them to be profitable employment.

² Bundaberg Mail 24 November 1908 p3

³ Bundaberg Mail 5 November 1910 p8

⁴ Bundaberg Mail 19 April 1913 p4

Through the de Castella connection he was introduced to the family de Bear of Chateau Tahbilk between Seymour and Nagambie on the Goulburn:

It was most interesting for me to be there, for I learned not only all about vines and grapes, but assisted in the making of wine and brandy. There was good shooting, fishing and boating, and the owners, Mrs. Bear and her four daughters made me always welcome in the homestead.

Wilhelm eventually gravitated towards Melbourne, probably looking for work. His daughter Mary later stated that when the First World War started her father had great difficulty because of his German background and he couldn't get a job. Finally he met up with the McKays who had established the Sunshine Harvester company. This was the family he had met around Bendigo in the 1880s, and that friendship now came to his aid by providing him with secure employment:

When the depression was on it didn't effect him, because by then he had a good job at McKays in Sunshine where he worked out the first templates. For every part of the machine there was a template produced, and before anything else was done he had to set up the department records and catalogue them all. He was well rewarded for that.



During the 1920s Wilhelm Stein moved to Melbourne and settled in Clifton Hill. He married Selina Schieferdecker with whom he started a new family. Selina Hannah Schieferdecker was a home grown Aussie as she born in 1886 in the town of Collingwood. Her father was Frederich Schieferdecker (1857-1933) and her mother was Hannah Rebecca Churches (1861-1927). They family were living in North Fitzroy and Selina worked as a machinist.

The Schieferdecker heritage goes back to 1834 in Neuenstadt am Kocher, Heilbronn, Baden-Württemberg, Germany. Johannes Christian Schieferdecker married Christina Barbara Holzwarth and they came to Bendigo, Victoria, by the late 1890s.

The Churches heritage goes back to 1819 in Minchimhampton, Gloucestershire, England; James Churches of England married Rebecca Ann Long in 1860 in Collingwood, Victoria, and their first child was Hannah Rebecca Churches.

The family came to St Albans in 1925 and settled in Biggs Street. By this stage he was already working at McKays in Sunshine, and the Steins had moved to St Albans because it was close to work. There might have still been some resentment to people of German background, but Wilhelm was seemingly a self-assured and assertive man. He soon received a written, public apology from someone for malicious and libelling utterances.¹

He was also quick to argue the public cause for keeping the water in the local reservoir as clear and unpolluted as possible by banning people from swimming in it, because it was the only source of water for rough domestic purposes when water tanks went dry.² The Keilor Council supported the proposal and erected a notice warning persons against bathing in the water or otherwise contaminating it.³ Stein also articulated other local concerns, such as the state of the wooden footbridge in Theodore Street. Again, he was proving to be an articulate spokesperson on behalf of neighbours.

Lena and Wilhelm had first lived in Clifton Hill with accessible services where three of Lena's children were born: Alfred, Ferdinand, and Mary. They then moved to St Albans to be near his workplace at Sunshine. According to their daughter Mary, the new home was a particular shock to Selina:

... who had just come home from hospital with a new baby. She was used to the modern amenities available in the inner suburbs like Clifton Hill. Her new home was a run-down cottage on a goat farm in Biggs Street without any amenities in the house or the area. The washing was done in a bucket over some stones and a fire in the back yard. The goats ate everything, even the baby's washing.

A second daughter, Elsa, was born in St Albans. A third daughter followed, Elma, but she lived only a few days.

St Albans in the 1920s was a small village of 75 households with 120 people, mostly of British heritage. There were two shops (Perrett's and Wardle's), two churches (Anglican and Presbyterian), a small primary school, and a Mechanics Institute Hall, all clustered around the railway line that ran through the centre of the village. There was no electricity and no mains water supply – it was rainwater tanks for everyone.

Selina's most notable contribution to the St Albans community was through supporting the development of Catholic religious services at the Mechanics Institute Hall. Selina became

¹ Sunshine Advocate 23 May 1925

² Sunshine Advocate Saturday 1 December 1928

³ Sunshine Advocate 8 December 1928

very ill with major thyroid problems and spent a long time in the care of St Vincent's Hospital. She vowed to become a Catholic if she recovered, which she did. She contacted Father Fennessy of the Catholic parish in Sunshine who started monthly services at the St Albans Mechanics hall. Selina and her daughters would bring the altar accessories from home and arrange the seating. That continued for some years but when Selina's health further deteriorated the Gavaghan family took over the tasks. (The local Sacred Heart parish was formed by Fr Reis in 1953 and the Catholic church was built in 1954.)



Wilhelm Stein repairing road in Millawa Ave

These were the Depression days and times were tough. Wilhelm worked a few years at McKay's then had to retire due to his age. He received an old age pension but there was no allowance for his wife and children; it was very difficult. The children started work at age 14. Alf at McKay's, Ferd at Allison's Taylors, then Whiltshires, Mary at McKay's and Elsa at McKay's also. When World War Two broke out, all the children were out working and the boys soon joined the Navy.



Stein family at home in Millawa Avenue

Unfortunately, during the wartime the family experienced a degree of animosity from

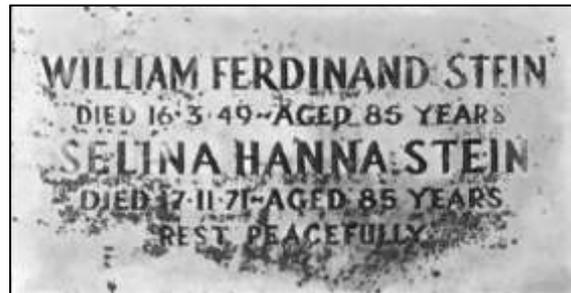
some quarters because of their German ancestry:

We were continually harassed, especially those at home as St Albans was a small town, also a very small-minded and ignorant place. Our house was stoned on Saturday and Sunday nights because we were Germans, even though our family were fighting the Germans.

There was also some generosity from a number of people whom they knew more directly. In the late 1940s they had to leave their long-term rented home as the new owner wanted it for his own family. The Steins moved to temporary accommodation at Fish Creek in Gippsland, but the housing was too cramped and the location too isolated. Then Eric Perrett, the St Albans village grocer who'd built a new home for his family, offered them the residence at the back of the shop. The Steins lived there for a few years.

St Albans in the late 1940s was starting to expand in response to economic and population growth after the war. The village now had 200 households with 850 people, and more local businesses were being established. The continental "new Australian" immigrants were starting to settle locally and would soon transform the quiet village into a thriving, cosmopolitan suburb.

Wilhelm Ferdinand Stein passed away in March 1949 at age 85 years. Selina Hannah Stein nee Schieferdecker passed away in November 1971, also at age 85 years.



Elizabeth Kob and Wilhelm Stein raised two children:

- Karl "Charlie" Ferdinand Werner Stein was born in Bad Leibenstein in 1898. In 1927 he married Lilian Annie Edwards who was born in White-chapel, London, in June 1903. They had two children. Karl died in Bendigo in 1983 at age 85. Lilian died in Bendigo in 1986 at age 82.
- Wilhelm "Willy" Stein died as an infant.
- Alexis Wilhelm "William" Emil Stein was born in 1901 in Bad Leibenstein. In October 1927 in Melbourne he married Leolyn Frances Power, who

was born in 1883 to Richard John Power and Mary Irene Stubley. Alexis and Leolyn had one child. Leolyn died in 1974 in Kew aged 91. Alexis died in 1985 at age 84.

Selina Stein nee Schieferdecker had raised four children:

- Alfred Charles was born in Carlton in 1912. He started work as an apprentice and was with McKay's Harvester Works based in Sunshine. He enlisted in the navy but his service details have not been found.
- Ferdinand Alexis was born in 1919 and started his working life at Allison's Taylors before moving to Whiltshires. He enlisted in January 1941 and served as Stoker 2nd Class on the Westralia. He married Queenie Irene Mary Hunter in Newcastle, NSW, in 1943; she was a Sydney girl from Newtown. She died in 2002 at age 87.
- Mary Edna was born in 1920. She started casual work as a young teenager before joining McKay's in Sunshine. In 1943 she married Eric Smith who was from Melton, and they had three children; their daughter Helen still lives in St Albans. Following in her father's footsteps, Mary developed an interest in history and was one of the oral historians behind the publication of "St Albans The First 100 Years", and contributed to other history projects. Mary passed away in 2015 at age 95, a St Albans stalwart for 90 years.
- Elsa Caroline was born in 1923. She also started working at McKay's at age 14. She married Bernie Mark Fry, who was originally from Shepparton, the son of Arthur Mark Fry and Ellen Gladys McCart. Bernie enlisted for service in 1940. He was in St Albans by the mid-1940s as he was in the 1947 football team, and that's the year that he married Elsa. They had one son, Mark Fry, who continues the tradition of researching family history. Elsa Caroline Fry nee Stein died at St Albans in 2005.

References:

- Discussions with the late Mary Smith nee Stein as recorded in *St Albans Oral History* (2004) and *Talking About St Albans* (2019).
- Autobiography *To My Dear Children and Grandchildren* written by Willy Stein-Liebenstein 1934/5.



St Albans state school class 1921



Mary Stein (centre) St Albans state school 1928



Main Road East looking west 1920s



Main Road West looking west 1920s



St Albans state primary school early 1900s

1926 – Claude and Elsie Cox

Claude Cox came to St Albans in the 1920s and established a barber and tobacconist shop on the corner of Main Road West and West Esplanade in the 1940s.

Claude Gellibrand Cox was a western suburbs boy because he was born in 1888 in Williamstown. His parents were Arthur James Cox and Mary Jane Baker. The Cox family heritage goes back to Arthur Cock or Cox in 1824 in Duxford, Cambridgeshire, England; he married Sarah Jarrold and they emigrated to Victoria in the 1850s. The Baker family heritage goes back to 1672 and Henry Baker in the Isle of Wight, England; William Robert Baker emigrated to Port Phillip Bay in 1844 and married Alice Glavin, whose first child was Mary Jane Baker.

Mary Jane Baker married Arthur James Cox in 1873 and they raised eight sons and three daughters between 1873 and 1894. The family were in Colac before moving to Williamstown in the late 1870s. Arthur James Cox was a bootmaker.

Claude Gellibrand Cox was born in Williamstown in November 1888. By 1909 he was in Lang Lang working as a labourer. In 1920 he married Elsie Annie Coyte who was from Yarraville. Her family heritage goes back to 1857 and Frederick Coyte in Modbury, Devon, England; he emigrated by 1883 and married Annie Boxshall in Brighton. They raised three sons and five daughters, Elsie Annie Coyte being born in Footscray.

Claude and Elsie Cox moved to St Albans by the mid-1920s and were living in Vincent Avenue. He worked as a flour-mill hand. In 1929 Claude was a committee member of the St Albans Progress Association when it had 23 members and was chaired by Ernest Luxford, the incumbent for 15 years.

In 1931 Cox was the social secretary for the St Albans Severance Movement and organising a euchre and dance fund raiser at the Mechanics Institute Hall.¹ They wanted St Albans to break away from Keilor and join Braybrook (Sunshine) but that did not occur.

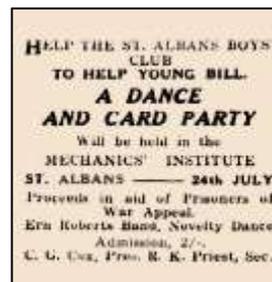
In 1941 it was euchre and dancing for Red Cross. In 1942 they organised Community Singing each Thursday night with Ern Roberts providing the music and "a delightful night is assured to everyone attending."²

Cox was ill in 1938 and it wasn't till March 1939 after a long illness that he was welcomed back to the Progress Association.

In 1941 he was the President of the St Albans sub-branch of the Red Cross Society and organising another euchre and dance fund raiser at the Mechanics Institute Hall: "Good Music and Prizes. Many Novelties."

In 1943 he was instrumental in forming a local branch of the Australian Labor Party and was elected President:

... a public meeting was held in the Mechanics' Institute to form a branch of the A.L.P. There was a fair attendance, and all present became members. Mr. D. McNamara, General Secretary of the A.L.P., and Messrs. T. Baker and A. Allen, of the West Sunshine Branch, were also in attendance. At the opening of the meeting Mr. Baker presided, and, after a motion by Mr. Cox, seconded by Mr. Straughen, that a Branch of the A.L.P. be formed in St. Albans, nominations were called for various positions, and the following office-bearers were elected: President: Mr. C. G. Cox. Vice-presidents: Messrs. A. Dixon and J. Straughen. Secretary: Mr. D. Gavaghan, Treasurer: Mr. S. Webb. Committee: Messrs. W. Beasley, M. Power, L. Robertson.³



In 1944 he was helping with the funds appeal for the Footscray and District Hospital. He was also the President of the St Albans Boys' Club, and organising more of their social events.

Elsie Cox's mother, Mrs Annie Coyte, became ill and came to stay with them, but passed away in 1945:

On April 14, at her daughter's residence, Vincent Ave., St. Albans, Annie, the darling mother of Elsie (Mrs C. G. Cox, St. Albans), and devoted grandmother of Meryl (Mrs F. J. Scheurer, Sydenham), in her 81st year, late of Yarraville. Dearly loved and sadly missed. Rest after long and patient suffering.⁴

Claude was taking extra activities and in August 1945 was elected to the committee of the Footscray and District Out-Patients and Welfare Centre of the Footscray Hospital⁵ and served with them for at least five years,

The sad news in 1946 was that Elsie Anne Cox passed away in Sydenham on January 4th at the home of her niece, Mrs Meryl Elsie Scheurer. Elsie Cox nee Coyte was aged a young 53 years:

It is with regret we record the death of Mrs. C. G. Cox, the wife of Mr. C. G. Cox, of Oberon Av., St. Albans. The late Mrs. Cox was very highly respected in the district, she

¹ Sunshine Advocate 4 September 1931

² Sunshine Advocate 13 March 1942

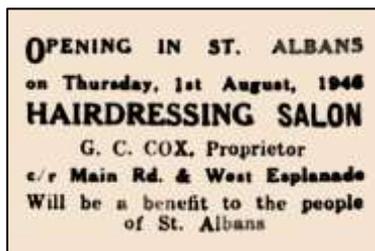
³ Sunshine Advocate 23 July 1943

⁴ Sunshine Advocate 20 April 1945

⁵ Sunshine Advocate 10 August 1945

had been ill for some considerable time and passed away on Friday last. She was buried at Footscray Cemetery on Saturday last. Much sympathy is extended to Mr. Cox in his very sad bereavement. Mr. Cox, was an active member of both the St. Albans A.L.P. and Progress Association and members of both organisations extend their sympathy.¹

Claude Cox started anew by establishing his own business as a hairdresser, with his "hairdressing salon" at the corner of Main Road West and West Esplanade, which had been the premises of Mr Iron the butcher. Cox continued his community activities.



In 1947 Cox was the Chief Marshall for the carnival on Errington Reserve that featured a procession from Self's corner, Victoria Crescent, East Esplanade, and Main Road East to the Reserve, a cavalcade of people and decorated floats, motorcycles, bikes, etc.²

In 1948 it was back to political activity and the local ALP branch was pleased with increasing membership inquiries because of solid voting trends at state and federal levels. It was decided to select a candidate to contest the first vacancy in the Maribyrnong Riding at Keilor, and Claude Cox was unanimously nominated as Labour candidate for the next vacancy.³ The opportunity occurred when Cr Frank Jolly resigned, and Cox nominated:

I have resided in St. Albans for 21 years and during that period I have assisted in all movements for the advancement of the town and district, particularly in the agitation for electric light and water supply. I have served as President of the following organisations in St Albans: The Red Cross Society; the Progress Association; the Boys' Club, and I am at the present time President of the Australian Labour Party, and will carry the Labour endorsement in the election. The St. Albans Branch of the A.L.P. has recently secured improvements in the train service, and the promise of the installation in the near future by the Postal Department of an additional telephone booth and two letter pillar boxes. I have assisted in promoting the welfare of the local school and claim to have been a deciding factor in obtaining the

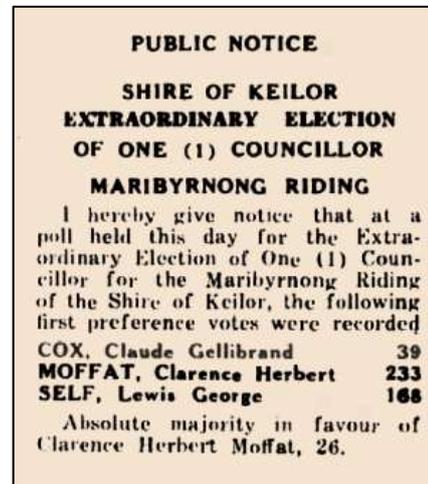
¹ Sunshine Advocate 11 January 1946

² Sunshine Advocate 5 December 1947

³ Sunshine Advocate 16 January 1948

extension of the water service to the school after conferring with the Chairman of the M.M.B.W. For the past 5 years I have been the district's representative on the Footscray Hospital Board.⁴

It became a triangular contest with three local businessmen from village centre nominating: Louis Self, Bert Moffat, and Claude Cox. The poll was held in June and Bert Moffat won easily.



Cox's business may have improved in the late 1940s. In 1948 he was advertising for an assistant and in 1952 was trying an innovation by opening as a depot for Marx's Laundry and Barclay's of Sunshine.



Claude's activities are not known for the later 1950s as the local newspapers are not digitised for that period. At some stage Claude transferred his business to Clifford James Snooks, who later moved the business to Alfrieda Street where he was working with Harry Cram. More than that is not known

Claude Gellibrand Cox passed away in May 1957 at age 68 and was buried at Footscray.

It appears that Elsie nee Coyte and Claude Cox did not have any children.

⁴ Sunshine Advocate 18 June 1948

1928 – William and Ada Lodge

William Lodge (1888-1953) and Ada Wilde (1890-1960) came to St Albans in 1928 and became very progressive hosts of social and philanthropic entertainments. William was a labourer and iron dresser at the Sunshine Harvester Works. Ada started working as the housekeeper at Strathalbyn in West Esplanade, the home of Alice Errington. Williams parents were Mary and Thomas Lodge but their heritage is not known. Ada's parents were William Wilde and Pamela Cooper and their heritage is also unknown.

William and Ada Lodge came to St Albans about 1928 and lived in West Esplanade. Their son Stanley was born about 1914. Their daughter Clara was born in December 1921 and started at the St Albans primary school in October 1928.

The family became very active in the district and stayed for two decades. Articles about their progressive community work started appearing in local papers during the 1930s.

In June 1935 Ada's older sister, Mrs Clara Currie (born about 1879), arrived from London – the two sisters had not seen each other for twelve years. There was a small hall on the Lodge's property and the two sisters soon put it to use for a variety of social and community events and fundraising causes.

In August 1935 Stan Lodge, the only son of William and Ada, became engaged to Lorna Mavis Boreham of Sunshine; they married in 1936. Lorna was the daughter of Samuel Thomas Boreham and Elizabeth Muriel Williams. The Boreham heritage goes back to 1772 in Suffolk, England. Elizabeth was born in September 1889 in Maldon, Victoria, the first of seven children born to George Williams and Elizabeth Jane Rowe; the Williams family going back to 1792 in Whitford, Flintshire, Wales.

In March 1938 Ada and her daughter Clara conducted a concert and fancy dress ball in aid of the after-care fund that was being organised by The Herald, and donated £10/14/6 towards the Herald fund.¹

In July 1940 they held a very successful card party at their home in aid of Footscray and District Hospital's Red Cross Appeal, the net proceeds being £1/17/. The president, Mrs Agnes Stevens, one of the great benevolent workers of the district, expressed appreciation of the generosity of Mrs Turner, who sponsored the afternoon and Mrs Lodge

for the use of the hall.² There was also a fancy dress juvenile ball held at Mrs Lodge's home on Saturday afternoon and was very enjoyable. "Many children were in fancy dress and had a good frolic. Each child received a present. Proceeds were for the Red Cross. A successful euchre afternoon was held on Wednesday at Mrs Lodge's home to aid Red Cross."³

In July 1941 there was another card game, this time for the Footscray and District Hospital Building Appeal. The Lodge's fund raising model was combining the fun of socialising with the good will of giving, and it was very successful:

The organisers were Miss L. White and Mrs. W. White, jnr. The first prize, donated by Mrs. Lodge, was won by Mrs. White, and the consolation prize, donated by Mrs. Currie, was won by Mrs. Clarke, snr. A sponge, donated by Mrs. F. McCreery was won by Miss L. White, and subsequently sold. All residents are reminded that the annual meeting of the St. Albans Red Cross Sub-Branch will be held at the hall on Monday, July 28, at 8 p.m. Card players are also reminded of the euchre afternoon to be held at the hall on Tuesday next, proceeds of which are to go to the Australian Comforts Fund: Radio Party Drive.⁴

In July 1941 it was a euchre afternoon in aid of the sub-branch of the Red Cross Society. In August it was a supper dance organised by Mesdames Lodge, Currie and Cox in aid of the Footscray and District Hospital Building Appeal. In November there was the welcome to honour another local boy, Stoker Albert Siddall, who had answered the call to duty.

The special event in January 1942 was the welcome to a St Albans sailor:

A very pleasant evening was spent at the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. Lodge, on Monday, the occasion being a social evening to Able Seaman Reg. Brown, who was home on a very short leave after being in action for 20 months. Cr. Jolly, after a few touching words, presented Reg. with a cheque for £4/4/- from a few residents of St. Albans, and also a wallet from the Councillors of Keilor. Able Seaman Brown suitably responded, and thanked all who attended for the unexpected presents and kindness shown to him. Miss Hazel Arkers presented his mother with a bouquet of carnations kindly given by Mrs. Douglas. After supper dancing was indulged in, Mr. Perrett being M.C. The evening was brought to a close by the singing of "Auld Lang Syne," everybody having had a very enjoyable time. Special thanks are extended

¹ Sunshine Advocate Friday 18 March 1938

² Sunshine Advocate Friday 27 June 1941

³ Sunshine Advocate Friday 19 July 1940

⁴ Sunshine Advocate 18 July 1941

by Mrs. Lodge and Mrs. Currie to all who helped to make the evening such a success.¹

The bad news in May 1942 was that William Lodge and another man were injured at work when a steel door, weighing more than half a ton, fell on them. William had his hand crushed but his colleague had his leg amputated.²

In January 1944 the Lodges welcomed home local boy, L.A.C. Bell, of the R.A.A.F., who had been away for two years on active service, and was now enjoying a well-earned rest. A large number of friends turned up to give him a real good welcome home, and the evening sped along very quickly. Items were given by A/C Eric White (R.A.A.F.) on his Spanish guitar, and Mr. J. White on his steel guitar, which caused much fun and was well applauded.³

In June 1944 the welcome was for two local boys, Mr. Owen Riley and Mr. Jim Carr, who have served for a long period on active service in New Guinea, and were now having a well-earned rest. A large number of friends gathered to give the boys a really good welcome home, and the evening sped away too quickly.⁴

In December 1942 the special occasion was coming of age of Clara Lodge: "About 120 persons were present, which, in itself, speaks for the popularity of this young lady."

In February 1945 it was a welcome back to Private J. Driscoll, Private J. O'Brien, and Able Seaman Doug Webb, wounded in the arm while serving on H.M.A.S. Australia.⁵ In June it was the welcome home for L.A.C. Wilfred Walker and L.A.C. Collin Harris.⁶

November 1945 was more poignant an occasion to welcome home Private J. Moran, who had been a prisoner of war for nearly four years.

In August 1946 there was "a final social evening" to four local boys:

A very large number of residents and friends assembled at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Lodge to welcome home the last of the boys from St. Albans, who have arrived home after long active service in the forces, Ron. Brown, Vin Carr, Wally Webb, and Frank Gavaghan.⁷

The celebration in September 1946 was a special welcome to a Blighty bride:

On Saturday August 24th, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. Lodge, West Esplanade, a

welcome was given to the first English bride of St. Albans, Mrs. Wally Baulch. - Wally, a well-known St. Albans cricketer, served with the A.I.F. in the Middle East and in England. It was whilst in Blighty that he met his bride, whose former home was in Eastbown, Sussex. The evening was a great success and the welcome extended the young bride should allay some of the quite natural strangeness experienced by her in her new country.⁸

Unfortunately, a sadder memorial took place in April 1949:

On Friday evening last the Mechanics Institute was again crowded to capacity when local residents tendered a Social Evening to Mr. and Mrs. W. Lodge, Mrs. Currie and Mr. R. Errington⁹ on the eve of their departure from St Albans. The Shire President (Cr. A. J. Davis) referred to the work done by these good people during the war period. Before making the presentations, Cr. Davis invited Mr. Jolly to support him. Ex-Cr. Jolly referred to the many functions organised by the Lodge family for the benefit of servicemen and women. Mrs. Lodge responded on behalf of the recipients. During the evening several items were given and a delightful supper was served. A tribute to the work of the energetic Secretaries, Mr. and Mrs. W. Baulch, and a strong committee was applauded by all present.¹⁰



An even sadder farewell occurred in November 1953 when William Lodge passed away at age 60: "On 5th November at this residence, 18 Servante St., Sunshine, loving husband of Ada dearly loved father of Stan and Clara, father-in-law of Lorna and Joe, grandchildren, Ken, Bev., Diane, Graeme and Neville, brother-in-law of Mrs. Currie. "Patient Sufferer at Rest".¹¹

Clara Currie nee Wilde died at Sunshine in 1956 at age 77.

¹ Sunshine Advocate 9 January 1942

² Sunshine Advocate 15 May 1942

³ Sunshine Advocate 21 January 1944

⁴ Sunshine Advocate 23 June 1944

⁵ Sunshine Advocate 23 February 1945

⁶ Sunshine Advocate 15 June 1945

⁷ Sunshine Advocate 2 August 1946

⁸ Sunshine Advocate 6 September 1946

⁹ Robert "Bobby" Errington was the son of the widow Alice Errington whom Ada had been assisting as housekeeper in their Strathalbyn home. Alice died in 1931 and Ada had agreed to take care of Bobby.

¹⁰ Sunshine Advocate 8 April 1949

¹¹ Sunshine Advocate 6 November 1953

Ada Lodge nee Wilde died at Footscray in 1960 at age 70 years.



1930 – Vincent Carr



Vincent Carr was the fourth son of Seton Ansley Carr (1895-1972) and Henrietta Violet May Dennis (1894-1980) who had married in Victoria in 1916. They moved from Ripponlea to St Albans in 1930 and made their home in

Victoria Crescent. Seton Carr is remembered as being the bootmaker of St Albans.

The Carr heritage goes back to 1749 in Whitrigg, Bowness, Cumberland, England; James John Carr married Sarah Ann Button and they emigrated to Victoria in the 1870s.

Henrietta Dennis was born in Bendigo to Charles Retalic Hodge Dennis and Henrietta Daugherty. Charles was born in 1850 Chacewater, Cornwall, Truro, England. Henrietta snr was born in 1858 in Pentridge, Victoria to Henry Daugherty from Belfast and Sophia Grub from Chatham Barracks, England.

Seton Ansly Carr married Henrietta Violet May Dennis in 1916 and they had five children: Violet Ruby Ann (1917), Seton Alfred (1918), William Charles John (1922), James Henry (1923), and Vincent William (1925).

- Violet Ruby Ann was born in July 1917, started at St Albans state school in 1923, left in 1925 for Elsternwick, came back in 1930, and left in 1931 for home duties. She married Raymond Charles Newman of Deer Park in 1946 and had a child. Violet died in July 2012 at age 95.
- Seton "Syd" Alfred was born in December 1918, started at St Albans state school in 1930 from Ripponlea and left in 1933. He became a tool maker and worked for Nettlefolds in Sunshine. In 1937 he enlisted in the military forces. He appears to have re-enlisted in 1940 and was discharged in 1945. He married Ethel May Warne in 1946 and they had two children: James William, and Lindsay Edward Raymond. Syd Carr died in Melton in September 2008 at age 89. Ethel died in Melton in September 2008 at age 87.
- William Charles John was born in Windsor in 1922 and died in February 1924 at age two; he was buried at Caulfield South.
- James "Jim" Henry was born in March 1923, started at St Albans state school in 1930 from Ripponlea and left in

1934. He enlisted in 1942 and served a year with the CMF and four with the AIF, serving in New Guinea and the Solomons; he was discharged in May 1946. He married Gwenneth Alvina Austin and they raised two children; they were living in Footscray West. Gwenneth died in 1991 at age 60. James died in May 2013 at Melton at age 90 years.

- Vincent "Vinnie or Vin" William Charles was born 1925 started at St Albans state school in April 1930 from Ripponlea and left in 1934. He enlisted in 1943; he was single and working as a junior clerk. He must have served overseas as he was awarded the Pacific Star, War Medal, and ASM. In 1948 he married Christine "Chrissie" Rose Tong¹ and they raised four sons and four daughters.

The Carr family came to St Albans in 1930 and became involved in the life of the school and village. In December 1938 many friends were entertained at the St Albans Mechanics Institute at an evening celebrating the coming-of-age of Violet, the only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Carr. Also, Vincent Carr passed the Merit Certificate at the St Albans school.

Henrietta Carr joined the ladies of the St Albans Sub-Branch Red Cross committee and became the secretary. They organised euchre and 500 tournaments and also trained and issued certificates for first aid. The ladies knitted for funds: *"Any ladies desiring to do some knitting are asked to get into touch with the works secretary, Mrs Carr, who will be pleased to supply them with wool and directions."*²

The Carrs' three surviving sons had enlisted and were all welcomed back when returning on leave:

A large and representative assemblage of residents and friends were present by invitation or Mr. and Mrs. Carr, Victoria Cres., at the St. Albans Mechanics' Hall ... on the occasion of a "Welcome Home Party" to their son, Sydney, returned from the Middle East. The host and hostess suitably received their guests at the hall. The evening was spent in a most enjoyable manner, dancing being indulged in, intercepted by vocal and musical items ... Cr. Frank Jolly, J.P., Shire President, on behalf of the Shire Council, ratepayers and residents, welcomed Syd in his usual inimitable style, in which he paid tribute to the part the young men in khaki and blue were

*playing in the struggle to preserve democracy, liberty and freedom during these unprecedented days. Syd suitably responded to the president's welcome. ... Mr. and A Mrs. Carr's other two sons, Jim and Vin, are also on active service with the A.I.F.*³

The St Albans Boys' Club Association also held a very successful evening when they held a presentation night to the local lads now in the Services, Ptes. Vin and Jim Carr, A.I.F., and Don Grantley, R.A.A.F. As Jim and Don were unable to attend, their presentations were received by Miss King and Mrs. Carr.⁴

The family contributed to the social for St Albans prisoners of war, and to welcome home Private J. Moran, who had been a prisoner-of-war for nearly four years. Mr. Syd Carr made a presentation of a substantial cheque, donated by some of the residents. Mrs. Siddall, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Ankers and Mrs. Carr were thanked for donating towards the supper, also Mrs. Mofatt and Mr. Carr for their services.⁵

In August 1946 a "final evening" was held when a very large number of residents and friends assembled at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Lodge to welcome home the last of the boys from St. Albans, who had arrived home after long active service in the forces, viz. Ron. Brown, Vin Carr, Wally Webb and Frank Gavaghan.⁶

In 1946 the celebrations were at the St Alban Church for the wedding of Violet Ruby, only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Carr, of St Albans, and Raymond Charles, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Newman, of Deer Park:

*The bride ... made a charming picture in her gown of brocaded magnolia satin and handsomely embroidered veil, held in place with orange blossom and pearls. Her bouquet consisted of white Christmas roses, sweet peas and camellias. The bride was attended by her two cousins, Misses E. and M. MacBean and Miss D. Ross, niece of the bridegroom. The three bridesmaids wore frocks of sentimental blue and carried bouquets of pink carnations, mauve sweet peas and stocks. They wore halos of flowers. The dainty flower girl, Pauline Penlerick, wore an all-white ankle length frock and poke bonnet, lined with lace frills. She carried a gold basket filled with gorgeous blooms. The duties of best man were carried out by Cpl. E. Newman, while Pte. Vin Carr and Reg. Smith acted as groomsmen.*⁷

In 1949 another wedding of much interest in St Albans was celebrated at the Church of England, between Christine, eldest daughter of

¹ Albert and Rose Tong came to St Albans in 1926. Refer to article in *Personalities of St Albans*, 2020.

² Sunshine Advocate 21 June 1940

³ Sunshine Advocate 19 March 1943

⁴ Sunshine Advocate 23 June 1944

⁵ Sunshine Advocate 23 Nov 1945

⁶ Sunshine Advocate 2 August 1946

⁷ Sunshine Advocate 2 August 1946

Mr. Tong and the late Mrs. Tong, and Vincent, youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. Carr:

The bride made a beautiful picture as she entered the Church on the arm of her father. She wore the bridegroom's gift of three strings of pearls with her white brocaded satin frock, which was made with a long train, long sleeves and buttoned down the back to the waist. Her veil was caught with a coronet of pearls and orange blossom and she carried a bouquet of white cactus dahlias, sweet peas and roses. ... The bride was attended by her sisters, Doris and Margaret, and cousin Betty Williams. They wore taffeta frocks of blue, pink and green respectively with matching Dutch bonnets and gold pendants, the gift of the bridegroom. Bouquets of pink carnations, sweet peas and dahlias were carried. The frocks were the work of Mrs. Williams (aunt of the bride). The bridegroom was attended by his brother, Mr. Jim Carr as best man with Mr. William Couser and Mr. Bert Noble as groomsmen.¹



Chrissie Tong with parents & bakers cart



Main Rd West & West Esplanade, State Library Victoria

Vinnie and Chrissie lived in the old barber shop on the corner of Main Road West and West Esplanade. They later moved further west near Kate Street, and the old shop was taken over by the Stevens brothers when they started selling real estate.

Vincent Carr died in 2010 at age 85 years and was buried at Altona. Christine Carr nee Tong died in 2020 at age 93 years.

¹ Sunshine Advocate 14May 1948

1934 – Daniel and Delia Gavaghan



back to 1836 in Ireland. The Healy ancestry goes back to 1845 in Ireland. Young Daniel grew up with five brothers and two sisters.



The Gavaghan family emigrated from England in 1929 and settled in St Albans in the early 1930s. Daniel Joseph Gavaghan was born about 1898 in Wigan, Lancashire England, to Daniel Gavaghan (1869-1942) and Bridget Healy (1867-1921). The Gavaghan ancestry goes

Bridget "Delia" Gavaghan was born in 1895 to Nicholas McMahon and Bridget Liddy who had married in Rath, Parish of Corofin in Ireland. Nicholas's family were on Toormore farm in Kilfenora, Clare, Ireland, from 1815. Bridget's family was from Martree,

Corofin, co. Clare, Ireland, in 1807.

Daniel Gavaghan and Bridget Liddy married in the early 1930s and had three children when they decided to emigrate to Australia. Daniel Gavaghan (31yo) and Bridget (33yo) left from London in 1929 on the ship Demosthenes with children Francis, Eamonn, and Mary. With them was 23-year-old Annie Gavaghan who was a weaver and was probably a relative. They all settled in Barrow Street, Bourke.² Daniel was working as a blacksmith which is the old term for a metal worker. Three more children were born: Delia, Daniel, and Kathleen.

The family came to St Albans in the mid-1930s and settled in George Street, but the children are not listed in the state primary school, so they probably attended the Catholic school in Sunshine – the Gavaghans were staunch Catholics.

St Albans in 1930 was a small village of 110 households with between 500 to 600 people dispersed around the central railway station and a few shop. It's main attractions were that land was relatively cheap and the regular suburban train service meant easy access to employment in the industrial districts of Sunshine, Footscray and Newport.

Daniel "Dan" Gavaghan might have worked as a blacksmith, but his skills and

² Old electoral district, possibly Brunswick - Coburg.

interests were much broader than process work. He was employed by the State Electricity Commission and his spare time was devoted to industrial, political, and community activities. He became Vice-President of the Blacksmiths' Society of Australia and represented them on the Melbourne Trades Hall Council, and was a delegate for them at some conferences of the Australian Labour Party. He was definitely an ALP supporter as he established the local branch and was on their executive committee. His other main community work was with the Catholic parish in Sunshine and later St Albans in promotion and fund raising.

Daniel and Bridget raised six children: Francis Michael, Eamonn Joseph, Mary Philomena, Delia Margaret, Daniel Nicholas, and Kathleen Winifred.

Francis Michael Gavaghan was the eldest son of the family born in September 1925 in Lancashire, England. He worked as a clerk and enlisted from Albury in 1943 at age 19. He served at 2nd Base Ordnance Depot and is included in the Albans Roll of Honour:

A very large number of residents and friends assembled at the home of Mr. and Mrs. W Lodge to welcome home the last of the boys from St. Albans, who have arrived home after long active service in the forces, viz. Ron. Brown, Vin Carr, Wally Webb and Frank Gavaghan.¹

Francis Gavaghan married Eileen O'Carroll in 1949; she came from Clydebank, Dunbartonshire, Scotland, and had settled in Essendon. He worked as a public servant. Eileen died in April 1987 at age 61 and was buried at Keilor. Francis died in Keilor in April 2007 at age 81 and was buried at Keilor.

Eamonn Joseph Gavaghan was born in April 1927 in Lancashire, England. He enlisted at Melbourne but no details are available. He was a radio operator at Mawson Station (Antarctica) in the 1960s and must have done something right as the Antarctic Names Committee of Australia (ANCA) named a mountain after him – Mount Gavaghan is a 1525-metre high mountain in East Antarctica. Eamonn died suddenly at Geelong Hospital in May 2003, aged 76 years. It appears that he never married.



Delia Margaret Gavaghan was born in 1931 in Victoria. She was a supporter of the St Albans Cricket Club and would assist in preparing supper with colleagues Mary Hewitt and Betty Goddard. Delia married

John Willim "Jack" Chisholm in 1953 and raised four sons and three daughters. John died in 1986 at age 54. Delia died in 1991 at age 60 years. Both died relatively young.



Mary Philomena Gavaghan trained as a nurse and ended up as a nun. She was active in the formation of the local Sacred Heart parish in the 1950s when it was started by Fr Con Reis. In 1959 she was at St Joseph's Novitiate in Mitchell, NSW. In 1963 she was at St Joseph's

Convent in Moama NSW working as a teacher. In 1977 she was in the convent at Rushworth, Bendigo and working as a teacher.

Daniel Nicholas Gavaghan was a member of the St Albans Football Club in 1949 and was showing good form. He was a Block Collector in the Sacred Heart parish during the 1950s. He worked as a clerk and in 1962 married Janice Mary Barnard who had attended Sacred Heart Primary School and became a teacher. She was the daughter of Doris and Fred Barnard who did a lot building on the church and school. In the late 1970s Daniel and Janice were living in Power Street, St Albans. There is a vague possibility they may have moved to the Northern Territory.

Kathleen Winifred Gavaghan took to music. In 1952 at the examination of the London College of Music, she gained a pass in Advanced Intermediate level; she was a pupil of Miss Hazel Ankers of St Albans. Kathleen married David Brendan Rowan in 1957. He was a driver and they settled in Bacchus Marsh. Their children were Stephen, Brendan, Martin, and David. David snr died in 1998 aged 64 years, and was buried at the Maddingly General Cemetery.

Daniel Joseph Gavaghan gained some prominence in the local media during the 1940s, particularly through his association with the Australian Labor Party and for his activities with the Catholic Church.

In July 1943 a public meeting was held in the Mechanics Institute Hall to form a local branch of the Australian Labor Party. The elected office bearers were: President: Mr. C. G. Cox. Vice-Presidents: Messrs. A. Dixon and J. Straughen. Secretary: Mr. D. Gavaghan, Treasurer: Mr. S. Webb. Committee: Messrs. W. Beasley, M. Power, and L. Robertson.²

¹ Sunshine Advocate 2 August 1946 p2

² Sunshine Advocate 23 July 1943



Over the next few years Gavaghan, as Branch Secretary, obtained a fair bit of media coverage in promoting the cause of local issues and ALP policies. He covered issues such as the proposed referendum on the Powers Bill, the inadequate local water supply, and the desirability of holding council meetings in the evenings. He also organised dance and card events as fundraisers for the ALP and the Catholic Church.

In 1947 Cr Charles Stenson, who had represented the St Albans Riding on Keilor Council for 40 years, gave notice that he would retire at the next election, and Gavaghan decided to nominate when the vacancy was announced. His credentials were extensive and were promoted in the *Sunshine Advocate*:

*A forthright supporter of progressive moves for the advancement of the people, Mr. Dan Gavaghan is with all a firm up-holder of the rights of the individual, and fully aware of the requirements of the wage-earner; the small businessman and small land owners residing in this district. As most of his time in the past year has been taken up in the Industrial field, he has decided that if elected he will vacate same position to allow him to give full attention to Council duties to the advantage of rate-payers. Support a man who of honesty, and integrity, who is prepared at all times to declare himself.*¹

The election became a three-way contest between Daniel Gavaghan, Harold Easton, and James Eddie. Unfortunately, Dan Gavaghan received the lowest vote and was declared defeated. After distribution of the preferences, James Eddie was declared elected to the Maribyrnong Riding, as it was now known.² James and Marjorie Eddie were farmers on Taylor Road who came to St Albans in the early 1940s.

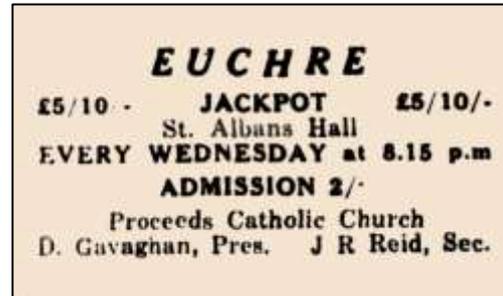
Gavaghan continued in his role with the ALP, but in the following year he declined to nominate for any future vacancies due to the pressure of other business. Consequently, Claude Gelibrand Cox was nominated as Labour candidate for the next vacancy. He was

¹ *Sunshine Advocate* 30 May 1947

² *Sunshine Advocate* 5 September 1947

a long-term resident who was well-known for his activities in Red Cross work, the local boys' club and sporting bodies.³

In 1949 Daniel Joseph Gavaghan was raising money for the Catholic Church, which had not yet been established in St Albans, so it must have been for the Sunshine parish.



Delia Gavaghan and her daughters were also active in the parish. According to the late Mary Smith⁴, the Catholic community was using the Mechanics Institute hall for religious services before their church was built. The altar and seating were set up by Mrs Selina Stein and her daughters (Mary and Elsa) before the Gavaghan family took over.

At first these services were held once a month on a Tuesday, later it was held every Sunday and the nuns would come with the altar items from Sunshine. Mary remembered the tales of Irish railway workers pushing their rail trolley from Sydenham to attend mass and Fr Fennessey riding his motorbike from Sunshine to perform mass. When the nuns started coming they were more sedate and took the train.⁵

In 1953 Daniel was appointed a JP:

*Mr. D. Gavaghan of George Street, St. Albans has recently been made a Justice of the Peace. Mr. Gavaghan is a well-known citizen of St Albans and has been secretary of St Albans Branch of, the A.L.P. for some years.*⁶

1953 was a milestone for the Catholic community because their first Presbytery was establishment in Arthur Street, and the Gavaghan family were closely involved in the accompanying ceremonies:

*Holding the canopy during the procession were Messrs. Gavaghan, J.P., G. P. Kennedy, Mlewski and Sam Farrugia, and the procession was led by Dan Gavaghan junior, as cross-bearer.*⁷

³ *Sunshine Advocate* 16 January 1948

⁴ Mary Smith was the daughter of Willy and Selina Stein, both of German heritage, who settle in St Albans in the 1920s. Mary was a local historian.

⁵ Recollections of Mary Smith nee Stein in *Talking About St Albans* 2019, pp4-40.

⁶ *Sunshine Advocate* 28 August 1953 p1

⁷ *Advocate* 3 September 1953 p16



leaving the field open for Jack Honey (ALP) and Robert Huart³ (Independent). Honey was another local blacksmith and had married Winifred Jean of the pioneer Stenson family, whose home became the Catholic presbytery. Honey was elected to Keilor Council, and so was Bob Huart later on.



In 1954 a Grand Opening Ball of the Sacred Heart Parish was organised and the ticket secretaries were Delia Gavaghan and Mary Hewitt.¹



Daniel & Delia Gavaghan with Mary



Eileen Farrant, Mary Gavaghan, Mary Farrugia, Delia Gavaghan, Loretta Farrugia, Helen Bell



In October Archbishop Mannix visited the parish and Daniel Gavaghan was given the welcoming privileges:

*Mr. Gavaghan, an old resident of St. Albans then welcomed His Grace the Archbishop and paid a tribute to everyone who had helped, particularly mentioning Mr. Jim Fraser, Fathers Rider, Egan and Reis, and many local residents.*²

In 1960 Dan Gavaghan had decided not to stand for the Keilor Council elections,



Mary Gavaghan, Eileen Farrant, Mary Farrugia, Delia Gavaghan & Mittens the horse

Bridget Delia Gavaghan nee McMahon died at St Albans in 1968, at age 73 years.

Daniel Joseph Gavaghan died in April 1991 at Footscray, at age 93 years.

¹ Advocate 29 July 1954 p14

² Sunshine Advocate 29 October 1954 p8

³ Little is known about Robert Huart. In 1963-1972 he was living in Fox Street and working as a public servant. He stood for the Keilor Council elections in 1964 and was outpolled by Rex Webb, but he was a Keilor councillor in 1965.



1935 – Stephen and Pearl Webb



Stephen Arthur Webb was born in June 1897 in Terang in Victoria, one of eight children born to Arthur Webb (1867-1954) and Ada Clara Elliot Armistead (1874-1923). The Webb family heritage goes back to the early 1700s in Harlton, Cambridgeshire, England; John Webb married Mary Jane White and they emigrated to Geelong in 1857. In the early 1900s they were farmers in Ararat. Stephen enlisted in 1918 with the AIF for active service abroad, and was discharged at the end of the year because of the demobilisation of the AIF.

The Armistead family heritage goes back to the 1770s in Bentham, Yorkshire, England; William Armistead married Alice Calvert and they emigrated to Victoria in the 1850s. Their son Stephen married Emily Benbow and they raised ten children, with Ada Clara being one of the middle children, born in February 1874 in the Borough of Hotham (now North Melbourne).



Pearl Anne Routley was born in March 1899 in Geelong to Charles Alf Routley and Mary Jane Harvey. The Routley heritage goes back to 1799 in Tiverton, Devon, England; Henry Routley emigrated to Victoria by the 1860s

and married Mary Jane Impey in Geelong in 1862. The Harvey family heritage has not been traced.

The Webb family moved from Lismore to St Albans by January 1935 and settled in Victoria Crescent near the railway station. That was a handy location for Stephen because he worked as a linesman with the railways.

The Children of Stephen Webb and Pearl Routley include:

- Athur Charles (1920-1941)
- Iris Pearl (1922-1991)
- Douglas Harry (1923-1995)
- Walter Stephen (1926-2009)
- Noel Kenneth (1927-1991)
- Shirley Leslie (1929-2006)
- Keith John (1931-1999)
- Joy Nellie (1933-)
- Barry John (1934-2010)
- Margaret Dawn (1937-1981)
- Ada May (1938-1998)



Arthur Charles Webb was born in June 1920 in Geelong. When the family moved to St Albans he was employed at Nettlefolds in Sunshine. He enlisted and was a gunner on the HMAS Australia in the North Sea and was in London

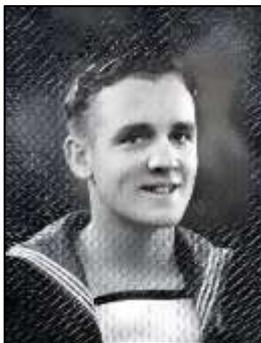
during the blitzkreig. He lost his life on H.M.A.S. Sydney in November 1941 106 nautical miles off Dirk Hartog Island, Western Australian:

In loving memory of our dearly beloved son and brother, Arthur Charles Webb, lost H.M.A.S. Sydney 19th November, 1941. Loved and remembered, the same today, As in the hour you passed away, Your memory will never grow old. Inserted by his loving Mother, Father, Sisters and Brothers, St. Albans.¹



Iris Pearl Webb was born in March 1922 in Geelong. She started at St Albans state school in January 1935 and left in March 1936 for home duties. She married Mack Hinson Slagle in Sunshine in 1943 and they had two sons and a daughter. Mack was

born in 1918 in Putnam County, Tennessee, USA, so he was probably an American serviceman who came to Melbourne in the 1940s. Iris and Mack must have settled in the USA after the war, as she died in 1991 in Detroit, Wayne, Michigan, USA; she was aged 69 years. Mack died in Troy, Michigan in 1992 at age 73 years.



Douglas Harry Webb was born in Ballan in December 1923 and started at St Albans state school in January 1935, leaving at the end of 1937 for factory work. He enlisted in 1943 and demobilised in 1946. He experienced a very pleasant social evening hosted by Mr and Mrs Lodge when he was enjoying a visit home in recovery after being wounded in the arm while serving on H.M.A.S. Australia. He married Mavis Robena McDuff in Footscray in 1945 and they had a son (Wayne Douglas)

¹ Sunshine Advocate 19 November 1954

and a daughter. In the 1980s they were living in Maidstone. Douglas Harry Webb died in February 1995 at age 71 and was buried at Altona. His son Wayne died in October 1995 at age 46.



Walter Stephen Webb was born in Ballan in January 1926. He started at St Albans state school in January 1935 and left at the end of 1939 and became a process worker with Haxby Bros. in Sunshine. At age 18 he enlisted at Footscray for war service through the

Citizens Military Forces. He was discharged in 1947, moving back to St Albans and obtaining work as a fitter. He married Ruth Hildegard Schultz in 1955 and they had two sons and two daughters. Walter died at Footscray in 2009 at age 83 years.



Noel Kenneth Webb was born in Ballan in September 1927. He started at St Albans state school in June 1938 and left in June 1941. He married Myrtle Jones in 1952 and they raised five daughters and a son. The family were living in Gertrude Street St Albans and Noel worked as a labourer. He died in February 1991 at age 63, and was buried at Altona. Myrtle Webb nee Jones was born in April 1929 and died in December 2012 at age 83, in the week before Christmas. A funeral service was held for her at St Albans and her remains were cremated at Altona.



Shirley Leslie Webb was born in Ballan in April 1929. She started at St Albans state school in 1935 and in 1939 received a silver cup for being the most improved junior pupil in the St Albans Girls' Gymnasium Club's annual display. She left

at the end of 1940 for the Sunshine Technical School. She married Thomas John Wright in Sunshine in 1956 and by the mid-1970s they were living in Harricks Road, Keilor Park. They raised a son and a daughter. Thomas's family background has not been traced.



Keith John Webb was born in Lismore in February 1931. He went to St Albans state school in September 1935 and left at the end of 1944 for factory work. In 1953 he was fined £20 for street betting when he was caught accepting bets at the side of Deer Park hotel. Evidence given was that defendant told Gaming police he had been accepting bets for several weeks and that he was employed on wages of £2 a day.¹

In 1957 at age 26 years he married Phyllis Smee in Sunshine and they raised two daughters. Keith died in March 1999 at Footscray, aged 68 years.

Joy Nellie Webb was born in June 1933, started at St Albans state school in March 1938 and left at the end of 1947 for home duties. She married Alexander Joseph Cook in Sunshine in 1951. He was born in Kensington, Melbourne, in October 1930 and in later life ran the Prosthetics Department at the Austin Hospital, Melbourne, Victoria. Joy and Alexander raised four sons and one daughter. Alexander Joseph Cook died in May 2023 at Ocen Grove, at age 92.



Barry John Webb was born in Victoria in October 1934. He started at St Albans state school in June 1939 and left in October 1948 for Cabinet Works in Sunshine. He married Moira Grace in 1955 and they had two sons. In the 1960s they were living in Williamstown Road Footscray

and Barry was working as a labourer. Barry died in August 2010 at Dubbo, New South Wales, at age 75 years.



Margaret Dawn Webb was born in Victoria in December 1937. She started at St Albans state school in May 1942 and left at the end of 1948 for Footscray Girls School. She married Ronald Clifton Keith Harvey in 1958 and they had two daughters and a son.

They settled in Norlane, Corio. Ronald worked as a labourer.

Margaret died in May 1981 at Geelong at age 43 years. Ronald Harvey died at Corio in January 1999 at was buried at the Geelong Western Public Cemetery.



Ada May Webb was born in Victoria in May 1938. She started at St Albans state school in May 1943 and left in May 1942 to work as a shop assistant. For a while she was working at the small Self's General Store in East Esplanade. She married Vernon Wood at St

Albans in 1951. They had one son and one daughter. The family lived in Victoria Crescent, St Albans. Vernon worked as a cleaner and Ada as a weaver. Ada Wood nee Webb died in February 1998 at age 59. Vernon Wood died in July 2019 at age 80.



Stephen and Pearl Webb

Stephen and Pearl Webb were aged in their late 30s or early 40s when they came to St Albans. With ten children still at school Perl Webb had a full-time job caring for them and running the household, and it is not known how much time she spent on community activities, and if she did it wasn't reported in the local media, apart from the occasional mention` at a community function.

Stephen became involved with the St Albans Progress Association and the State School.

In March 1937 he was appointed Treasurer of the Progress Association with Alf

¹ Sunshine Advocate 3 Jul 1953

Clarke as Secretary and James Stevens as Minutes Secretary. Webb was still the Treasurer in 1943.

In 1940 he was elected to the school committee and was still there in 1943 as assistant secretary.

The family assisted in raising funds for the Red Cross Sub-Branch, often buying raffle tickets and occasionally winning a prize. In one competition Mr. Stephen Webb was the lucky winner of a knitted frock.¹

In 1943 he was elected treasurer of the newly-formed local branch of the ALP. The Progress Association also acknowledged the family's loss:

Feeling reference was made at the meeting to the loss sustained by the passing of Mr. J. N. McKechnie, (a former Vice-President of the Association), and Mr. Arthur Webb, son of Mr. S. Webb, and members stood in silence as a mark of respect.²

Stephen Arthur Webb died at St Albans in June 1971 at age 74 years.

Pearl Ann Webb nee Routley died at Footscray in November 1978 at age 79 years and was buried at Keilor East.



Myrtle Webb, Tom Lofflean, Frank Farrugia, Maureen Turner



Frank Farrugia & Ada Webb at Self's Store



Frank Farrugia, Billie Ritchie, Keith Webb



Frank Farrugia, Ken "Popeye" Brown, Charlie, Herbie Blain, Joe Farrugia, Noel Webb



Back: Kevin Priest, Joe Farrugia, Noel Webb, Front: John Doherty

¹ Sunshine Advocate 25 October 1940 p6

² Sunshine Advocate 12 December 1941 p3

1935 – Irene Doherty



Irene May Doherty was born in March 1929 and enrolled at the St Albans Primary School in 1935 from Warrnambool, and left in 1938 for Sunshine Technical School. She passed her exams for Intermediate Technical Certificate in 1943. Irene was lucky to be alive as in June 1935

at Warrnambool she was hit by a car and suffered a broken thigh and facial abrasions.¹

Her parents were Michael Dennis Doherty and Ida May nee Holmes. Her brother John joined the navy in the 1940s.

Irene Doherty was already active in 1943 in helping raise funds for the St Albans Red Cross Sub-branch:

Special mention is made of the efforts of the Misses Irene Doherty, Jean Kennedy, and Maureen Turner, who between them raised the sum of £3/16/1.²

In 1947 the football club held its first Annual Ball, at which local debutants were presented to the Presidents of Keilor and Braybrook Shires, and Irene was one them, the others being Bessie Bell, Josie Hale, Jean Kennedy, Patricia Kidd, Margaret Nicholls, Eileen Scullie, Doris Tong, and Margaret Turner. Dancing was indulged in until the early hours of the morning.³

In 1950 she was one of the best players in the St Albans Girls Basketball Team, along with June Gibson and Maureen Turner.



In October 1950 Irene joined the Sunshine Football club's Annual Ball, which was part of their social and fund-raising activities; the theme was a 'Belle of Bells' competition for seven young ladies chosen at Balls around the district, the contestants being Margaret Lane (Our Lady's), Beryl Phillips

(Sunshine Football Club), Betty Hollingshead (St Marks), Irene Doherty (St Albans F.C.),

Mary Hopkins (Ex-Students), Dorothy Hutson (Rockbank F.C.), Shirley Sheridan (Sunshine Soccer Club). Irene was crowned the winner and received a trophy, sash, and a string of pearls as the prize. Interestingly, the judges were from radio 3UZ and the music was provided by Graeme Bell and his Dixieland Jazz Band⁴ which was class indeed.

Irene's commitment to football was not just a pretty face. In the 1950s she was a player with the ICI women's football team with other locals including Margret Wright, Maureen Turner, Jean Kennedy, Betty Goddard, and Helen Bell.

In 1951 Irene Doherty announced her engagement to Donald Colin McPherson⁵ of Sunshine, and they married in 1952 at St Albans Presbyterian Church with the reception at the St Albans Hall:

The Bride's gown featured a small stand-up collar of guipure lace with a vee of lace on the front bodice and the full skirt finished in a slight train. Her fingertip length veil was held by a pearl coronet and she carried a bouquet of gardenias and azaleas. Miss Jean Kennedy flew from Mildura to attend the Bride, who is the only daughter of Mr and Mrs M. D. Doherty of Victoria Crescent, St. Albans. A small bolero topped the strapless bodice of the turquoise french ring velvet gown worn by the Bridesmaid with a matching cap trimmed with feathers. She carried a velvet muff adorned with a spray of lemon roses and violets.⁶

Irene and Donald made their home in St Albans, on the corner of Main Road East and Percy Street, opposite the tennis courts on Errington Reserve.



L-R Margret Wright, Maureen Turner, Jean Kennedy, Betty Goddard, Helen Bell, Irene Doherty

¹ Age 6 June 1935 p7

² Sunshine Advocate 17 September 1943 p4

³ Sunshine Advocate 1 August 1947 p2

⁴ Sunshine Advocate 13 October 1950 p5

⁵ His parents were Bruce Ivor McPherson and Amy Louisa Dean. The family heritage goes back to the 1790s in Little Dunkeld, Perthshire, Scotland.

⁶ Sunshine Advocate 30 May 1952 p3

1940 – Joyce Riley

Joyce Amanda Riley was a precocious singer and dancer in St Albans from her primary school years in the 1940s, and was very active on the local social entertainment scene for about two decades. Her music and dancing skills were inherited from her mother, but blossomed under the tutelage of Bernice Self of St Albans (piano) and Olga Wallace of Melbourne (dance). Much of Joyce's early experience was through the social and philanthropic entertainments that were hosted by William and Ada Lodge and her sister Clara Currie of West Esplanade.



Joyce's parents were Owen and Ivy Riley of Main Road West. Owen James (aka James Owen) Riley was born in August 1904 in Tanjil (Warragul), Victoria, to James Henry (aka Henry James) Riley and Alice Fanny Lonsdale. The Riley heritage goes back to 1873 in Durham Lead, Victoria. The Lonsdale family heritage goes back to 1904 in Warragul, Victoria.

Owen James married Ivy Esther Dunn in 1934 and they had one daughter, Joyce Amanda Riley. Ivy Dunn was born in April 1900 at Collingwood to Daniel Dunn and Annie Maria Blee, who were from Cornwall, England, and emigrated in 1884.

Gavan Aitken remembered Mrs Riley as being near the corner of Amy Street where the peppercorn trees were: "Mrs Riley was along there between Hassett's and the True Value store. She was a piano player and used to teach music. Joyce was her daughter and they moved to the other side of the railway line."

Owen Riley was a truck driver who volunteered for service in the 2nd AIF in 1942 at age 37 years, and served in Darwin, which was a declared non-overseas war zone. His wife was listed as Ivy Riley of Main Road, St Albans. Owen was appointed as a trade specialist with the Trade Group II as a cook. He was eligible for the Defence Medal, War Medal 1939/45, and Australia Service Medal 1939/45.

Joyce was born in August 1935 and started at the St Albans primary school in 1940. She left at the end of 1946 for Williamstown High School.

Joyce must have loved entertaining from a very young age, as the first reference to her performing locally appeared in the *Sunshine Advocate* in 1941, when she was six

years old, as part of the entertainment for sailors Able Seaman Arthur Webb and Stoker Phil Townsend, both on leave. A little later her performance was with Mrs Lodge in aid of the Red Cross and was cited as giving a very pleasing display of song and dance.¹ In November she was in some of the musical and elocutionary performances celebrating the anniversary of the St Albans Presbyterian Church. She was also doing a song and dance routine in the welcome home for Stoker Albert Siddall, hosted by Mrs Lodge, where Owen Riley was called upon to introduce the Keilor Shire President, Cr. Francis Jolly, to make the presentation.

In 1943 the entertainment was for pre-nuptial festivities at the Mechanics Institute Hall to publically congratulate Mavis King and William Hunter:

Mr. Ern Roberts supplied the music, and the whole programme was admirably carried through under the direction of Mr T. Toby. Joyce Riley, a very young performer, high in popular favour, sang several songs, and another little contemporary of bright promise, Pat Haines, of Sunshine played pianoforte solos.²

In 1943 at the London College of Music Melbourne Centre she received a preparatory first class pass in pianoforte under the tutorship of her St Albans piano teacher Brenda Self.³ Later in the year she was contributing dancing, games and recitations "which passed the time pleasantly" to welcome home Sydney Carr after two years of active service.⁴

When Josiah White of Tottenham married Clara Lodge of St Albans, Joyce Riley: *"was trainbearer, wore an old world dress of off-white net over satin, and a bonnet trimmed with dark red roses. She carried a Victorian posy of dark red roses and carnations, and wore an oriental necklet presented by the bridegroom."⁵*

In 1944 it was another welcome home, to Keith Brown and Reuben Bedford who had had a long spell on active service.

It must have been an even happier moment for Joyce in June 1944 because one of the local "boys" who had served for a long period on active service and now having a well-earned rest, was her father, Owen Riley.⁶ Mrs Riley was presented with a bouquet of flowers in celebration.

In January 1945 it was a different accolade, as Joyce was one of the students who received a prize for excellent sewing,

¹ *Sunshine Advocate* 23 May 1941 p3

² *Sunshine Advocate* 15 January 1943 p1

³ Age 3 February 1943 p1

⁴ *Sunshine Advocate* 26 March 1943 p1

⁵ *Sunshine Advocate* 10 September 1943 p1

⁶ *Sunshine Advocate* 23 June 1944 p1

presented by Mrs Agnes Stevens, the doyen of charitable cause in St Albans.¹ Joyce may have been a member of the McQualter Sisters in another function for the Red Cross.² In November the occasion was a social for St Albans prisoners of war.³ There was similar a welcome home for Private Moran where Joyce gave some fine displays of dancing, and Mr. and Mrs. Owen Riley won the lucky spot dance.

In December it was a welcome to LAC Ken Brown of the RAAF, and Joyce Riley was mentioned as being one of the students of Miss O. Wallace.⁴ Miss Olga Wallace was a dancing teacher based in Russell Street Melbourne during the 1940s.

Could Joyce have expanded her repertoire dramatically in 1946? or was it another Joyce Riley as The Age advertised:

*Tonight. Albert Hall, Windsor. Gala Night. Montes. Numbers. Spots; also special items. Fancy Dancing and Can-Can by Joyce Riley. Lea Thomson's band.*⁵

In October 1946 it was welcome home to servicemen, this time at the Mechanics Institute Hall: "It was a night that will long be remembered as the greatest ever held at St Albans. The hall was packed almost beyond its capacity."⁶

In 1948 when Christine Tong married Vincent Carr, Doris Tong and Joyce Riley were happy giving entertaining items.

In 1949 it was a successful variety show for kindergartens, where:

*A feature of the program was the appearance of a local lass, Miss Joyce Riley, of St Albans. Her outstanding performance. being her dancing as partner in the apache dance. A bright future is predicted for this young artist.*⁷

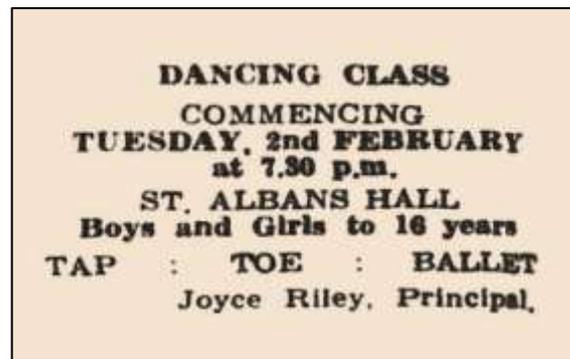
In 1950 it was a variety show at Sunshine, a return of the popular Gaiety Review Co. at the Shire Hall. In the company's previous visit it was voted the best variety ever presented in the district. This year, 40 stars of stage and radio would provide items of mirth, melody and glamour, including such artists as:

*Rosewarne and Reynolds (Australian exhibition dancing champions 1949 and 1950). The Debonairs of Tivoli fame; Mat Vita (celebrated harpist), Gerry Clausen, Honor Ayton (Sunshine's soprano) and Joyce Riley (of St Albans) will appear.*⁸

1951 was, possibly, another new direction, as Joyce Riley was listed to play the piano Sonta in E Major on air for the Swallow's Parade.⁹ Could this have been the St Albans lass or was it a Doppelgänger?

In 1952 the St Albans school Mother's Club held a Grand Ball and Joyce was one of the solo vocalists.

In 1954 the local dramatic production was by Mary Hewitt and Neville Thurgood in the Christmas Pantomime "Cinderella" featuring local Val Gibson and Joyce Riley as Cinderella and Prince Charming. The show raised £36/11/9 to be divided between the Alfred Clarke Memorial Free Kindergarten and the St. Albans Cricket Club.¹⁰



1954 was a real turning point in Joyce's career, as at age 19 she progressed from being a performer to becoming a dancing instructor. She advertised in the local news paper as "Joyce Riley - Principal", holding classes for boys and girls at the St Albans public hall.¹¹ In October there was to be a dance and concert in the new hall to aid the State School Christmas Treat, and it was Miss Joyce Riley's students who would be featured with local artists.¹²

Her dancing pupils were also featured in the 1954 Christmas Pantomime with the St Albans Little Theatre ensemble who were performing at St Albans, Keilor and Sunshine.

But undoubtedly the biggest event in 1954 occurred in August when Joyce Riley, only child of Mr and Mrs O. J. Riley of St Albans, announced her engagement to Arthur, elder son of Mr and Mrs A. P. Johnson, Coburg.¹³

In 1957, at age 22, Joyce Amanda Riley married her fiancé Arthur Andrew Johnson, who was an inspector.

Arthur was born in Melbourne in 1928,

¹ Sunshine Advocate 12 January 1945 p1

² Sunshine Advocate 2 March 1945 p2

³ Sunshine Advocate 23 November 1945 p3

⁴ Sunshine Advocate 21 December 1945 p2

⁵ Age 28 January 1946 p10

⁶ Sunshine Advocate 18 October 1946 p3

⁷ Sunshine Advocate 28 October 1949 p2

⁸ Sunshine Advocate 11 August 1950 p4

⁹ Age 1 June 1951 p4

¹⁰ Sunshine Advocate 15 Jan 1954 p1

¹¹ Sunshine Advocate 19 March 1954 p10

¹² Sunshine Advocate 8 October 1954 p10

¹³ Sunshine Advocate 27 August 1954 p12

the son of Andrew Peter Johnson and Violet Alice Hayes. The Johnson family heritage is quite exotic as it goes back to Anders Antolis Antilla in 1650 in Vörå, Lanssi-Suomen Laani, Finland. Peter Andrew Johansson Johnson Ohlis Antohlis emigrated to New South Wales about 1840 and married Caroline Moses in Sydney in 1842. Her family descends from Abraham Moses who was in Spitalfields, Middlesex, England, in 1801, and emigrated to New South Wales prior to 1858.

After Peter Antohlis (the spelling has changed over time) married Caroline Moses in 1842, they had nine children, all of whom had the surname 'Johnson'.

In the 1960s, Joyce and Arthur Johnson were living in Pascoe Vale. It is not known if she continued with her dancing career as artiste or teacher.

Owen and Ivy Riley were still listed in St Albans in 1970, still on the Amy Street corner, but left that address by 1975. It is not known where they moved to.

In the 1980s Joyce and Arthur Johnson were living in Greensborough; he was working as a sales manager, and she was a saleswoman.

Joyce's mother, Ivy Riley nee Dunn, died in 1986 in Balwyn North, at age 86 years.

Joyce's father, Owen James Riley, died in June 1990, at age 86 years.

In the 1990s Joyce and Arthur Johnson were living in Briar Hill and Joyce had some unfinished family business. Her father had been eligible for some military medals because of his service during WW2, but must not have received them. In 1998 Joyce wrote to the army to obtain the medals as she was the only child of the family.

Joyce Amanda Riley and Arthur Andrew Johnson probably had two children, a son and a daughter, but their names and details are not known.

Arthur Andrew Johnson died in Melbourne in 2019 at age 90 years.

ST. ALBANS LITTLE THEATRE TO PRESENT CHRISTMAS PANTOMIME
With the co-operation of Miss Joyce Riley's dancing pupils, St. Albans Little Theatre will hold a grand Christmas Pantomime at St. Albans, Keilor and Sunshine in December.
The pantomime will be "Little Miss Muffet." Dates of the various functions will be announced later.

1941 – Albert and Dorothy Weibrecht

Albert Charles Weibrecht (sometimes spelled as Wiebrecht) was of German heritage but he was an Aussie by birth, being born in Horsham, Victoria, in January 1912, to Carl August (Friedrich) Wiebrecht and Veronica Amelia Stengert. The Wiebrecht family origins are from Brandenburg, Germany; some of them had emigrated to South Australia by the 1830s. The Stengert family were in South Australia in the 1850s. Carl and Veronica married in Victoria in 1908 and raised nine children: Oscar, Albert, Harold, Lona, Ronald, Ivan, Norma, Thelma, and Brian.

In the 1920s the family were in the Romsey district on a sheep farm and Carl Friedrich was in partnership as Craythorne & Weibrecht, dealing in road construction with the Country Roads Board and Romsey and Bulla Shire councils. Carl Wiebrecht died in 1956 after a short illness.¹

Albert Weibrecht might have had a connection with Fred Scheurer² as in 1926 Fred and Albert won the potato race at the Fentona state school's annual picnic, while Lorna Weibrecht won the Siamese race with Mavis Craythorn.³

It is not known when Albert Weibrecht came to St Albans, probably in the 1930s, and he was staying somewhere in Main Road. He became known as Mick Weibrecht.

Weibrecht may have worked as a cabinet maker but he also worked as a labourer, shearer, and a driver.

In March 1941 Albert Charles Weibrecht married Dorothy Henrietta Irene Dennis (1917-1985) who was born in Prahran. Dorothy's sisters were her bridesmaids and that must have been a really special occasion as their photographs were included in the Age:

Her four sisters were bride bridesmaids to Dorothy Henrietta Irene, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs C Dennis, St. Albans, when she was married to Charles Albert, third son of Mr and Mrs Charles Weibrecht, Clarkfield, at the Church of England, St Albans. They were Misses Nellie, Florence, Irene, and Violet Dennis. The bride's frock was of ivory crepe satin and her veil was held with a headdress of orange blossom. The first and third bridesmaids wore pink, the second and fourth blue lace over taffetas, and had matching marguerites and tulle in their hair.⁴

¹ Argus 11 January 1956 p13

² Frederick James Scheurer was a Sydenham man whose family was from Clarkefield near Romsey. He was working as a real estate agent on Unger's corner in St Albans during the 1970s.

³ Sunbury News 10 April 1926 p4

⁴ Age 1 March 1941 p15



Dorothy Dennis & sisters as bridesmaids 1941

Charles Alfred and Doris Gertrude Dennis came to St Albans after the first world war and lived in Arthur Street near Taylors Road; they later moved to Victoria Crescent. While some of the children stayed at Arthur Street. Their children were Alfred (1914), Reginald (1916), Dorothy (1917), Nellie (1919), Violet (1920), Irene (1921) and Florence (1922). Mr Dennis worked as a bootmaker.

Albert Weibrecht enlisted in June 1941 at age 39 years, and in 1943 was at Port Moresby. He was discharged because he was in a "reserved occupation". Marion McAuley thought that Doris McIntosh might have got him released from serving in the army because he had been shearing sheep in the district and that was classified as an essential service.

The sheep flocks in St Albans were relatively small (200-300) and didn't need large shearing gangs. A man on his own with a portable shearing rig could do the job efficiently enough. At first Bob McRae was doing that with hand shears before the portable one-man machines came along. Weibrecht was doing some of that and took over after McRae died.



Portable shearing equipment at St Albans

Albert and Dorothy's children were Fay, Joan, and Dennis. Their home was at 4 Arthur Street, near Victoria Crescent.

- Fay Lorna was born in October 1941 and started at the St Albans primary school in 1947; she left in 1953 for the Sunshine Technical school.

- Joan Irene was born in June 1945 and started at St Albans primary school in 1950; she left in 1954 for the Sunshine Technical school, but returned from 1956 to 1957.
- Denis was born in April 1947 and started at St Albans primary school in 1953; he left in 1954 for the Sunshine Technical school, but returned from 1956 to 1959, after which he went to St Albans High School. In 1960 he was in Form 1B in a class of 40 that was 95% migrant children; the Weibrecht name fitted in beautifully even though he was a homegrown Aussie. Denis became a technical assistant.

Frank Farrugia, a work colleague and St Albans boy from birth, remembered Albert Weibrecht but knew him as Mick:

Mick Weibrecht, who as an ex-farmer from Romsey and strong as a bull, but the farming life was disappearing and he got a factory job. He took over shearing sheep for some of the local farmers when Bob McRae died. He married Doris Dennis, who used to be in Arthur Street and baby-sat us when mum wasn't around. Mick and I both worked at Nettlefolds.

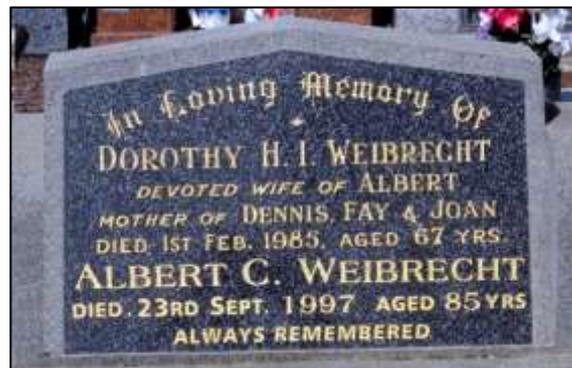
At one stage Frank and Mick were doing some extra work on Saturday mornings to replace some of the old fences on the Overnewton estate:

We started really early, maybe 5:30 or 6 o'clock, because Mick was a racing man and wanted to knock off at 12 o'clock to go the races. It was hard work, digging in posts, knocking stakes into the ground, running the wires though. We'd do a chain at a time. The Colonel would give us a shot of wine and pay us the £10 and Mick would head off for the races.

Another of Mick's sidelines in the late 1940s and early 1950s was selling the occasional motor vehicle from home, so maybe he had some mechanical skills as well.

Dorothy Weibrecht nee Dennis died in February 1985 at age 67 years.

Albert Charles Weibrecht died in September 1997 aged 85 years. They are buried at the Keilor cemetery.



1942 – Colin Missen



It was at a meeting of the St. Albans Historical Society held in the Tin Shed when Colin Missen was asked to give a 'talk' on St. Albans as he knew it. That is when the following notes were taken. At the beginning of his story, Colin Missen stated he had arrived in

St. Albans in 1942, having previously lived on a farm in Mt. Cottrell Road, Rockbank.

The Missen family's original home was the Rose and Crown Hotel, built in 1860 and which is now being used as the office of a caravan park on the Western Highway at Rockbank. It was in December 1976, when B. & P. Blackmore & Associates lodged the proposal to develop the site into a caravan park with the local council.

Colin and his brothers Mervyn and Kevin Missen had attended the St. Albans Primary School for the rest of the year of 1943 after arriving in St. Albans. When they lived on the Macrae family farm named 'Lynalban', on St. Albans Road (now renamed Green Gully Road), their mode of transport to school was walking and this took quite some time.

There were four teachers at the school, Mr. Lam, Mr. O'Brien, Mrs. Paul and Miss Bailey. There were about 100 pupils. The school was the proud owner of one football and one cricket bat and one basketball. The pupils' main game was marbles.

The central section of St Albans was part of the Keilor Municipality at that time. Councillors Dickson, Jolly, Stenson (for forty years) were some of the names remembered and council meetings were held on Saturday.

In the late forties Councillor names remembered were Easton, Moffat and Eddie (it was Easton who suggested a road be made across Green Gully). All the Councillors mentioned have been Shire Presidents, except Cr. Dickson. The first time Cr. Stenson became President was in 1910.

Next, Colin Missen took an imaginary walk around St Albans, starting at Green Gully. There was a sandpit on the right-hand side. This was used as an unofficial tip. There was also a sandpit on the left side as well as a tunnel. At the corner of Driscolls and Green Gully Roads an old family member, Bob Macrae, lived in a shack. When he was very old, he was burned to death when the shack caught fire.

If you continued into Driscolls Road

(which was previously named Fox Road) at the end was Stensons Road. Mr. Stenson had an orchard and a Mrs. Dobson lived on a property there. On the corner of Sunshine Avenue lived a Mr. Phil Hill. Along Sunshine Avenue to Taylors Road were the farms of Macrae, Anderson, Boyd, Overall, Gilbertson, Finlay McCauley, Griffith, Keith Anderson, Jim Eddie, Fred Anderson, Coleman and King.

In later years, after the Macrae farm had been subdivided, five acres of land had been set aside as a hotel site. This land was situated opposite the present day fire station in Taylors Road west of Sunshine Avenue. The building of the hotel did not proceed and the land was subsequently sold as housing allotments. To the west of this 5-acre allotment was a concrete sheep dip our family had built. Houses have been built over the dip.

Travelling along Arthur Street, the Dennis family (and later Pearton) had a poultry farm, further along came Scantlebury, Elder, Gibsons (later Freeland), Anderson Senior and on the corner of Alexina Street where Pearson, Webb and Tom Smith lived. In Walter Street, Lewis had a poultry farm, also in the Arthur Street block were Stanfield and Mullenger. As well as these, the names of Myers, Gavaghan, Leckie, Farrugia, O'Hare, Hutson, Bell, White, Stenson, Roberts and Brown lived in this area. (The late Mrs. Jean Missen nee Macrae added the following to her son's observations: - The families Bell and White both lived in Biggs Street, the families Doherty and Goddard shared one house in West Esplanade, a Mrs. Judd lived where the present Safeway store is located (erstwhile owned by Woolworth), the family Scoble lived near Mrs. Judd.

The Fitzgibbons lived in Station Avenue, as did Mrs. Turner, the family Smith lived in Oberon Avenue, Mrs. Dobson first lived in Driscolls Road at the corner and then moved to Stenson Road.

Mr. Griffith had three brothers, Mr. Jack Coleman farmed in Taylors Road, the Dennis family lived at the corner of Arthur Street and Taylors Road, the Roberts lived in East Esplanade in a white house next to the old Church of England building that had burnt down. The Ankers lived in East Esplanade; the family Brown lived on the corner of East Esplanade and Victoria Crescent.

There were two churches in St. Albans, the Church of England and the Presbyterian Church.

Once a month an Indian hawker used to call in at his [Colin's] parents' farm to sell his wares and to cook curries for the family. There had been two drownings in the dam in Fox Street. Mr. Kennedy was the man in charge of

the St. Albans Railway Station at the time. (According to the Late Mrs. Jean Missen, the first station master was Mr. Sams, the second Mr. Del Kennedy, the third Mr. Taylor and the fourth Mr. Tom Rigg – the latter served as station master from November 1971 to February 1988.)

The fire brigade was in East Esplanade, close to the Main Road intersection abutting the railway line. Firemen remembered were Mr. Bert Gibson and Mr. Harold Easton.

Travelling along Victoria Crescent, the following names were recalled - Blain, Power, Batten, McIntyre, Moffat, the McKechnie sisters and Haines (dressmaker). In East Esplanade there was a Self grocery store (originally a milkbar cum greengrocery store - the late Mr. Lew Self originally worked in a bluestone quarry near the present-day St. Albans Hotel of which Mr. Frank Jolly was the manager), the Robbs, the Mechanics' Hall which consisted in part of the main hall, supper room and kitchen.

The Missen boys used to leave their bikes at the Gibsons when catching trains to school or work. The Gibsons lived on the other side of the hall. Next came Main Road East where Mr. Kennedy lived in one of the three Railway houses built on the southern corner.

A railway ganger lived in one of the houses. (Author's addition: two of these houses had an air raid shelter erected at the rear of the property, which consisted of a mound of soil in which a tunnel was dug, supported by wooden beams.) The Scobles had a car repair business in Main Road East, then there was a cake shop, Judd and Cook came next, then the Errington Reserve and then the tennis court. The Martello shop and Bill Stewart were also located here. In Percy Street, Hook, Pollock and McRae lived.

In Main Road West the names remembered are Richards, Gallagher, the old butcher shop (where the Scobles lived), Claude Cox, then an old shop (Davidson's), Perretts, Moffat's butcher shop, Thomas and Hassett. Also in Main Road West was the Stevens' farm, and the Nat Dale piggery. Watkins lived on the south side; he sold the horse Welkin Sun to the Macraes - this horse came second in the Melbourne Cup in 1952.

Next came Cyril Clements who donated a large parcel of land to the then Keilor Municipality for the residents' use, after Clements came George Scully, who had sheep and cows. The corner of Main Road West and Station Road, the area now named Albanvale, is where the Leckies lived.

Off the main road, towards the railway line, there was a school, Snaith's poultry farm,

the Goddard house and a few scattered houses. Hewitt, Wilson, McIntosh (who was doorman at the hall), Patterson and Nicholson lived there.

In the Pinnacle Estate area the following names are remembered, McKechnie, Stein, Harris, Walker, Cameron, Charles Hogan, Strachan, Turner and Fitzgibbon. In the main, people who used to graze their own house cow used this area.

In the Sydenham area there was a chaff mill (some St. Albans men worked there), the Scheurer shop, school, hall and the Presbyterian Church.

In Pecks Road, there was an old hotel (which had been built by the contractor who had built the Keilor hotel). The hotel in Pecks Road was used by goldiggers on their way to Ballarat, also by Cobb & Co. coaches, which stayed there. There was a rural fire brigade. This brigade was a voluntary one and run with the help of the Hughes and Landers families.

In the 1940s Keilor went backwards compared to the early days. There was one shop, a post office, a hotel, Fry's garage and shop. The lagoon was opposite, as was Ancrum's car repairs business and the Keilor Pound. The area was used by market gardeners who grew apricots, tomatoes as well as all kinds of vegetables. As far as Keilor history is concerned, the old post office is where there is now a motel; there was a delicensed hotel (Yates). The Racecourse hotel had disappeared. The then police barracks and courthouse are now a private residence. There was a blacksmith shop near the motel. There was a slaughterhouse in the Eagling Street area, a butcher shop on the Highway (now Macedon Road), and racecourse meetings were held on Christmas Day.

Colin Missen went on to speak about what they (the youths) did in their spare time. There was the St. Albans Football Club, we played football or helped on working bees. In April 1921, the St. Albans Football Association was formed and this association covered an eight-mile radius. There was a cricket club with a hut on the Errington Reserve. We attended dances at Sydenham, Rockbank or Melton. Transport was by Doherty/Hassett bus (i.e. at the back of a delivery truck) or by bike. There were occasional sports meetings at the Errington Reserve. On Saturday nights we would go to Kirby's Sunshine Theatre where a seat would cost Two Shillings.

On Sunday afternoons, we would kick a football on land on the northeast corner of Main Road East and Alfrieda Street. Of course, there was rabbiting, fishing and mushrooming. We earned pocket money picking apricots and

tomatoes at Dodds and would go to the Showgrounds occasionally to watch trotting or racing.

Odd items of interest were the calling of the previously mentioned Indian hawkker, the baker came from Sunshine (Mr. Tong), Mr. Alex Hassett had a horsedrawn vegetable cart, Selfs delivering of groceries, Selfs ice truck, Stewart Anderson delivering milk with a milk cart, the visits by Annie Collingwood, a homeless woman.

Most people had their own house cow and poultry. Paul Spiteri, the Walkers, and Darby Rockett had battles with the Council ranger who impounded or attempted to impound wandering cattle. How we travelled? We walked, rode a bike, used a horse and cart (mainly Jack Coleman's) to go shopping and sometimes Fred Mullenger's. We used the train service or the Doherty/Hassett bus.

Schooling was available at the Sunshine Technical School, Our Lady's Catholic School in Monash Street, Williamstown High School and the Footscray Technical School and Melbourne High School.

Places of employment were the Sunshine Harvester Works, Spaldings, Nettlefolds, Dragoons Potteries and Wunderlich, also the seasonal farm work.

Constables Power and Shaw who did much of their work on foot and by push bike to maintain law and order. They worked from the station in Withers Street, Sunshine. There was little work to be done by them; the painting of the Presbyterian Church on New Year's Eve by local lads or the putting of a potato in a car exhaust were major crimes of the time.

The first new settler in St. Albans during the 1939-1945 period to my recollection was a Jan Mikula who lived in Taylor's Road near Theodore Street.

(A talk by Colin Missen: "St Albans: The Way It Was And The Way We Were 1939-1950". Transcribed by Alie Missen 2005.)



Alie and Kevin Missen

1943 – Beverley Godfrey



Beverley Lorraine Godfrey nee Lodge was a St Albans identity for many decades because of her role as a local dancing teacher, working from her own premise as well as the St Albans Community Youth Club. She was born in Sunshine in September 1943 to Stanley Lodge (1914-1971) and Lorna

Mavis Boreham (1914-1983).

Stanley's parents were William Lodge and Ada Wilde who were English immigrants and moved to St Albans in the late 1920s and lived in West Esplanade. William worked as a labourer and iron dresser at Sunshine Harvester. Ada had been a theatrical dancer, so she was not shy of theatre or the stage and was soon hosting community fund-raising activities. She was always known as "Mrs Lodge" or "Mrs W Lodge".

Beverley attended St Albans primary school from 1949 to 1955 and then went to the Sunshine Girls Technical School from 1956 to 1959, where she became a form captain and prefect. After that she attended the London College of Music (Melbourne) and studied Elocution and Dramatic Art.

Beverley Lodge married Graham Alexander Morley in 1964. They settled in Ivanhoe Avenue, St Albans. He worked as a butcher; she worked as a typist. Some of her clerical work was with Burton and Cooke,¹ St Albans High School, and some local retail businesses. Bev and Graham raised three children: Brett (1967), Tracie (1968), and Troy (1974). Beverly and Graham later divorced.



Although Bev worked as a typist she also followed in her mother's footsteps by becoming a fully qualified theatrical dance teacher in tap, classical, ballet and jazz genres. For many years she ran the popular dance classes held at the St Albans Community Youth Club. She had established the "St Albans Academy of Dance"

¹ Burton & Cooke were a city-based company marketing confectionary and small retail shops around Melbourne.

which usually featured annual performances at school or public halls, and they also joined events such as street parades. One of the theatrical dancing displays they put on at the Broadmeadows Town Hall did not finish until 11:45 p.m., a late act for some youngsters.

Dancing classes for children were a popular activity in the 1950s; for example, in 1954 Joyce Riley¹ was holding classes at the St Albans Mechanics Institute Hall, for young children (4-9 years) and older (10-16), teaching tap, toe and ballet.² Joyce was quite talented in singing, dancing and playing the piano. During the 1950s she was active with the St Albans Little Theatre and would stage Christmas pantomimes. She would also help Mrs Lodge, Bev's mother, by performing song and dance at her entertainments.

Beverley nee Lodge married Noel John Godfrey in 1985. His parents were Andrew Ure Godfrey of Scottish background and Violet Livett Gladman who was of Irish background. Noel was a fitter and turner and had been living in Leslie Street St Albans. He was divorced from Donna Amelia Lawson whom he had married in St Albans in 1968.



Early dance performance at St Albans Youth Club

One of Bev's former dancing students remember her fondly:

I was introduced to the St Albans Academy of Dance and to a teacher who I didn't realise at the time would shape me into who I am today. Her name was Bev Godfrey. Bev had a wonderful way of teaching, she was funny, she was kind, she understood and she wasn't afraid to make a fool of herself to make you feel more comfortable. Bev would stand in the wings of the stage on Performance nights pulling funny faces to make you "less scared" about being in front of an audience. As little kids she would tell us to "Go and run your wrist under the taps in

¹ Joyce was the daughter of Owen and Ivy Riley of St Albans. Mrs Riley was a piano player and used to teach music from a small store near Amy Street.

² Sunshine Advocate 9 March 1954 p10

the bathroom to cool down" on hot summer days. Bev loved a song a dance routine and even at in her late 60s would get up and "join in".³

Lisa Walton was also a student:

I remember my grandfather walking me to dance classes at the parish of St Alban the Martyr on the corner of East Esplanade and Alexina Street. Bev was my teacher for tap dance. I think Tracy was in our dance group too. I'm pretty sure I still have one of my costumes stored away somewhere.

Noel John Godfrey died at St Albans in April 2012 after a long bout of illness and was buried at the Keilor cemetery. At the St Albans Youth Club AGM Lorna Cameron reported that:

I loved the story told at his funeral about the time he was supposed to bring home a wardrobe on the back of the ute, somehow he managed to drop it and his explanation to Bev was that it was a 'flat pack' ready to assemble. Noel had a wonderful sense of humour.⁴



St Albans Academy of Dance in street parade



St Albans Academy of Dance in street parade

Tina Kuzmanovska has written a brief but nice biography about Beverly Godfrey in "Many Lives Many Voices, Stories from St Albans", St Albans Secondary College, 1996.

³ Miss Kayley, Dance Space Performing Arts, <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100057229370206>

⁴ St Albans Community Youth Club AGM report 2012.



Other people remember her fondly for her humour and positive disposition as revealed in some recent Facebook exchanges. Josef Kalkbrenner wrote that he remember Bev: My brother Andrew beat her in a talent show at the

Anglican hall at East Esplanade in 1957. My brother played piano accordion and beat her hands down. Little did she know that he also played with the Symphony Orchestra in Linz, Austria, when he was fifteen, but yes she was good.

Patsy Slawitschka Mullan: Bev and I go way back to 1959 when we were still in our teens, and remained friends. Bev was a great tap dancer and went on to teaching at the old Nissen hut in Main Road East which is where us teens would rock and roll the night away, wonderful memories. Bev went on to teach dance to some of our daughters and each year would organise a concert for all her pupils from preschool to teens. Thanks for the memories Bev.

Sharron Meissner: I also did dance classes with her. We couldn't afford the tap shoes so Beverley loaned me some. One of the mums (maybe Ella's mum) made my costumes. I loved going to dance class. Once a week on a Saturday from memory.

Bev Godfrey continued her involvement with dancing for decades, as Tanya Mielicki has attended a showtime dance concert with her in 2013 at the Maribyrnong secondary college.



Tanya Mielicki and Bev Godfrey

Beverley Godfrey nee Lodge passed away at St Albans in mid-November 2021 at age 78. She had been unwell and was being cared for by her daughter Tracie and her son.

1948 – Giovanni and Onorina Forte



The Forte family of St Albans were of Italian background and came to Australia in 1938. In 1942 they were registered as being Civil Aliens, because of the Italian background at a time war. Giovanni Sciran Forte was born in 1908 in Asiago, Veneto,

Italy. His parents were Domenico Pietro Forte and Elisabeth Stefani and the ancestry goes back to 1842 in Favara, Agrigento, Sicilia, Italy.



Onorina Margareta Mosele was born in 1912 in Asiago, Vicenza, Veneto, Italy. Her parents were Cristiano Moselle and Maria Cristina Cunico of Asiago; their ancestry goes back to 1776 to Maddalena Stella and Pietro Mosele.

Giovanni Forte and Onorina Mosele had married in June 1930 and raised nine children – we know about four of them because they attended St Albans primary school in the 1940s, having transferred across from the Keilor primary school. Giovanni was a gardener, and most probably he was employed in some of the market gardens at Keilor.

They came to St Albans in 1948 and were possibly one of the earliest continental migrant families in the post-war era. In 1948 there were 23 new enrolments at St Albans primary school, most of whom were of Anglo origin, so the four Italian Forte children were a noticeable proportion for the year.

However they were not the first Italian migrants in the district; e.g., Andrew and Violetta Lorensini came in 1918 and the Sassella brothers came in the early 1920s; they were major cattle dealers with holding paddocks in St Albans and Deer Park. Mr Dodds of Keilor was known to have hired Italian men in later years, e.g. Giuseppe Siciliano in the early 1940s, and the Loccisano brothers were there in the later 1940s.

Giovanni Forte became a naturalised British subject in 1948. At this stage St Albans was a small village of 800 people clustered around the railway station with small farms in the outer areas. There were some orchards and market gardens along the river, while other farmers raised cattle or sheep and grew crops. But it was a time of population growth. In the late 1940s, the migrants coming to Australia

were mostly Eastern European Displaced Persons from the refugee war camps. In the 1950s they were Assisted Migrants from throughout Europe.

The Forte children who enrolled at St Albans state school were Renato, Domenico, Mary, and Angelina.

Giovanni and Onorina Forte had nine children – five sons and four daughters – but not all are identified in the ancestry listings.

Their first daughter Maria was born in 1932 and died in 1937 at age six years.

Mary was born in November 1938 and was at St Albans primary school between 1948 and 1951, after which she left for St Mary's in Sunshine.

Angelina was born in September 1940 and was at St Albans primary school between 1948 and 1951, after which she left for St Mary's in Sunshine.



Renato was born in June 1934. He started at the Keilor state school and gets special mentions for his work in collecting and packing in Egg Appeal for the Metropolitan Hospitals in 1945 and 1947. He was at St Albans primary in March 1948 before leaving in June 1948 to work on the family farm. He married thrice, Patricia Bertha Felstead in 1958 with whom he had three children, then to Loida in 1992, and Sandra in 2010. Renato died in May 2011 at age 76 years.



Domenico was born in September 1936 and was at the St Albans primary between 1948 and 1950, after which he left for work. In 1962 he married Nella Cecomancini and they had two daughters. Domenico died in 2003 at age 65 years.

The Forte family was originally living in Cemetery Road Keilor, before moving to St Albans in 1948. They moved to Sunshine by the mid-1950s and were living in Chapman Street; Giovanni worked as a labourer.

Giovanni Sciran Forte died in April 1984 at the Royal Melbourne Hospital at age 75, and was buried at the Lawn Cemetery, Altona Memorial Park.

Onorina Forte nee Mosele died in November 2010 at Rosanna at age 98 at Rosanna, and was cremated at the Springvale Botanical Crematorium.

1950 – Frederick Francis Barnard



Frederick Francis Barnard usually known as Fred, was one of the builders of St Albans from the 1950s, especially because of his involvement as a builder and volunteer with the Sacred Heart Catholic parish and its church and

school that were built in Winifred Street.

St Albans was starting to expand rapidly because of Australia's strong immigration intake program and many families settled in the neighbourhood because of relatively cheap land, relaxed building regulations, and lots of work opportunities in nearby suburbs. The housing boom was a big fillip to the local economy as builders and building suppliers started to thrive after two decades of languish. Fred's role in the Catholic parish has been acknowledged in a couple of their publications but not otherwise documented in the local history books. His family has probably one of the best-documented local family trees going back to 1100 in England.



The Barnard family's paternal heritage is traced back to a "Fitzbernard" ancestor who was born about 1100 in Kingstown, Kent, England. By 1270 the family elders were Sir and Lady Godfrey "Bernard" and the new spelling continued until 1365 when the "Barnard" spelling was

adopted. Thus it was that in 1436 Sir Thomas Francis Barnard married Lady Marien Margaret of Abington Mauntell and their son became Sir John Barnard I of Abington.

Frederick Francis Barnard was born in March 1911 in Bendigo. His parents were Francis Arthur Barnard (1886-1965) and Catherine Francis Stone (1889-1984). Francis Arthur Barnard was born in Victoria in 1886 and Catherine Stone was born in Mitcham in 1889.

They married in August 1910 in St Killains



Catholic Church in Bendigo and raised eight children — seven boys and one girl. Frederick Francis was their first son, born in 1911.

Catherine Frances Stone was born in November 1889 in Mitcham. Her parents were Frances Abel Stone and Susan Harriet Walker (Ware). The Stone heritage traces back to Thomas Stone in 1743 in Somerset, England. Abel Stone came to Tasmania in 1852 and married Mary Holstock in Victoria in 1853.

The children of Frederick Barnard and Catherine Francis Stone were:

- Fredrick Francis Barnard born in March 1911, died in May 1978 at Footscray.
- Robert Haydon Barnard born in December 1912 at Daylestone, died in December 1994 at Melbourne. Worked as a timber worker. Married Anna Elizabeth McVitty.
- Francis Paulineus Barnard born in 1914 died in 2012. Married Ursula May Quinlivan.
- Doreen Margaret Barnard born in November 1917 at Kerang, died in 1992 at Wangaratta. Married William Archibold McLean.
- Vincent George Whelan Barnard born in 1919, died in 2007. Wed Irene Kathleen Phelan.
- Alan John Kenny Barnard born in 1920 at Barham NSW, died in 1979 at Wangaratta. Worked as a toolmaker. Married Enid Winifred Gillies. Settled in Essendon. Enlisted in the AIF in 1943 and discharged in 1944.
- Kenneth Barnard born in 1923, died in 1986 at Wangaratta. Married Eileen Patricia Keenan.
- Gordon Barnard born in November 1923 at Koondarook, died in February 2007 at Wangaratta. Wed Betty Victoria Tripp.



Barnard siblings circa 1978

The Barnard family were living in Sunshine during the 1920s. Fred had completed his apprenticeship with H V McKays and worked there as a driver. The family is lucky to have survived. In 1927 their home in Station Parade caught fire in the night and Catherine Barnard and

her four children might have perished when their home was destroyed, but fortunately their pet dog woke them from sleep and they were able to escape.¹ In 1933 it was Fred who was lucky to have survived an accident at McKay-Massey-Harris when he was trodden on by a horse and suffered serious injuries to the head.

The family must have been well connected in the municipality as their coming-of-age party for Doreen was held at the Masonic Hall with 140 guests and the dignitaries included the Shire President Cr Parsons and Cr Pridham was chairman of the supper table.

Frederick Francis Barnard married Doris Watts at Footscray in 1939. Her parents were Fred Watts and Mary Victoria Kemp who were from Lancashire England. It appears that Fred and Doris settled in Sunshine near other members of his family who were in Graham Street.

In May 1943 Fred enlisted with the Civil Construction Corps as a carpenter and joiner but was discharged in December as no further work was available for him. He and Doris were living in Hampshire Road Sunshine during the 1940s. They came to St Albans in 1950 and were living in Station Avenue before moving to their long-term home in Winifred Street. They raised seven children, the youngest of whom went to the old St Albans State School as the Catholic primary school had not yet been built:

- Janice Mary was born in July 1940, started at the primary school in 1950 and progressed to the Hyde Street School in Footscray. She married Daniel Nicholas Gavaghan of St Albans and they lived in Power Street. He worked as a clerk and she became a lay teacher at the Sacred Heart Primary School which was mostly staffed by the Sisters of St Joseph in its early years.
- Kevin Frederick was born in August 1942 and after his primary schooling went to the North Melbourne Boys Roman Catholic school. Kevin became a builder and later may have established a business as a building consultant. He married Sheila Irene. They lived in Taylors Road and raised seven or eight children.
- Yvonne was born in July 1945 and started at St Albans Primary in 1950 and then progressed to the St Albans High School in 1956 when it was established in temporary premises in Sunshine.
- Desmond "Des" Harry went to Assumption College at Kilmore for his matriculation studies 1961–1964. He wed Helen Emily and they lived in Alexina Street. He was the General Manager of the St Albans Sports

¹ Sunshine Advocate 27 August 1927

Club 2000-2013 and Operations Manager at Club Italia Sporting Club since 2013.

Carmen Hickey recalls that the Barnards helped a lot of people with their building problems: *When the Gigacz family bought their property in Sylvester Crescent they were soon in real trouble because the builder went broke so the family were left with nowhere to go. The Barnards lived in Winifred Street and Fred Barnard built a lot of residences in St Albans. Anyhow, Fred told John Gigacz not to worry as he would take over the construction for them. That's the way things were – people would pitch in and help.*



Frederick Francis Barnard died in May 1978 at age 67, quite young, and was buried at Keilor. Kevin Barnard has stated of his father that:

The parish was his life. Money didn't mean anything to him. He liked to be comfortable but he had no ambitions to be a millionaire. He treated everybody fair. It didn't matter who they were or where they were from, they were all treated the same. He devoted his life to the parish and his family — the things that were most important to him. He sacrificed weekend after weekend. Virtually all his life he sacrificed. It meant so much to him. It's hard to understand how anyone can be so dedicated for so long. He had a relationship with Fr Reis that he treasured very much. He was always a very quiet fellow. He didn't like a fuss. He liked to do his own thing and never looked for any thanks or any fuss. Anything that was his was everyone else's. He was never selfish with anything.¹

Doris Barnard died in 2008 at age 96 years and was buried at the Keilor cemetery.



¹ Kev Barnard in Moira Eastman, Sacred Heart St. Albans 1953-1978, 1978 p19

1951 – Bazyl and Warwara Dalinkiewicz



Bazyl Dalinkiewicz was born in February 1918 in the town of Zabrezje, Nowogrodek, Poland. He had blonde hair and blue eyes. That region was part of Poland at the time hence the Polish nationality listed on his documents. He attended primary school in 1926-1932 and was literate in Polish and Belarussian and spoke some German. During the late 1930s he worked as a farmer on his own farm in the district. The outbreak of war brought many changes and dislocations. In 1940-41 he was a laborer through the Employment Office of Kandalaksza Russia. He was captured by the Germans as a laborer under German control in 1941. He was sent to Norway and worked there under German control until 1945. In 1941-45 he was POW labourer for Germans in Rovaniemi, Finland. He was returned to Germany by the US Forces From and was in a a DP camp in Germany in November 1945. In 1945-46 he was locksmith in the camp at Hasenecke, Hessen, Germany. In 1946-48 he was a labourer at Wildflecken and W-Dorf Bavaria, Germany. In 1948-1948 he was a storekeeper in Windischbergerdorf Bavaria. In 1948-49 he was again a labourer at Michelsdorf, Bavaria.



Warwara Szaranda was born in December 1921 in Brychowcy, Podlaskie, Poland, and was at primary school in late 1930s before taking on domestic work, but her occupation was also listed as a farmer. When war broke out, she became a telegraph worker through the Labor Office in Orsza Poland 1939-42, and then a farm worker at Elmshausen, Germany, during 1942-1945.

Warwara Szaranda married Bazyl Dalinkiewicz in Windischnergerdorf in Bavaria, in December 1947. Their son Mikolaj was born in 1948 in Furt in Wald, Barvaria, in Germany. In April 1948 the International Refugee Organisation processed the family's application for resettlement to Australia and they were accepted in July 1949. The IRO rated them as an "average family group". Bazyl was declared fit for heavy work and Warwara fit for medium work.

The family arrived in Australia on the

Nelly III in December 1949. They were listed as Polish nationals but they were also Byelorussian refugees. Warwara and Nicholas were housed at the Department of Immigration Holding Centre at Cowra, New South Wales, while Bazyl was sent to the Department of Army in Albert Park, Victoria. Bazyl worked as a labourer, and some of that was with the State Electricity Commission.



Dalinkiewicz home in Henry Street St Albans

The family moved to St Albans probably in 1951 or 1952, and they were some of the early post-war settlers in Henry Street. They built a weatherboard home at 16 Henry Street and lived there the rest of their lives. All around them were open grass paddocks slowly being populated as other European migrants started building their bungalows and small houses. Their neighbours to the west were the Hofmans, Ribarows, Kiezyks, and Melnyks.

There were no made footpaths or roads. The water mains came only as far as the Kiezyk property, so it was a case of taking a bucket and filling it up with water from the tap in their front yard; but things soon improved.

The milkman did his early morning rounds with horse and cart and the clip clop sound was a wakeup call to children in the street. If you weren't quick in collecting the milk the magpies might puncture the cap for their early morning sip. The iceman used to come with his truck once a week and put a big block of ice into the top of the ice chest. The briquette man delivered his produce in old potato sacks. A farmer might come around once a year selling big sacks of potatoes.

The baker drove around the district with his horse and cart, but it was mostly white bread – a Vienna loaf was welcome but the much-loved continental rye bread was not yet on the delivery list. The baker's cart was an adventure opportunity for children. One of the boys from up the street was too daring by hopping onto the footplate at the back; with the jolting of the cart his fingers were caught in the suspension springs and he was screaming in

pain. It took a couple of men with an axe to wedge apart the spring leaves to release his fingers. The horrified young onlookers were wary of hitching rides from then on.

Another combined rescue operation occurred when a snake was seen near the Dalinkiewicz home. It was summertime with lots of cracks in the ground and the snake slithered away. As the men were digging for it in one spot the dog was barking madly at another so the men turned there and caught and killed it.

The shopping centre was near the railway station, which was a 30-minute walk away, much longer if young children were in tow, which was a long trek for women to carry heavy string bags of groceries. Some husbands built shopping trolleys for their wives, some used bicycles to carry their laden bags. Gradually, the shops started catering for European tastes such as salami and pickled herring. Life was a bit easier when the milk bar opened around the corner on Conrad Street.

Warwara and Bazyl received their naturalisation certificates in December 1961, so they were new Australians for sure.



Warwara and Bazyl had two sons, Mikolaj and Victor, and a daughter Zina. Mikolaj was born in 1948 in Furt in Wald, Barvaria. Locally he was known as Nicholas. He started at the state primary school in 1954 and in 1956 moved across to the recently-

built Sacred Heart primary school. He then went to the Footscray Institute of Technology and in 1969 completed his Diploma of Mechanical Engineering. In 1978 he graduated from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology with a Graduate Diploma in Management. He worked for Telstra for over thirty years and was a member of the Australian Institute of Engineers and the



College of Mechanical Engineers. Nicholas wed Elizabeth Kouzmin in 1970 and they had six children. His other career was in the religious realm. He was ordained in 1984 and in 1999 he became the Archpriest of the Russian Orthodox Church in Melbourne and served for many

years. He is now retired.



Viktor Dalinkiewicz still lives locally. He attended the St Albans North Primary School and developed a keen interest in cricket. In the 1960s he would be out on the road playing street cricket with the neighbours: Joe Kiezyk, Gary Keenan, John Turner, Charlie and

Alfie Montebello, Joe Ribarow, and some of the female neighbours – it was a fruit box for the wicket and out of six if you hit the ball on the full into a front yard. A good spinner if I remember correctly. Viktor joined the St Albans Cricket Club and was elevated through the ranks to assistant coach. He's still with the club and committee fifty years on. Viktor was a HR Projects Manager at Metro Trains, and dealt with Australian trucking, railroad and transportation issues around Melbourne.

Zina Dalinkiewicz ended up working as a typist. She married Harry Scamangas in the 1907s; they settled in St Albans and had several children. Harry attended St Albans High School in the 1960s and was boundary umpire in some of their football matches.

Bazył Dalinkiewicz died in 2007 at age 89 and was buried at Footscray.

Warwara Dalinkiewicz nee Szarando was admitted to Kalyna Care in Taylors Road, Delahey (home for the Ukrainian elderly) in early 2014. She passed away in December 2014 at age 93 and was buried at Footscray.



1951 – Leopold and Maria Hofman



Little is known about the later lives of Leopold and Maria Hofman of St Albans, but I remember them as being good neighbours from the 1950s and early 1960s. They arrived in Australia in November 1949 on the Nelly as Displaced Persons. They

were initially housed at the Department of Immigration Holding Centre at Cowra, New South Wales. Leopold was sent to work in Melbourne and was based at the Department of the Army in Albert Park. He was born in April 1924 in Rokitno, Poland, so he was aged 25 years when he arrived.



Maria Hofman was also relatively tall (5 foot 8 inches) and slim with fair hair and blue eyes. She was born in August 1926 in Maiergruen in the Czech Republic and was aged 23 years when she arrived. In February 1950 Maria and Veronika moved

to join Leopold at the Department of the Army in Albert Park, Melbourne. Veronika was born in August 1947 in Ludwigsburg, Germany, so she was only two years old when she arrived in Australia.



The family moved to St Albans about 1951 into a half-house in Henry Street. It was an actual half-house, as the front half had a proper gable roof, whereas many of the first homes in the district were the typical St Albans bungalows with the almost-flat skillion roof.

The Hofman half-house had two largish rooms separated by a corridor, one room being the master bedroom and the other a multi-purpose room as kitchen, dining and lounge, with the baby's bed tucked in the corner. A narrow, corridor-width space in the back was the temporary bathroom and laundry. Behind the building there were already some stumps in the ground with bearers atop ready for an extension that never happened.

The Hofmans were of Roman Catholic back-ground and Veronika would have started at the St Albans Sacred Heart primary school as it was built in 1954.

I was Veronika's age when my family came to St Albans in 1951, and we were immediate neighbours.

Leopold and Maria were Polish nationals but spoke German at home, and I always thought that Maria was of German background. Leopold was at least trilingual as he spoke Polish, German, and English. Leo and Maria became naturalized citizens in 1958¹ so they must have decided to make Australia their permanent home.



Veronika, Peter, Helen, Teresa, Joe 1950s

In the early 1950s there were eight families in our little cluster between Henry and Conrad streets. We were next to the Hofmans and to the west were the Ukrainians Josef and Maria Kiezyk, and their son Josef. Next to them a Polish man with a German wife, Wasyl and Anneliese Melnyk. On the other side of the Hofmans were Bazyl and Warwara Dalinkiewicz (Byelorussian) with sons Nick² and Victor, and daughter Zina. Behind us were three families: Heinrich and Anna Klaus (possibly Yugoslav-German), then Stefan and Parania Kasjan (Ukrainian) with two boys John and Michael and a girl Stefania. I think the other family was Russian or Lithuanian but I've forgotten their name. This little hamlet of houses remained unchanged in the early fifties, but eventually other houses started to be built around us.

As with many families at the time, the Hofmans soon had a productive back yard. They planted fruit trees and cultivated rows of vegetables. There was a tool shed, chook shed and a pigeon coop in the back corner. Along the front fence they planted roses. They had a dog named Rex.

Veronica's parents bought us presents for Christmas which we loved though our parents were embarrassed by the gesture because they couldn't reciprocate.

Veronika was an outgoing type whose

company we enjoyed. Helen and I would go to her place and listen to the radio or play games with swap cards like snap and drops. Listening to the radio was exciting and I couldn't wait for the hour the children's programs came on air. Adventure story time would probably be a better description as we listened to the deliciously scary episodes of Leonard Teale doing Superman; there was also Tarzan of the Apes, Hop Harrigan, and Captain Silver and the Sea Hound. Great adventures for the imagination of a growing boy.



Veronika & Helen with Hofman home in background

There was a sad ending to this family story, however, as one year in the mid-1960s the mother and daughter returned to Germany for a holiday and never returned. Hofman was left behind and ended up dropping out of the area and living somewhere in Footscray. I know that he wrote letters to Maria and Veronica but I was too young to know what was really happening. Were there unresolved family issues in Germany?

The house was unoccupied and gradually deteriorated. I moved out of the area and lost contact with local events. Some years later I heard that Maria returned on her own for a visit, apparently to encourage Leopold to come to Germany, but he stayed.

I remember a rumour that Keilor Council eventually took possession of the property to recover unpaid rates. The property was sold and the house demolished and replaced with a modern brick home.

Leopold Hofman moved to Kingsville by 1967 and was working as a metal dresser. later as a storeman. In 1977 he was still in Kingsville and listed again as a metal worker.

It's likely that Leopold Hoffman died in May 1980 at the Bethlehem Hospital in Caulfield, at the relatively young age of 56 years; I don't know the cause of his death. He was buried at the Altona Memorial Park Cemetery, Hobsons Bay. Leopold didn't leave a will, and therefore the settlement of his

¹ Commonwealth of Australia Gazette 17 April 1958 p1126

² Nicholas Dalinkiewicz became an Archpriest with the Russian Orthodox Church in Collingwood.

estate was handled by the public trustee.¹

The Hofmans of St Albans were nice people and I hope that they all achieved some peace and happiness in their lives.

Joseph Ribarow, 2024.²

Helena Ribarow, Joe Ribarow, Veronika Hofman



Joe Ribarow & Leopold Hofman



1951 – Alexander Duchovs



Aleksandrs Duchovs was born in July 1941 to Helene Duchovs nee Stankevics. They were Latvian nationals who were caught up in the war and ended up in a displaced persons camp in Wuerzburg, Germany, because of forced evacuation. They applied to the International Refugee Organisation (IRO) for resettlement and were accepted by Australia. Helen had remarried, so the family comprised of Martins Talivaldis Strebs-Stelps (stepfather), Helene Strebs-Stelps (mother), Aleksandrs, and Izolde (stepsister).

The family were probably housed in the Broadmeadows Migrant Hostel as the children attended the Westbreen primary school. By 1951 they were living in North Street (Taylors Road). They obtained their naturalisation papers in 1959. Mr Strebs-Stelps worked as a rubber worker and colour blender.



Alexanders Duchovs (sic) started at St Albans state school in September 1951 and left in June 1955. St Albans in 1951 was a quiet village of 900 people with one school, one bank, one hall, two churches and eight shops.

The population was growing fast with post-war migrants settling in because of work and housing opportunities. The Shire President arranged a concert to welcome them. The Education Department announced it would extend the state school with a pre-fabricated unit. By 1955, when Alexanders left the school, the population reached an unprecedented 4000 people and was growing like never before.

Alex Duchovs' main contribution to St Albans was that he helped establish the boys' basketball team in the 1960s, that was partly initiated through the High School and the Youth Club on Errington Reserve.

Alex developed an interest in sport and turned to football, basketball and boxing. He was a member of the St Albans Football Club in the 1960s, and is included in one of the club's iconic photos from 1963/4 with players including Doug Stevens, Ivan Volkov, Wishy Dawidowicz, and Gavan Aitken. Unfortunately he was not in the team in 1966 when they won the Footscray District League premiership.

Basketball for boys at the Youth Club was first started in 1956 by Norm Trevena, and

¹ Victoria Government Gazette No. 93, 29 October 1980 p3643

² Parts of this article were previously published in *St Albans Secondary College Celebrating 50 Fabulous Years* (2006).

then in 1965 Leo Suszko and Joe Lubas revived the club's competition. There was a team playing there in the early 1960s with members including Gavan Aitken and the Van Liempd brothers. They played at the Showgrounds whereas the St Albans Building Supplies team played at Albert Park. Basketball was introduced in the High School in 1964, and some of their players joined the Building Supplies team in the late 1960s.

Doug Stevens sponsored the St Albans Building Supplies team probably in the 1960s; Alex Duchows was the likely instigator and captain-coach. Players included John Hay, Herman Erkamps, Tony Erkamps, Chris McCormack, Leo Suszko, Val Noone, David Dusting, Henry Goralski, and Joe Ribarow.

Alex's biggest sport challenge was in boxing. He fought under the name Kid Alexander as a light heavyweight. His debut was in 1963 at Festival Hall. His officially listed bouts were at Festival Hall. He won all four of his bouts in 1963 and lost the next four between 1964 and 1970.¹



Duchows (front right) StA Football Team 1963



Leo Suszko & St Albans Basketball Team

1952 – Jan and Anna Mikula



Jan and Anna Mikula were 'new Australians' who came to St Albans in the post-war era. Their "claim to fame" in the history of St Albans is that Colin Missen identified them as the first new settlers in St Albans in the 1939-45 period, but he was mistaken, as they came

to Australia in 1950 and with the mandatory two-year work stints under government direction, they probably settled locally in 1952. (Perhaps Missen was referring more generally to migrants who arrived "after the war".)

Jan and Anna were Polish nationals. Jan had served in the Polish Army and was captured as a prisoner of war in 1939. He became a POW soon after war started and was put to work as a railway labourman, a locomotive fireman, and a ships boilerman. After the war had ended, the Mikulas were accepted under the International Refugee Organisation's (IRO) resettlement program for migration to Australia.

Jan Mikula was born in December 1912 in Baranowisz, Poland, to Adam Joefela Mikula and Teofilia Szyto. (Their earlier histories are not known.) There were five children: Jan, Nina, Anastasia, Olga and Mikael.



Jan Mikula married Anna Trunowa about 1945. She was born in December 1919 in luckoja, Russia. Her parents were Igor Trunow and Matrona Panina. (Their earlier history is not known.) They had five children: Maria, Tania, Anna, Mikael, and Ivan.



Jan, Anna, and their daughter Irene arrived in Victorian in 1950. Jan Mikulic was sent to Shepparton to the Northern Goulburn Valley Fruit Growers Association, working for the Pickworth Brothers of Tatura. Anna and Irene Mikula were sent to the Holding Centre of

¹ <https://boxrec.com/en/proboxer/134343>

the Department of Immigration at Rushworth. The Mikulas likely moved to West Sale by 1951 as their son John was apparently born in the hospital there in April 1951. Their work history there is not known.

When they moved to St Albans the family settled on the northern perimeter of the district, on North Road (later renamed Taylors Road) between Theodore and Alfrieda streets; the Danilow family were their near neighbours. The property was opposite the old Anderson farm that was established about 1905. Jones Creek which ran through the Anderson's farm and across North Road would occasionally overflow in winter and flood some of the land along Charles Street, and occasionally there were grass fires, but it was their new home.

Jan obtained work as a blacksmith at Massey Ferguson in Sunshine. They raised four children. Their first son Vladislav had died as an infant in Germany. Irena became a supervisor, now in Tatura. The Australian-born children included John who was a gentle giant, went to the technical school and became a plumber, now in Townsville. Helena worked as a clerk, now in Gisborne. Liz (Elizabeth) was at St Albans high school from 1967, now in Sunbury.

The children's early education histories are not known as their names do not appear in the state primary school register. The Milkulas were of Roman Catholic faith and the children most probably attended the Sacred Heart Catholic primary school which started in 1954 – it would have been an accessible walk for the children along Theodore Street to the school on the corner of Winifred Street. They most likely attended the Polish mass that was held on Sundays by Fr Krasocki.

Very little is recorded about the family's life in St Albans, apart from Jan's name being mentioned in the Sunshine Advocate in May 1953 when his bicycle was stolen from the railway station.

Jan Mikula died in December 1986 at age 74 and was buried at Altona Memorial Park. Anna Mikula died in April 1994 at age 74 and was buried at Altona Memorial Park.



1953 – Mary and Bill O'Brien



Mrs O'Brien was the Tuck Shop Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic School. Mary Smith and William "Bill" O'Brien were from Lancashire in England. They married in Liverpool in 1937 and had two daughters, Maureen (1939) and Ann (1940). The family

migrated from Liverpool to Melbourne in 1952. They were a relatively young family as William was aged 39 and Mary was 38. They settled in St Albans fairly soon as in 1953 Bill O'Brien was one of the local volunteers helping to build the first stage of the Sacred Heart church and classrooms in Winifred Street, just up the road from the O'Briens' home.



Bill worked as an engineer and though Mary was listed in the electoral roll in the traditional women's role of "home duties" she was in fact soon running the tuck shop at the Sacred Heart primary school, which began in 1954, as well as putting in lots of extra hours as a parish volunteer.

Bill and Mary became volunteers with the parish library when it was established about 1956 - it was usually open for several hours on Sundays.

The St Joseph's Guild for men at St Albans was formed in 1956. The group comprised of volunteers who worked on a roster system to repair and maintain the parish buildings; they also built the scout hall and sports pavilion. Social "men's only" nights for the Guild were also established, but it was the ladies – Mrs O'Brien, Mrs Gavan, Margaret Hewitt and Ann O'Brien – who prepared supper even though they were sent home "before the festivities began."

The tuck shop was normally open

during school hours, and Mrs O'Brien also ran the tuck shop after mass on Sundays. Her daughters Maureen and Ann would help her as well as other young parishioners such as Rosemary Keegan.

In 1957 the Sacred Heart School established a Mother's Club, and before long Mrs O'Brien was President and her tuck shop co-worker, Mrs Howells, was Secretary, Mrs Tolhurst was Vice-President and Mrs Taylor was Treasurer. The ladies also helped with school activities such as reading with students, sewing, and fundraising through street stalls, jumble sales, parish fetes and the much-appreciated toffee days.

Maureen O'Brien made an often-quoted and now iconic observation of early St Albans: "We didn't have any made roads. It was all mud. There was no electricity. When we went to work we used to leave our muddy boots underneath the seat on the station and change our shoes on the train. We'd leave the boots and they'd still be there when we got home. There were no roads or footpaths at all and the drains were all open."¹



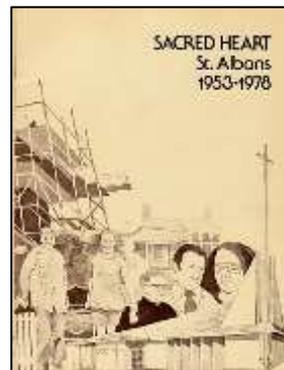
Phillip Cini wrote that: "What I particularly liked about primary school was when they had toffee day. On Toffee Day there was a big array of toffees with different colours and different toppings: white ones with sprinkles or yellow ones with sprinkles. We couldn't afford much so we always bought the coffee flavoured ones which were about half a

penny. That's about all I ever tasted, but they were toffees and they were good."



Anton Simic remembers that Fridays were special days for tuck shop cuisine "because they were apple pie days and they were my favourite. You'd pay for your apple pie in the morning and receive a token as proof of payment. Then at lunchtime

you'd go to the tuck shop and get your delicious apple pie."



Fr Val Noone recalled that "During the late 1960s, once a month on a Sunday night, rock bands performed in the parish hall and neighbours were remarkably patient. I think we had an 11.30 p.m. curfew. Mrs Mary O'Brien used to sometimes open the Tuck Shop for light drinks and snacks for the Catholic Youth Junction."

William O'Brien died in St Albans in August 1988 at age 76 and was buried at the Keilor cemetery.

Mary O'Brien nee Smith died in Werribee in November 2005 at age 91 and was buried at the Keilor cemetery.

¹ Sacred Heart St Albans 1953-1978, p5

1953 – Fr Joseph Krasocki



Joseph Krasocki was of Polish ethnic background, born in April 1905 in Irkutsk, Siberia, Russia, to Susan Kuczyncka and Michael Krasocki. He was educated at Odessa and in Poland, where he joined the Salesian Congregation and studied for the priesthood at

Cracow, Poland. He was ordained as a priest in 1935 and was working in Warsaw when Poland was invaded and he fled to Lithuania.

Krasocki emigrated to Australia under the International Refugee Organization and arrived at Melbourne in January 1950. He was aged 45 and was described as having grey hair and blue eyes. His destination was Archbishop Mannix Missionary College, Oakleigh, which had been opened in 1947 by the Sunbury-based Salesian Fathers. He quickly became involved with the Melbourne Catholic parish with a particular outreach to the Polish community.

Rev. Jerome Krasocki S.D.B. became the spiritual director of the recently-formed Polish Society of Australia and chaplain of Poles in Victoria. He must have been a welcome help to the Catholic clergy as their Polish brethren were one of the largest emigrant groups in Melbourne at the time, about 3,000.

In April 1950, Krasocki was holding a traditional Polish Easter service at St Augustine's Church in Melbourne:

A feature of the ceremony was the age-old Polish custom of blessing the Easter food. Eggs, cake, fruit, vegetables, meat, together with a "pinch of salt," were placed in baskets at the foot of the altar and blessed in the traditional manner. For most of the Poles, it was the first time they had attended their Easter ceremonies for nearly 10 years and a large number gathered to receive the Easter blessing and to take part in liturgical ceremonies commemorating the Resurrection of Our Lord.

In May 1950 he was the celebrant at the first Australian celebration of Poland's National Festival, dedicated to Our Lady Queen of Poland, held at St Augustine's in Melbourne:

During the afternoon there will be an exhibition of folk dancing, singing, etc., in their club room, Roma House, Elizabeth-street, Melbourne. President of the society is Mr. Stanley Szustkiewics, with Mr. Stanley Bilinski as secretary. Object of the society is to explain Australian customs to the migrants. They also propose to interest Australians in the handicrafts and social interests of Polish people. Dances are arranged for members, and efforts are made to supply accommodation for those needing it.



New Australian artists, Advocate 20 July 1950

Krasocki also acted as chaplain for "New Australians" in Victoria, and this role must have been enhanced by his multi-lingual skills; for example, when he visited Seymour in May 1950 he heard confessions in Polish, Lithuanian, German and Russian. He also attended the Somers Transit Camp and was due to visit Heathcote and Rochester on similar missions.

In 1951 there were six Polish chaplains working with and for Polish migrants in Victoria: In Melbourne, they are Rev. Stanislaus Skudrzyk, S.J., and Rev. Joseph Janus, S.J. Rev. Lucjan Zaroszka is attached to the Sale diocese with headquarters at Sale, and Rev. Feliks Wozniczak is Polish Chaplain at the migration centre at Bonegilla (in the Sandhurst diocese). A Lithuanian priest, Rev. Lawrence Kemesis, looks after both Polish and Lithuanian people at the holding centres at Benalla and Rushworth, and has his residence at the latter camp.

A well-attended celebration was when 2,000 Poles attended a solemn High Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral and sang national hymns before and after Mass where Archbishop Mannix presided and Father Krasocki was the celebrant:

Fr Moran welcomed the Polish people to the Cathedral and to Australia and hoped they would make their own contribution to the progress and development of this country. He appealed to Australians to extend a welcome to the newcomers and make them feel they were amongst friends who wished them well. Father Trzeciak preached the sermon in Polish. A national standard was blessed by Archbishop Mannix, was borne at the head of the procession into the Cathedral, and followed by Polish girls in national dress.

The Polish Catholic presence in Melbourne's west strengthened when the Sisters of the Resurrection established a convent at Essendon in 1952. The opening ceremony was conducted by his Grace the Archbishop, Most Rev. D. Mannix, who hoped that Australians would continue to welcome the Polish people as they had done so far.

A grander local occasion occurred in 1953 when the St Albans parish was established

by Fr Con Reis. The local population had been increasing with the arrival of European refugees and by 1953 there were 400 Catholic families in St Albans, of whom 90% were new Australians. Catholic services had been held at the old Mechanics Institute Hall in East Esplanade, but under Fr Reis's guidance a presbytery and chapel were built in Arthur Street. On Sunday 16 August, four hundred people formed a procession from the old public hall to the new parish centre.



Sacred Heart presbytery 1953



Polish girls leading procession

Fr Joseph Krasocki was a key figure in this celebration, as he conducted Mass for the first time for the Poles of the parish:

The half-mile route from the hall to the new building was lined by interested onlookers and the processionists sang hymns ... Children of Mary formed a guard of honour outside the presbytery and Father C. Reis gave Benediction and addressed the people of the parish. All had an opportunity of inspecting the presbytery during the day. ... Assisting Father Reis at the procession was Father J. Krasocki, S.D.B., who celebrated Mass, for the first time, for the Poles of the parish, on that day. These Masses will now be weekly, but in no way will they be different from the usual Mass of the Sunday ... but at the end of the Mass Father Krasocki will say a few words in Polish to his congregation. ... Nearly 100 children in national costumes led the procession.

Fr. Krasocki held a regular Polish mass in St Albans on Sundays. He might have started

about 1952 when monthly services were being held at the Mechanics Hall, before the church was built in Winifred Street. The nuns from the Polish church in Essendon were involved in St Albans since about 1954. On Saturdays, Sr. Albina and Sr. Gertruda taught children the basics of the Polish language and history from a room at the back of the church. This was a project that had been developed with the St Albans Polish Society. They also had a small Polish library located there that was looked after by Henry Liszukiewicz who later graduated as the well-known local GP. There was a Melbourne paper *Tygodnik Polski* (Polish Weekly) that would circulate locally, and in the late 1950s Tony Wyka was the young volunteer delivering it to the St Albans subscribers.

The St Albans Polish Society did not build a Polish House or Church. There debate about the desirability of developing separate ethnic parishes or incorporating them into normal parish arrangements. Fr Con Ries had been the director of the Catholic Immigration Office and preferred the multicultural approach. It's been said of him that in St Albans he established:

... a remarkable multicultural spiritual family, where people of dozens of nationalities, some former enemies in World War II, worshipped side by side, and their children went to school together. ... Bearing in mind the Polish factor in our discussion, it is noteworthy that during the late 1950s and early 1960s, under the leadership of Reis, Sacred Heart parish and its hall were home to one of Australia's most thriving Polish religious, cultural and sporting communities. Moreover, Father Joseph Krasocki celebrated Mass there every Sunday and remained a lifelong friend of Reis. For the six main Masses on Sunday, sermons were in English but priests of a dozen nationalities came on a rotating roster to celebrate an additional Sunday Mass, to hear Confessions and preach in their own tongue, every month or so. In his parish Reis implemented the plan which he had earlier sought to make a diocesan one.¹

Fr Krasocki was a very compassionate man and would go out of his way to help his congregation despite some protocol constraints; for example, when a Polish widow was not able to have her Serbian Orthodox husband's coffin accepted into the Catholic church, Fr Krasocki helped the grieving family by accompanying them to the burial and holding a payer ceremony over the grave; and helping a mother to be released from the Sunbury asylum and return home to care for her children.

Fr Joseph Krasocki was effectively the parochial Polish priest for two decades from 1952 to about 1970, after which he moved to Ballarat. He passed away in 1978.

¹ Val Noone, *Journal of Australian Catholic Historical Society*. Volume 36 2015.

1954 – John and Evelyn Gigacz



John and Evelyn Gigacz were pioneers of the Sacred Heart Parish and St Albans in the 1950s. Jan 'John' Gigacz was born in 1922 in Brezno nad Hronom, Slovakia. He studied chemistry and obtained his degree from the Technical University in Bratislava. He became

a refugee after the end of WW2.



In 1947 he was working as an industrial chemist in the production of viscose rayon and went to the USA to learn about their new production methods and equipment. Then in 1948 Communists took over the Government of Czecho-Slovakia and when Jan returned he was called up for army service. After basic training he returned to his factory work but decided to escape the political indoctrination and loss of freedom.

He was caught trying to cross the border illegally, was jailed as a political prisoner, and sent to a labour camp and then a coal mine near the Austrian border. Eventually, a group decided to escape to Austria with the help of a smuggler guide and reached Vienna, aiming to get to Salzburg in the American zone, where they were able to get political asylum. While working in the mess hall as a kitchen helper, Jan met a man whose brother had migrated to Australia, and this became a likely destination.

In 1950 Jan qualified for emigration under the International Refugee Organisation as a Displaced Person and applied for Australia. The Australian immigration officers were not interested in his qualifications and recorded his occupation as labourer. In November 1950 with a few hundred other DPs they boarded a train and ended up in Italy, where they boarded the Hellenic Prince for Australia. The DPs were allocated to

dormitories each holding 200 men, but it was not a "free ride" as they were rostered for kitchen duty and the cleaning of dormitory, dining room, and bathrooms. Jan thought the food was very poor; e.g. for breakfast they had dried corn flakes. There was even a shortage of drinking water at one stage.

The ship docked in Australia in January 1951 and passengers were put on the train for the Bonegilla migrant reception camp. Jan was soon on another train headed for work picking grapes in Adelaide. It was here that he met Evelyn Coleman at a dance and their interests were sympatico, but they lost contact.

He started writing to chemical companies looking for a job and was offered a position as a laboratory assistant with ICI (Adelaide.). The manager suggested Jan move to Melbourne where ICI had its head office, because there were more chemical factories and the headquarters of the Royal Australian Chemical Institute which handled the recognition of overseas qualifications. Jan arrived in Melbourne in May 1952, but found there was no position available at ICI. Fortunately, the Nobel Explosive factory at Deer Park was looking to fill a vacancy, so Jan ended up in a job that he wanted.



His first position was working in the 'black powder' laboratory analysing raw materials and semi products in the manufacture of the black powder and finished products. He applied to have his qualifications recognised by the Royal Australian Chemical Institute, and was probably the first applicant with a degree from Bratislava and it took the Institute some time to establish that it was of the required standard. He was admitted as an associate member of the Institute in January 1953 and his position at work was upgraded from a mere laboratory assistant to a staff position as a chemist.

Evelyn Mary Coleman was born in November 1924 in Roseville, New South Wales, to Robert Bede Ignatius Coleman and Katherine Ann Evelyn Mary Cooke. The Coleman ancestry goes back to 1818 in Waterford Ireland, and Thomas John Coleman came to New South Wales in 1877. The Cooke ancestry goes back to 1805 in Lambeth, London, and William Henry Douglas Cooke arrived in Tasmania in 1869 and moved to New South Wales in 1871. Robert Bede Coleman enlisted in 1916 and served in France in the trenches on the Western Front between July 1916 and May 1918. He was wounded in action but survived the gassing. He was awarded the British War Medal and the Victoria Medal for his gallantry.

In 1951 Evelyn Coleman was living in Gordon, Bradfield, NSW, and working as a telephonist with the PMG. She went fruit-picking in Adelaide and met Jan Gigacz at a dance. After Jan left Adelaide, he exchanged letters with Evelyn but after a while the letters stopped. Evelyn had moved back to Sydney and Jan had moved to Melbourne and he did not know her new address.

He would later recall their completely unexpected reconnection: "... one cold winter Melbourne morning - it was 15th July 1953 - as I was changing platforms at the Flinders Street station on the way to work, I saw in the morning crowd Evelyn. She was also on the way to work. We did not have much time to talk then, but we met the next morning a little earlier and I asked her then in the front of Flinders Street station to marry me. We married on the 27th November 1954."



Jan had met Fr Reiss in 1952 and after Jan and Evelyn married they decided to build their home in St Albans where Fr Reis had recently established the Sacred Heart Parish with its temporary church and school. The site

was also relatively close to Deer Park where Jan was working. He and Evelyn would come to St Albans on weekends to help build their home and paint the weatherboards, etc. They quickly became involved in church activities.

Evelyn thought of the Sacred Heart parish as home: "Our sense of belonging increased the camaraderie of the Mother's Club, tuck shop rosters, church and school cleaning groups, and above all the generosity and self-sacrifice of those wonderful Sisters of Saint Joseph (think of the classes of 80s and 90s!)."



Jan recalled the parish organisations with which he became involved: "Holy Name Sodality with mass on the first Sunday of the month. ... Sacred Heart conference of Saint Vincent DePaul society began to function with about 15 members visiting the sick, elderly and people in need. St Joseph's Guild took care and maintenance tasks around the church school buildings, presbytery and convent. The Guild was divided into a number of teams each team had a leader. The teams were rostered for work on different weekends. ...

Among other jobs we installed drains in the old school yard and painted school buildings. The start of each school year required special effort by the men on the long weekend before school opening, old and broken discs had to be repaired. ... There was the never ending need to provide parish finances. Once a month we had to do the block

collection. ... One was the Silver Circle. This was time-consuming, requiring us to visit participants to collect money every week. Running the Ugly Man Competition was also demanding but a lot of fun.”



Jan and Evelyn raised six children: Stefan Robert, John Joseph, Anthony Francis, James Michael, Katherine Mary, and Andrew Thomas. Some of them are still involved in St Albans today.

Ján ‘John’ Gigacz died in 2014 at age 92 and was buried at Keilor. Evelyn Mary Gigacz nee Coleman died in 2018 at age 93 and was buried at Keilor. Another couple of wonderful St Albans pioneers from the 1950s.



References:

- Transcript of talk given by John Gigacz to a Rotary Club for Refugee Week in 1998.
- Kevin Baker “A Miracle of Faith and Work”, Catholic Parish of Sacred Heart, St Albans, 2004.

1954 – Thomas Arthur Evans



Thomas Arthur Evans was born in May 1948 in Melbourne. His mother was Dorothy Phyllis Hallett (1928-2019) who was the daughter of Samuel Henry Stephen Hallett and Annie Keen Coombes. The Hallett family was from Trysull in Stafford-shire, England; and Henry and Emma Hallett migrated to Korumburra in Victoria, about 1914.

The Coombes were from the 1850s in Swerul, Dorset, England, and Annie Keene Coombes migrated to Victoria and married Samuel Hallett in 1924; Dorothy Phyllis was their first child. They lived in Korumburra where Samuel worked as a labourer.

Several Hallett families settled in Korumburra and the men were employed as farmers or labourers. Annie Hallett nee Coombes died in 1940 at age 38 years.

Samuel Hallett married Martha Mary Crampton in 1942 and moved to Melbourne in the late 1940s and by 1954 they were in Henry Street, St Albans; he was aged 57 years. Samuel Hallett died in 1962 at age 65 years. Martha Hallett nee Crampton died in 1974 at age 80 years.

Thomas Evan’s father was Arthur George O’Keefe who was the son of Patrick John O’Keefe and Emma Jane Blair of Warrnambool. The O’Keefes were originally from Ennis, County Claire, Ireland, and Patrick O’Keefe migrated to Victoria in the 1880s. The Blair line was from the early 1700s in Ballybryan, Greyabbey, Co. Down, Northern Ireland, and John Blair migrated to Victoria about 1850. Some of the family genealogy is unclear and it’s possible that Arthur O’Keefe was also known as Evans and died in the 1950s.

Dorothy Hallett married Arthur O’Keefe and had two children, then in 1957 she married Arthur John Mancer and had several more children. (Thomas Arthur Evans was the first child of the first marriage.) John Mancer was a plastic worker. In 1963 the family were living in Broadmeadows before moving to Andrew Road (Stevensville Estate) St Albans. Arthur Mancer died in 1975. Dorothy Phyllis Mancer died in 2019 in Broken Hill, NSW, at age 91 years.

According to the Keilor Messenger, Thomas Evans was the eldest son of Mrs Mancer and the late Mr. T Evans. Thomas was

the grandson of the late Samuel Hallett of St Albans, and brother of Pat, Peter, Dorothy, Ron, Judith, John, and Douglas.

In 1970 Thomas Evans was aged 21 and was a national serviceman on duty in Vietnam attached to Headquarters Company, First Australian Task Force, and was due to be discharged from the Army next May.

Private Evans was killed in January 1970 when the Land Rover he was driving overturned on the road to Baria, Nui Dat Province, Vietnam. Fate had been cruel because while on leave a few months earlier he had married Miss Kay Demon at St David's Church of England, in the Sydney suburb of Ancliffe; they had been married only three months when he died. Also sad for the family was that his brother, Peter, had received notification to register for national service.

The remains of Private Thomas Arthur Evans were buried at Woronora Memorial Park, Sutherland, New South Wales, Plot Niche 3/S.

He was remembered locally in January 1970 through an article in the local paper, the Keilor Messenger. Formal memorials include the Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour, Grafton Clarence Valley Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Kallangur Vietnam Veterans' Place, Port Pirie Vietnam Veterans Honour Wall, and the Seymour Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Walk Roll of Honour.



Keilor Messenger 21 January 1970 p1

1956 – Robert Malcolm Dusting



Robert Malcom Dusting was born in September 1917 in Portland, Victoria, to David Robert Dusting and Margaret Charlotte Malcolm. The Dusting heritage goes back to 1778 in St Michals Mount, Cornwall, England; John Matthew Dusting emigrated in the 1850s and settled at Portland. The Malcolm heritage goes back to 1842 in Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire, Scotland; William Malcolm emigrated to Victoria in the 1860s and settled in Penhurst.

David Malcolm Dusting and Margaret Carlotte Malcolm married in Portland in 1917. They became dairy farmers and raised four sons including: Robert Malcolm (1917), Kenneth James (1920), and David Robert (1922). David Malcom later joined the railways and the family moved regularly.

Robert Malcolm "Mac" Dusting completed his matriculation certificate at Williamstown High School, which is where he met his future wife, Dolores Bond. Mac's nephew Michael Bond writes: "He would travel from Springvale to Laverton to take his high school sweetheart, Dolores (Doreen) Bond, to the monthly dance or to the pictures, often running to catch the last train home."¹

Mac began work as a driver and storeman, starting at the S E Dickens grocery store in Footscray.

Robert Malcolm Dusting enlisted in the AIF in October 1939 and joined the Sixth Division Service Corps. He was granted four days leave to marry Dolores Bruce Bond in 1939 in Footscray Victoria, and her home was in Whitehall Street, Footscray. The marriage was obviously a good omen because within a few days Mac played in the Springvale Football Club premiership-winning Grand Final team.

Dolores joined the Royal Australia Airforce's signals corps and reached the rank of sergeant, but her service records have not been traced.

Mac Dusting spent the next decade (1939-1947) in the Middle East, Greece and Crete, New Guinea, and spent two years in Japan as a sergeant in the British Commonwealth Occupational Forces. He was awarded the Greek Commemorative Medallion, Defence, War, and Australia Services Medal 1945-75 with Japan Clasp. In Japan he was part of the British Commonwealth Occupation Forces and

¹ Michael Bond, The Age 26 August 2011

was based south of Hiroshima, the city that was totally obliterated by America's use of their "Little Boy" atom bomb in 1945.

After returning to civilian life, Mac Dusting worked at a grocery store in Rosebud, and then as a council worker and builder's labourer. For recreation, he played cricket and football for Rosebud. The family moved back to Melbourne and Mac worked as a milkman, once again with Dickens in Footscray.

In the early 1950s they bought a grocery store in Caulfield, but the business had not been successful, so the family was desperately seeking cheap housing which had easy access to public transport. With the aid of a war service loan, the family moved to a two-bedroom home on the corner of Collins Street and McIvor Road in the growing suburb of St Albans, which became their permanent home.

Mac became a public servant with the Transport Regulation Board in Carlton and remained with them until retiring in 1977. Dolores worked as a clerk for William Train and Co., who were slate and flag merchants in West Footscray.

Mac Dusting was involved with the St Albans Football Club and during the 1960s was a trainer with the under-sixteens team. He was also a founding member of the local anglers club. He always marched with his mates in the ANZAC parades.

Robert and Dolores Dusting raised three children: Margaret Gloria (1945), Carol, Anne (1946), and David Robert (1949), all of whom went to the St Albans High School.

Dolores Bruce Dusting nee Bond passed away in May 1996 at age 80 years: "You are still the rock and pillar upon which the family was built. Your loving husband, Mac."¹

Mac Dusting died of heart failure in August 2011; he was aged 93 years. He was buried at Altona Memorial Park, Hobsons Bay. His obituary was written by his nephew Michael Bond and was published in The Age in August 2011.



Margaret, David, Carol Dusting 1951

¹ Legacy Remembers 3 May 2010

1956 – George Beris



George Beris was a Greek national who came to St Albans in the late 1950s or early 1960s. His parents were Petros and Eleftheria Biris and his siblings were Olympia and Steve. They were immigrants from the Macedonian region who migrated to

Australia in 1954 and were living in Scott Avenue during the 1960s and early 1970s. One wonders if they might have escaped a tough political environment as some people describe a somewhat pugilistic attitude in the father and sons, which might have channelled George's aptitude for boxing as recreation and career. Petros Biris worked as a labourer and Eleftheria worked as a machinist.

George was a member of a local gang who wore black leather jackets with "The Untouchables" emblazoned on the back. Bob Punicki thought they chose that name from the American TV series that was popular at the time. Their favourite hangouts were a cafe in Main Road East opposite Coles, and Chris's pool room in East Esplanade. Bernie Kokot recalls the Main Road East venue: "The coffee shop had a snooker table, those table soccer games, and a pinball machine, so a few other kids of 16 years and over would drop in. We didn't drink coffee but plenty of the popular lime spiders and Coke floats ... and milk shakes of course."

George was often shadowboxing to keep fit. Alex Stojkovic remembers him at Chris's pool room on East Esplanade in the early 1970s, that he was always clowning around when he showed up and was full of laughter. George was a happy man. Graeme Melbourne recalls that: "One day he was on the footpath in front of the shops in East Esplanade and he was darting around and appeared to be playing hand tennis against the brickwork; only thing was there was no ball."

People remember the Untouchables as being a bit rough and others remember them as being mostly harmless, but it was the era of the bodgies and widgies when portraying a tough persona was desirable for teenagers striving for individuality and notoriety. According to Steve Kozlowksi, the Untouchables included George Beris, Bob Punicki, Socs (Socrates), Beefy Miller, Saverio, and a few others.

The 1956 Olympics would have piqued the attention of young lads as aspiring boxers – apart from the possibility of some local fame,

boxing would have been a potential way to financial security for a working-class boy. The St Albans Community Youth Club organised boxing training for boys, and competitions were also held there for fundraising purposes; Douglas Stevens organised some of these tournaments. It was a time when teenage boys greatly admired boxers for their sporting prowess.

Lorna Cameron recalled that one day some lads out on the street were giving a lot of cheek to a local, Austin McMahon, and were mortified when they turned up at the club to find that he was the professional boxer who was going to teach them a lesson.

George Biris started his professional boxing life in 1956 at the age of 15 years, and his professional name was always listed as George Beris. George's trainer-manager in the 1960s was Laurie Schwind, who was born in Fitzroy and became a boxer in the welterweight division 1949-1954. He later had his own gym in Palmerston Crescent, South Melbourne.

Beris fought in the featherweight division and had 59 bouts between 1956-1967. His debut professional bout was a 3-rounder in July 1956 against Kevin Glover at the Collingwood Town Hall. Beris lost this match but beat Glover in 1957 when they fought at the West Melbourne Stadium. Beris's last fight was in December 1967 against Mario Magriss at the Channel 9 Studios in Melbourne, which was a 10-rounder resulting in a draw.

In his career Beris won 16 bouts, lost 35, and drew 8. He mostly fought in Melbourne but other places included Adelaide, Newcastle, Sydney, Mooroopna, Benalla, Albury, Wakool, Beechworth, Myrtleford, and Launceston. Boxing was a popular sport on television for some years. Mario Viti remembers that Ron Casey and Merv Williams of Channel 7's TV Ringside respected George's capabilities. Festival Hall was the big venue for boxing and Peter Adamczyk remembers going there on Monday nights: "We always got in for nothing because George used to take us through the dressing rooms."

The Biris family moved to Northcote in the 1970s, where Petros died in 1976 at age 53, and Eleftheria died in 1983 at age 62.

After his boxing career George became a bouncer or security guard at Melbourne venues including the St Albans Hotel.

George Beris died suddenly in October 1977 due to a burst appendix. Ahmed Ajayoglu believes that Beris got off the train at St Albans and was walking along the platform when he collapsed on the ground. He was buried at Fawkner Memorial Park. He was aged 36.

1957 – Anton Utri



Anton Utri was born in 1930 and came to Australia in 1954 as an Austrian national. He was single, aged 23 and his occupation was listed as a farm worker. He was at first housed in Fitzroy and allocated work at Newport with the Rolling Stock Branch

of the Victorian Railways. When he moved to St Albans he started working as a carpenter, so perhaps that was his other occupation overseas. His earlier family history is unknown

Anton Utri married Katharina Reschl in Melbourne in 1957. Their children included Christina Gerlinde, Werner Karl, Gary Anton, and Peter.

Katharina was an Austrian national who came to Australia in 1955. Her parents were Anna nee Winger and Valentin Reschl and her sisters were Maria and Helene. Anna was born in 1921 in Slatnik, Yugoslavia, but her father was from Mágocs, Baranya, Hungary. Valentin was born in 1912 in Drenje, Djakovo, Slavonia, Austria-Hungary. He married Maria Baumgartner in 1933 (it is not known what happened to her) and then Anna Winger in 1941, in his home town of Drenje. Valentin Reschl and Anna Winger had three daughters: Katharina, Mitzi and Helene.

There were three Utri men in St Albans who were carpenters and Anton may have been the leader ...

In 1958, Anton Utri formed A & K Utri Builders, which developed a culture of exceptional building service that has evolved through both his personal endeavours, and employing of staff, sub-contractors and suppliers that possess the same high regard for great craftsmanship and attention to detail.

Anton Utri had married Katharina Reschl, so "A & K Utri Builders" might have been their start-up company. The name still exists in the construction industry through the firm McMahon & Utri Builders.

The Utri family were members of the Catholic Church and Anton helped build the old and new churches in Winifred Street:

"When the old church was built it was a lot of work involved and things were hard. But at the beginning of 1978 it was also very hard and crowded. With the new schools, renovating the classrooms, the hall and the old church, and a new church going on it's been really hard. There's a lot of voluntary work being done again. And Fr. O'Reilly has

been under a lot of pressure. There's not a second his mind is at rest."

During the 1970s and 1980s the Utri families in St Albans were living in Mclvor, View, and Clacton streets. The Mclvor Street family were Anton and Katharina, the View Street family were Marie and Franc, and the Clacton Street family were Ilse and Andreas who was also a carpenter. Mrs Reschl was also on Clacton street.

David Dusting late of St Albans writes that Fr Werner Utri, the Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral, was a neighbour in Mclvor Road where the Utri family lived who were related to the Reschl family.

Pauline Aquilina who grew up in St Albans recalls that Werner Utri became a teacher and Principal in Ballarat. Pauline worked with Werner when she was teaching in Melton South prior to him becoming a priest.

Werner Utri of St Albans was ordained a priest for the archdiocese of Melbourne in August 1993 and celebrated his first Mass at Sacred Heart Church, St Albans. In 2004 he was chaplain at the Australian Catholic University in Melbourne.



Fr Werner Utri, Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral

Phillip Cini remembered Christine Utri from the Sacred Heart school: "Christine Utri is another classmate of note; she also went on to tertiary education and today is the Principal of Catholic Regional College at St. Albans."



Christine Utri (L) receiving Rotary award

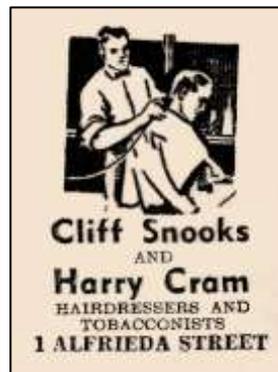
1958 – Nancy and Cliff Snooks



Nancy and Cliff Snooks were residents of St Albans from the late 1950s but nothing much about them is recorded in local history. Cliff is remembered a bit more as he was the gents hairdresser in Alfrieda Street, probably the only establishment of that type at the time.

Nancy was a 'local' because she was from Keilor. Nancy Elaine Steers was born in Keilor in May 1923 to Henry Robert John Thomas Steers and Elizabeth Ellen Harvey. The Steers heritage is from Brighton, Sussex, England. The Harvey heritage is from Cornwall, England.

Nancy Elaine Steers enlisted in the Australian Women's Army Service (AWAS), the Women's Services of the Military Forces, in May 1943; she was living in Armadale with her parents, aged 20, and was single. She married Clifford James Snooks in July 1945, and was discharged on compassionate grounds in August 1945. Nancy and Clifford settled in Malvern.



Clifford "Cliff" James Snooks was born in Launceston, Tasmania, in April 1924 to George Arthur Snooks and Harriet May Cox. George was born in 1880 in Caveside, Meander Valley Council, Tasmania, Harriet was born in

1905 in Kindred, Central Coast Council, Tasmania. They married in 1922 and raised four children: Dora May (1923), Clifford James (1924), Coral Heather (1925) and Colin Sydney (1927). The family moved to Victoria and in the 1926 were living in Korumburra.

Clifford enlisted during the war and served with the 2nd AIF (his service history is not published). In 1949 he and Nancy were living in Bendigo where he was working as a process worker. By 1958 they were living in Theodore Street and Cliff was working as a driver. By 1963 they were living in Power Street and Cliff was working as a hair-dresser. The first gents local hairdresser was Claude Cox who established his 'salon' on the corner of West Esplanade and Main Road in 1946. Cliff probably worked for a while with Claude Cox

and bought the business. By the mid-1950s the business had been transferred to Alfreda Street and Cliff was working with Harry Cram. Gavan Aitken recalled that:

Around the corner from Hampton's there was a little shop in Alfreda Street that was a hair dresser. That was a converted garage and there was a little tobacconist section as you walked in and a curtained doorway that you went through to the barber shop with a couple of chairs. Cliff Snooks and Harry Cram had a hairdresser and tobacconist business at that end of Alfreda Street and that was probably in that garage.

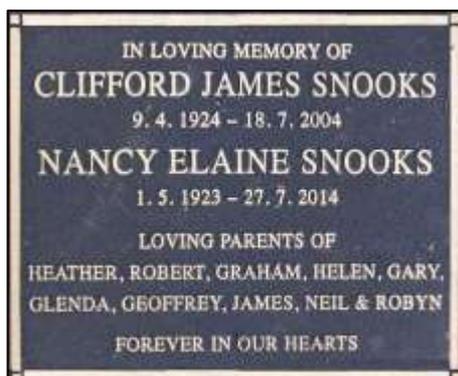


Harry and Audrey Cram were living in Main Road East in the late 1950s. They moved to Vule Street in the 1960s and in 1968 Harry was working as a foreman, so Snooks & Cram as a partnership might have closed in the mid to late-1960s.

Nancy Snook's work in the community has not been traced. During the 1950s Cliff had joined the local football club and became a coach. It's interesting that the trainer at the club was Robert "Mac" Dusting of McIvor Road. A decade later their sons, Graham Snooks and David Dusting, would be in the basketball team with the St Albans High School and the St Albans Building Supplies.

In the 1970s Clifford and Nancy were living in Perret Avenue, St Albans. In the 1980s Cliff was working as a clerk, so he must have sold the business.

Clifford James Snooks died in St Albans July 2004 at age 80. Nancy Elaine Snooks nee Steers died in July 2014 at age 91. They are buried at the Keilor Cemetery. Neither of their names were included in the St Albans Roll of Honour as published in the Sunshine Advocate in 1945 – perhaps because they were not local residents at the time and people would not have been aware of their service to their country.



1959 – Harry and Edith Unger



Harry and Edith Unger were survivors of the Holocaust but both lost their parents in the death camps of Auschwitz and Theresienstadt. They had emigrated independently to their new homes in Australia. Harry (Heinz) Unger was born in Berlin Germany in December

1921 to Gustav Unger and Elfriede nee Israel. Harry became a locksmith and welder. Elfriede Unger nee Israel died about 1942 in Auschwitz Birkenau, Poland. Gustav Unger died in 1943 at Theresienstadt (Bohemia).

Harry, who was an only child, escaped Germany as a teenager and in 1939 caught the train from Berlin to Holland, and then caught the ship Queen Emma to England arriving in August 1939 Harwich, Essex, England. He was training in a technical engineering school in Leeds, but in June 1940 he was 'captured' as an enemy alien and was interred in Kitchener's Camp. In September 1940 Unger and 2,500 other men were transported on the S.S. Dunera and interned at Hay and later Tatura, so Harry has always been one of Australia's Duneera boys.



Harry Unger and many others were later assessed as being refugees fleeing from the Germans and in November 1941 he was released. Unger voluntarily joined the British Army's Pioneer Corps and in 1941 was transferred to Loveday, which was a staging

post for many of the Dunera internees who had volunteered for the British Army and were waiting to be shipped back to Britain.

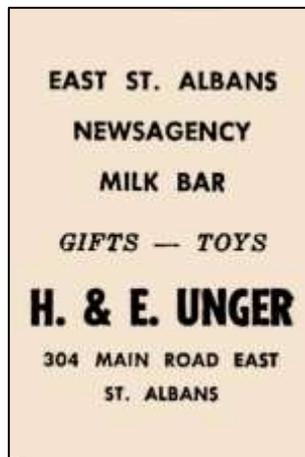
In 1941 Unger was released from Loveday for transport to England and returned there in November 1941, and served with them back in England for six years before travelling to the Middle East and India. He had achieved the rank of Sergeant with the British Army, came back to Australia in January 1948, a stateless person, aged 26. He settled in St Kilda and applied for naturalisation in 1949.

In January 1953 there was a note in the Australian Jewish News of Unger's next stage in life: "Strauss-Unger: In Honour of the engagement of her niece Edith Strauss to Harry Unger, Mrs. K. Kaufman will be "At Home" at Williams Road, Windsor, on Sunday, January 25th. from 2.30—5.30 p.m. Will all please accept this as a personal invitation."¹

Edith Strauss was born about 1921 in Mainz, Germany, to Hugo Strauss and Martha Babette Kahn; both Hugo and Marth died at Auschwitz in 1945. Edith had emigrated to Australia in 1947, arriving at Sydney on the vessel Johan De Witt. She probably came to Melbourne fairly quickly, as her aunt Kaethe Kaufmann was living in Melbourne. Edith settled in East Brighton and applied for naturalisation in 1954.

Edith Strauss married Harry Unger in 1953. At this stage he was working as a salesman. In the late 1950s they established the Sommer and Unger newsagency and milk bar on the corner of Main Road East and Collins Street, St Albans, which quickly enough became known as "Unger's Corner".

Family relationships had led to the formation of the business in St Albans.² Kaethe Kaufmann's daughter Inge married Martin Sommer who became Unger's business partner. Martin Sommer was Harry Unger's business partner in the shop and they also acted as agents for Switzerland General Insurance Co Ltd.



During the 1950s and 1960s, Unger's corner became the most popular local congregation place, especially for High School students on their way to and from classes: "I loved going to Unger's with my school friends. Everyone would put their school bags in Ray Haynes' front yard

behind or between the conifers, and then we'd go to Unger's and enjoy their Blue Heaven milk-shakes. Beautiful."

Gavin Aitken also remembered them: "Martello owned the Unger's shop site along Main Road East. In fact he owned a few shops down there. He was Domenic (Don) Martello

¹ Australian Jewish News 16 January 1953 p9

² Julius and Eva Unger with children were living in Foxton Street St Albans, but they were not Jewish and not related to Harry or Edith Unger.

and he had the licensed grocery store near Joe Loccisano's fruit shop. Harry Unger was one of the Dunera boys, so he was another war refugee who ended up in St Albans. He had the milk bar and newsagency at 304 Main Road East near the Collins Street corner. Mrs. Sheridan used to work for them."



Main Road East c1955, Kon Haumann images

Harry and Edith Unger probably left St Albans in the late 1960s or early 1970s and went to live in Caulfield. During the 1970s, Harry and Edith Unger were living in Caulfield South with their son Geoffrey and daughter Susan. Geoffrey took over the management of the St Albans business. Susan married Terry Crothers. Geoffrey married Natalia Michael.



Edith and Harry Unger

Remembering the Ungers

Bev Toogood: When I was about 16, I worked at Ungers when it was a milk bar. It was mainly a milk bar and also had newspapers. Guys used to come in the morning on their way to the train and work. I used to heat tins of spaghetti in milkshake containers on the coffee machine by blowing steam through the spaghetti, and they'd have that for their breakfast.

Gary Kelly: My mother worked at Spotless Dry Cleaners on the corner of Main Road East and Erica Ave in the 1960s. We would sometimes go with her to work in the mornings before school. I remember my brother and I huddled around a kerosene

heater in the back of the shop on icy winter mornings. My mother would send us down to Unger's to buy some of the continental style cakes they sold. But our favourite was the huge wagon wheels. I remember melting the chocolate coating by the heater. I also remember a job we had at Unger's delivering flyers to letterboxes in the area on a Saturday morning. I can't recall what they were advertising. The Ungers' were lovely people.

John Payne: I worked at Ungers in the



60's with Brian Ward and Mrs. Sheridan. Jimmy Young managed the morning shift. Loved Sunday mornings making milkshakes for all the kids coming back from Church. We always gave them milk from a contented cow.

Hahn Eade: I did a paper round on my BMX from there in the 80's. Eating free warm cinnamon donuts from the nearby bakery on cold winter mornings, and washing them down with the first milk bottle I came across in front of someone's house.

Vicky Casha: I used to work part time at Unger's newsagency. Lovely people. I remember their son Geoffrey and I think their daughter was Susan. That was a long time ago.

Pam Bolton: I work for the Ungers in their milk bar/newsagency, mainly on Saturday mornings; loved my job there. Worked there when Australia went to decimal currency. They sold gifts and were also a Tattersalls Agent.

Bernie Kokot: The arrival of television in 1956 had opened up more opportunities for kids from both sides of the railway line to meet. I recall when Unger's Milk Bar put a TV on the rear shelf of their shop and at around 4 p.m. after school many kids would sit cross-legged on the shop floor watching the Mickey Mouse Show. The generosity of Mr. Unger is still remembered in the free ice-cream we all received.

Marlene Flower: Used to love going there with my friend Usci and have blue spider milk shakes, delicious.

Unger's Newsagency was still operating in 2007 when Aleksandar Atanasovski was the store manager.

Harry Unger passed away in December 2017: "Beloved husband of 64 years to Edith. Loving father of Jeffrey and Susan, and father-in-law of Terry and Amira. Adored grandfather of Emma, Ashley, Josh and Alexi. Much loved great-grandfather of Darcy and Jax. A wonderful and gentle man who was deeply loved and will always be remembered."

The Duneera boys also remembered: "The Duneera Association mourns the loss of Denira Boy Harry Unger on the 30th of December, aged 96. An active and valued member who will be sorely missed. Heartfelt condolences to Edith, Susan, Jeffrey and all the family. Vale Harry Unger."

Harry (Heinz) Unger's story has been published as "Harry Unger – Duneera Boy" in "Voices from the Melbourne Jewish Community" written by Adel Hulse (Makor Publications, Melbourne, 2018).



Harry Unger at Duneera Association function 2015



Harry and Edith at Duneera Association function
Duneera News No.99 February 2017

1959 – Edite Sturesteps



Edite "Edith" Imgarde Sturesteps was born in 1904, a Latvian national who arrived in Australia in 1949 at Fremantle on the Oxfordshire which had departed from Naples with 672 passengers. Edite was a displaced person originally from Riga/Latvia, aged 45, divorced, and her

religion is listed as Protestant.

There is some speculation that she might have been a Holocaust survivor during the occupation of Latvia in the early 1940s when thousands of Jews and Gypsies were killed, including civilians whose political opinions and activity were unacceptable to the occupiers. Also, thousands of German and Austrian Jews were deported to the Riga ghetto.

Edite Sturesteps had been a teacher in Latvia with university qualifications as Magistra in History. (Obtaining the Magister/Magistra required five years of study with coursework and a final thesis.) Edite was accompanied by her eight-year-old son Osvalds George Sturesteps. They were transferred to the Department of Immigration holding centre at Benalla, which had been recently established:

"Benalla's Migrant Accommodation Centre opened in June 1949. In 1941 an air-training school was opened at Benalla Airport known as No 11 Elementary Flying School. During the post-war years, the former air-training site became a migrant holding camp and eventually became a housing commission estate. The migrant camp could hold as many as 800 people at any one time. When the camp closed in late 1967, it was estimated that 60,000 people, mainly from southern and eastern Europe, had spent time there. The old migrant camp is located just off Samaria Road, behind Benalla Airport."

The settlement connection with the airport was reinforced when Osvalds George started his schooling at the Benalla Aerodrome School. He later became known as George Osvalds, which is much more familiar in the Australian vernacular.

Edite Sturesteps became a naturalized citizen in 1957. In 1958, a decade after arriving in Australia, she was still based at the Benalla Migrant Accommodation Centre and was working as a storewoman. In 1959 she started working as a teacher at St Albans, which

appears to have been her first appointment in Victoria's education system, so it had taken her a decade to transition from her assigned blue-collar work to her former teaching career. The decade no doubt enabled her to refine her English language skills.



1959 staff, Edite in second row four from right



Sturesteps probably started at St Albans in 1959 because that is the first time that she was included in *Alba*, the school magazine; she would have been aged about 55 years, one of the older teachers at the school. She was probably the first teacher of the

German language at St Albans because German, Italian and Russian classes at the school started in 1959. Hannelore Henschke started at St Albans in 1959 and was likely one of Edite's students - Hannelore attained an Exhibition (top in the state) for German in 1963, which must have been pleasing for student, teacher and school.

Mrs Sturesteps was still there in 1975 according to Bruce Alcorn, when he wrote about the school's jubilee, stating that she was a maternal figure in classroom and staffroom and much respected, being a capable teacher of German and history. She would have been aged about 70 in 1975 and might have been contemplating retirement.

She was living in Richmond in the 1960s and was still there two decades later, so that was undoubtedly her permanent home address.

Mrs Edite Imgarde Sturesteps died in 1986. The funeral service was held at Tobin Brothers Chapel in Doncaster Road. Her remains were buried at the Springvale Botanical Cemetery.

Her son, George Osvalds Sturesteps, died in August 2019 at age 77 and was buried

at the Springvale Botanical Cemetery. He was the husband of Beryl and father of Tony and Ashley (dec).

Remembering Mrs Sturesteps

Lorna Cameron: The locally trained teachers would mostly have been aged about 30, with the overseas ones being older, with Mrs Sturesteps being the eldest. Sturesteps would have been in her mid-50s whereas some of the younger teachers were in their early-20s.

Ludmila Pavlova: Mrs Sturesteps was a poor soul. She had finished studies in the faculty of history in Latvia, which included modern and ancient history. She complained that she knew all about the Greeks but never knew what kind of bread they ate in the morning, which is what the current books were writing about. Years later you thought of her with a smile. Underneath it all she was very kind.

Jan Tully (Rawlins): Sturesteps was our German teacher. She always wore cardigans or long-sleeved dresses on very hot days. One day I was asked by a teacher to take a note to her during lunch-time and I walked into her empty classroom unexpectedly. I noticed there was a number tattooed on her arm immediately and she quickly pulled down her sleeve.

Phillip Spivey: When I think back to some of the teachers at St Albans ... Even though she had her own idiosyncrasies, Mrs Sturesteps was helpful. I've always been interested in history and she's the one who inspired me to keep going.

Henry Goralski: Sometimes if we had a spare lesson we might be in room having a practice with our kazoos. For some reason we thought we were crash hot musicians and we all bought kazoos and imagined ourselves as an eccentric little band putting on a show for the school. The sound must have transferred down the air duct into the next room because Mrs Sturesteps would burst into the room demanding that we "stop playing those combs."

Joe Ribarow: The first year was also loaded with decisions: do you want to study French, or German? I chose German because some of the families in my neighbourhood spoke the language. So here I was in Grade 1C trying to learn the intricacies of masculine, feminine and neuter endings in the nominative, accusative, dative, and genitive cases under the guidance and sometimes failing patience of Mrs Sturesteps - you'd have to have patience to put up with the rowdy behaviour that developed once the awe of a new school and

new teachers had diminished. We were a class of nearly 40 students . . . With such large class numbers, it must have been impossible to give any attention to individual learning needs. Mrs Sturesteps clearly loved the subject much more than many of her reluctant and recalcitrant students did, but she persevered.

Bob Barker: Frau Sturesteps sticks in my mind because she was one of the German teachers along with Mr Ziemelis. Mrs Sturesteps was of Latvian nationality and was in her fifties so she must have been one of the



older members on staff. When you first started at high school you had to select either the French or German as your language study and I chose German because I thought it might be easier to pronounce. These days children start learning other

languages in primary school but that wasn't the practice in our era. I think that we students gave Mrs Sturesteps a hard time because she wasn't the strict disciplinarian that other teachers were.

She gave me some good marks one year. In fact she gave me the top mark in the class for reading in German, which was above the marks received by some of the German kids in the class. I think it was because they were reading very casually in their regional accents whereas I was a non-German who was really trying to pronounce it properly. But when it came to the German grammar and all the declensions I really lost it. I found it hard to understand how the grammar worked, and there were lots of der, die, das, dem, die, das; it just went on and on. Although I liked studying German I lost interest in the subject because I couldn't get round the grammar ... The German kids just waltzed through it.



Teaching staff 1971

1960 – Mary Burden



Mary Josephine Cassar was born in 1916 and was of Maltese heritage. She married an English man, William Thomas Burden, in the early 1940s. William Thomas Burden was born in 1921 in Lambeth Surrey, England, to James Frederick John Burden and Mary Ann M Wisdom.



William was one of seven children. He became an electrician and in 1946 at age 24 he emigrated to Malta. He married Mary Cassar and they raised four children between 1943 and 1952: Yvonne (1953), Robert (1947), John (1945) and Grace (1952). The family came to Australia in October 1957 and William

found employment as an electrician. They initially stayed in Grant Street, St Albans, possibly with the Camilleri family, before moving to their own place in Mclvor Avenue, St Albans.

The Maltese community has had a long history of settlement in St Albans, with some of the earliest documented history being after the First World War. The late Mary Smith remembered the Farrugia family as being the first-known Maltese migrants to come here in 1926 and their children started school in 1931: "The headmaster at the school was Mr Sheridan at first and Mr Cunningham in my time. When he introduced the Farrugia children he said they would find it hard to understand us because they spoke a different language."

In 1901 there were 268 Maltese in Australia, and in 1947 the total was 3,238 or 0.04% of the total population. The Maltese Assisted Migration Agreement was arranged in 1948, and by 1952 a total of 12,229 people had arrived in Australia under this scheme. There had been an agreement with the British government who were closing down their naval bases in Malta and assisting the retrenched people to migrate.

Mary Burden started working as a mathematics teacher at St Albans High School in 1960; her qualification was listed as Senior

Oxford Certificate. In 1962 her extra curricula duty was that she was Form Mistress for Form 2A: "... it's not a happy form but we have had a happy time with our teachers. Mrs Burden is our form teacher as well as our mathematics teacher and is very and understanding to all of us."

The Burden family didn't stay in St Albans very long. By 1963 they had settled into Eastcote Street in Sunshine and Mary took the train to St Albans during the week. Jan Tully would share the carriage occasionally: "I remember her SO well. Sometimes I would travel with her on the train to Sunshine. She was so friendly to we students."

Barry Rayner was teaching at the High School in the 1960s and recalls that there were several migrant teachers who did a wonderful job in maths-sciences, in particular Mrs Burden, Mrs Kriksciunas, Nick Bolvari, and Paul Pavlov.

Ludmila Pavlova remembered Burden as "another very fine person."

Joe Ribarow remembers Mrs Burden as one of the teachers with a gentle disposition who "At one time spoke to me after class about the problem with some of the other boys who probably didn't change their socks often enough. She was being very gentle and discreet. I thought it was very nice of her to be worrying about the other boys (I was terribly naïve) but was relieved that I didn't have to explain to her that I only had one school outfit myself and that the washing was only done once a week. Why would you need to change your socks more than once a week anyway?"

Mary Burden continued working at St Albans High School until the late 1960s but it is not known where she transferred to after this.

William Thomas Buren died at age 73 years in 1995 and was buried at the Port Arlington Cemetery, Greater Geelong, Victoria.

Mary Josephine Burden nee Cassar died at age 86 years in 2002 Walgett, New South Wales, and was buried at the Port Arlington Cemetery, Greater Geelong, Victoria.



Mrs Burden in front row second from right 1962

1960 – George Strauss



George Hermann Strauss was born in December 1923 and was of Jewish background from Vienna, Austria; the population was mostly of Germanic origin and German was the main language though there were Slav, Polish, and Hungarian minorities, and Jewish people were about ten percent of the population in Vienna.



George's parents were Moses Samuel Strauss and Elsa Klapp. Moses's father Hermann Strauss was from Vienna and his mother Katherina Rurnauer from Korican, Czechoslovakia. Elsa's parents were Leopold Klapp and Karoline Fauvers from Czechoslovakia. Moses Strauss and Elsa Klapp married in 1907 and raised two children: Karoline (1908-1920) and George Hermann (1923-2014). The circumstances of Karoline's death as a teenager is not known.



George Strauss and his parents were caught up in the horrors of World War Two and it's likely that George was sent as a teenager to England to escape the increasing persecution of Jews. His mother Elsa nee Klapp was not so lucky, because she died in the Izbica concentration camp, Poland, about 1942, as did his grandmother, Katherina Strauss.

According to Wikipedia, the Izbica ghetto was a Jewish ghetto created in 1941 by Nazi Germany serving as a transfer point for deportation of Jews from Poland, Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia to Belzec and Sobibór extermination camps.

George's father, Moses Samuel Strauss, must have escaped by a different route to China because he died there in Shanghai about 1944.

In 1940 George, a leatherworker, was in London where he was classified as a Jewish Refugee and a German Internee. He was 'captured' in July 1940 for being an enemy alien. In September he was transferred with 2,541 other enemy aliens mostly Jewish, from England to Sydney on the S S Dunera.

In November 1940 he was marched into and was interred at No. 7 Camp at Hay, New South Wales. It must have been strange experience of confinement that was mixed with intellectual challenge:

"... the school of the German camp no.7 has 101 courses, comprising 181 classes and is attended by 560 students. The studies pertain to languages, sciences, technology, agriculture, arts, and religion."

Was it here that George extended his fluency in several languages?

In 1941 Strauss was transferred to Tatura and then released to Shepparton in 1943. Possibly this is where he was working in a factory.

Strauss retained connection with his fellow Hay/Tatura internees and later joined a committee to maintain connection with the Dunera people. The group formed the Hay Tatura Association in the late 1980s and published the Dunera News. Over time, the management of the association shifted to Melbourne, and George Strauss was on that first Melbourne committee.

George's name is also included in the Tatura Irrigation & Wartime Camps Museum's book, "The Dunera Tapes" (1990) which was written for the 50th anniversary of their arrival in Australia.

George's whereabouts between 1943 and 1946 have not been traced. After his stay in Shepparton, he must have moved to Melbourne because he was living in Surrey Hills when he applied for naturalisation in 1946. He probably enrolled in tertiary studies at this time, which would have taken several years - where this occurred is not known but was probably at Melbourne University. He ended up with qualifications as Master of Arts (French) and Diploma of Education.

In 1946 George Hermann Strauss married Valda Carmel Mooney and they raised four children: Elsa, Philip, Margaret, and Peter. Valda's family was of Irish background from Roscommon and came to Australia in the 1860s; they were in Colac in 1866. Valda was born in 1925 to John Francis Mooney and Anni Millicent Halkyard, who were living in Brunswick North at the time. Valda enlisted for service in the RAAF during the 1940s but her service details are not known.

In 1949 George and Valda were living in Bairnsdale, where George was working as a teacher and Valda as a clerk.

In 1954 they were at Box Hill South, where George was again working as a teacher. In the late 1950s he was teaching at Burwood High School.

George Strauss started at St Albans High School in 1960 in the position of Senior Master - the Headmaster was Mr Barker and the Senior Mistress was Miss Taylor. Strauss was aged 37 and fluent in English, French, and German, which were three of the languages being taught at the school. He would have been able to converse with many of the students' parents as many of the refugees and displaced persons in St Albans spoke German. It's often been said that German was the local lingua franca of St Albans in the 1950s.



Teaching staff 1960

Strauss did not stay long at St Albans, leaving at the end of 1962. In 1963 George and Valda were living in Pascoe Vale and both were working as teachers.

In 1970 George Hermann Strauss was conferred as Doctor of Philosophy by Melbourne University. George and Valda then moved to New South Wales and were living in Bathurst. George was working as a lecturer, most probably at Mitchell College, as in 1971 he was appointed to the board of the Mitchell College of Advanced Education. He was also on the board of the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) during the 1970s.

By 1982 George had transferred to the Prahran College of Advanced Education. He was a founder and principal lecturer in Interpreting and Translating at Prahran CAE and it's said that he was one of the pioneers in the field of interpreting for diverse immigrants and indigenous groups. He also held

interpreting classes at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) in the 1980s.



Staff and prefects 1961

Publications

George Straus has written a number of publications in French and English, including:

- The Role of the Devil in the Works of Andre Gide, University of Melbourne, 1970.
- Contes amusants easy stories for young students, 1965.
- Voyage aventureaux, 1966.
- Margaret Holmes A Life of Ecumenical Service (1886-1981).
- Notre siècle: lectures françaises modernes, 1968.

At some stage Valda and George Strauss moved to Sassafrass, Kalista. Then in the late 2000s they moved to a retirement home in Viewbank, Victoria.

Dr George Herman Strauss died in August 2014 at age 90 years and was buried at Eltham:

"Loved husband of Val. Father of Elsa, Philip, Margaret and Peter. Grandfather of Freyja, Konrad, Mitzi, Tekla, Cathy, Steven, Peter, Shelley, Michaela and Lara. Father-in-law to Loy (dec) and Aea. Grandfather-in-law to Miles, Lindsay, David, Marcel and Hannah. Great-grandfather to Harriet, Luca and Lachlan. A fine man."

Valda Carmel Strauss nee Mooney had been a teacher, editor and writer, and two of her publications were "Quellers, Undertakers and Wild Irish Stew" and "Irish Famine Orphans in Australia" about young girls sent to Australia between 1848 and 1850. Valda passed away in July 2015 at age 89 years and was buried at Eltham with her late husband:

“Strauss (nee Mooney) Valda Carmel 1925-2015, 89 years. Loved wife of George (dec). Mother of Elsa, Philip, Margaret and Peter. Grandmother of Freyja, Konrad, Mitzi, Tekla, Cathy, Steven, Peter, Shelley, Michaela and Lara. Mother-in-law to Loy (dec) and Aea. Grandmother-in-law to Miles, Lindsay, David, Marcel, Hannah and Buddha. Great grandmother to Harriet, Luca, Lachlan and Mitchell. Always with humour.”¹



Grave of George and Valda Strauss

Remembering George Strauss

Rosemary Keegan: In the four years at the high school I was taught by wonderful teachers. The most influential teacher in all of my education was Mr. George Strauss - later Dr. Strauss after he completed a Ph. D. at Melbourne University in French literature - on the role of the devil in the works of Andre Gide. Mr. Strauss had been a young Jewish boy sent to England to escape the barbarity that was occurring in Germany during the 1930s and 1940s. He gave us a love of learning and a belief in personal integrity. He was particularly drawn to a group of students among us who, he said admiringly, not only read European works of literature but read them in their original languages. These were the children of European parents who had been displaced by the war and who, more often than not, were professional people: chemists, engineers, educators, in their own pre-war countries. I was not one of those multilingual Europeans - but I was part of the group who wanted the sort of education which was being offered to us. In the end, even though I was not gifted in languages as my European friends were, Mr. Strauss had me reading the works of Andre Gide in French.

Daryl Keeble: George Strauss came as the senior master in 1960 and I remember

him as the French teacher who was also very strict. He was a very intelligent Jewish guy who had a tough life but fortunately left Europe at the right time to escape the pogroms and genocide. He had a Master of Arts degree but in Australia I think he started off working in a can factory before coming to teach at St Albans. He was probably a good teacher but he was very strict.

Bernie Kokot: French classes were rarely looked forward to with George Strauss. He too was very strict and rather impatient when we could not immediately repeat the French phrases he conveyed. It was easy for George to speak French in the correct tone because he had a huge nose designed for the job, and we pupils were at the young age where our voices were still soprano. I persisted however and found that in future years that developing some comprehension in French, combined then with my ability to fluently speak Polish and rudimentary German, I impressed my later girlfriends and their Aussie parents.

Jeff Barlow: George Strauss was an impressive man. Like some of his former students at St Albans I found him to be a firm disciplinarian, not surprising given his background. Seems he came to St Albans when I was in 5th form in 1960. I studied French in 5th form and I think I had a different French teacher - can't recall now. The Dunera story itself is quite significant and I understand the crew were very callous and even cruel to the people they were transporting. George's PH D thesis on the works of Andre Gide is in the Melbourne University library both in French and in English editions. From a small bit of reading I have done it looks like Andre Gide had quite an influence on modern Existentialism and drew some of his ideas from Friedrich Nietzsche. He appears to have lauded an appreciation of the senses of the body and liberating the body in contrast to the theme of the sinful body that was promulgated by religion at the time.



Jeff Barlow (centre back) and classmates 1950s

¹ The Age obituaries 2017

1961 – Martha Cameron Arms



Martha Cameron Clarke was born in Armidale, New South Wales, in 1911. Her father was Leandre Armytage Clarke from Dunkeld. Her mother was Nancy Marie Lewers Rowe from Pitfield near Ballarat. Nancy and Leandre married in 1905 at St Phillip's Church in

Sydney and they eventually settled in Clermont in Queensland.

Stanley Messenger Arms was born in May 1910 in Kew. His parents were John George Arms and Jessie Middleton. The Arms' genealogy goes back to 1792 in Surrey, England, but they were travellers as they were in Nova Scotia, Canada, in the 1830s. John Arms came to Prahran, Victoria, Australia, prior to 1862. He married twice and had 9 children with his first wife Mary Ann Cox (1840-1881) and 4 with his second Elizabeth Edwards (1857-1948). The Middleton genealogy goes back to 1882 and Moonambel, Victoria.



Martha Cameron Clarke married Stanley Arms at St Hillary's Church in Kew in January 1936 and the young couple went to live in Brighton.¹ They raised five children: two sons and three daughters. Stanley was a manager with the Water Board and the family moved quite regularly because of his work requirements. Martha trained as a teacher and this was probably in the 1930s before her children

were born.

Martha's ancestors had settled in the Geelong area. Martha's grandmother worked with young women who were brought to Australia to marry the men already here, and would teach them some skills and made sure they got a decent match with a male partner. It was a pioneer family that she came from, so Martha Clarke (Arms) grew up amongst strong, assertive women.

Martha Arms separated from her husband probably in the 1950s. He worked in regional Victoria and she stayed in Melbourne.²

In 1961 Martha Arms started with the St Albans kindergarten, also known as kindy or kinder, and stayed until 1980, which was her twentieth year with the service. She helped form the district's first play group with the help of local parents like Evelyn Mullenger, who recalls the formative years of these services. Evelyn takes up the story:

Martha Arms came to St Albans in the 1960s when the schools were full of children from the post-war immigration era. Several new primary schools had been built and also a high school. The education of young children in these classrooms was always very regimented, particularly in larger classes where you might have 50 or more students. Kindergartens were a new concept targeting the "pre-school" and Martha's philosophy emphasized involvement rather than regimentation.

She would get the kids together and show them how to do things but never force them. Sometimes they would ask "How do you do that? Can I have a go?" Or one kid would go and do it and the other kids would go and look. If there were kids watching and watching she would go up and say "Do you want to have a try now?" and they would say "Yeah". Kids did things at their own pace. Which was a bit unusual in those days because it was still the era of kids should be seen but not heard and expected to do something when they were told to do so.

Of course when these kids went to the Catholic primary school they wanted to continue being independent, whereas the school wanted them to sit down and be still and only do something when they were told to.

I couldn't afford to send my kids to kinder except for my youngest son, but Martha would still encourage mothers like me. Once a week she would stay back when we mothers could go and talk to her. Her theory was that if you were a stay-at-home mum and took your first

² Stanley Messenger Arms died in Wangaratta in 1977.

¹ Argus 20 January 1936 p16

child to kindergarten, you really need to go back to kindergarten because you would know how to meet up with someone else and share activities with their kids.

If you went and told her that your kids have tipped all the knives and forks out of the drawer all over the floor, she would ask what do you think they are saying? They are saying they want something to do. So tell them to put all the knives in there and all the spoons in there. They want a task, so give them something to do.

She was an amazing woman. There were so many people she reached outside the kindergarten. She spent twenty years with the kindergarten, possibly more.

It was the churches that started the kindergartens. At the start kindergarten was just for the wealthy people but people like Martha started changing that. She was a Minister's daughter and knew how the churches worked.

Martha had a long-term assistant, a Mrs Goldun, who was there for years. I remember that when the Greek grandmothers brought their grandchildren she would ask them to stay. They could leave if they wanted but they happy to know they could stay.



Mrs Goldun, Martha Arms & kindergarten children

I was blessed by having contact with Martha, Lorna, and Mrs Jo DuBarry was the principal at St Albans East Primary School for over a decade. They were strong women and we had them all in St Albans. Jo DuBarry has just turned 96. She tells some funny stories.

There were people who stayed on the kindergarten committee for many years to help with its development. Barry Bowers was one of them. Lorraine Williams who is an accountant was with them for a long time with the kindergarten and the toy library bus. Some women stayed on for years long after their kids left the kindergarten. Martha always said you don't sit on a committee and raise money to make the kindergarten wealthy. You sit on the

committee to buy things that your children are going to use. That was contrary to many other meetings where you were raising money and all anybody wanted was to have a big bank balance.

Martha was a teacher before she came to St Albans. Vicars' daughter used to become the pre-school teachers. That was a nice job for women, and probably nicer than nursing. Being with little children was always seen as something nice for girls to do.

Kindergarten used to be for people who had the money to spend on their children; it wasn't open to everybody at the beginning. Martha had five children of her own, so she must have trained before she had the kids. When they moved around from place to place she would make friends with another family with a similar number and ages of kids and arrange to look after each other's children once a fortnight, so each fortnight one mother had the day off. She'd always say that women could organise their childcare if they were willing to cooperate.

She didn't put teachers on a pedestal. She said some of the good work that teachers do is common sense and she wanted to show some of the uncertain mothers that there was plenty they could do with their kids.

Martha was very good on the piano and did that a lot with the kids as they had singing sessions. She thought music was an important way for kids to learn language. Even the migrant kids who started without English would soon join in and by the end of the year understood what they were singing. Martha let the Greek ladies stay and interact with the kids, but after a while the kids were all so confident that the mums and grandmums could go home and have some time to themselves.

Martha was also happy to connect with campaigns looking at the needs of children. Meredith Sussex came to Sunshine Council at a time when there was concern about mothers and their three-year-old children being on sedatives because their mothers couldn't cope with them. Kings Park was just a new suburb and we went there to door knock and found a lot of housebound people. That's what led us to starting the playgroup at the kindergarten. That's also where we started the art classes before they transferred to the youth club.

Martha was willing to help these new initiatives. That was the afternoon when she was in the office and she would let us use the outdoor space to do things. She would talk to people and give them books to read, encourage them to think of new ideas. That was pretty radical in those days. I think that why people called her the Pink Lady. People

reckoned she must be a socialist, a communist, a pinko, just because she was prepared to try things out of the ordinary, so they called her the Pink Lady. She was just a woman who had a voice and was prepared to use it rather than just do everything that other people told her to do. Martha was a Vicar's daughter and there were some pretty strong women in her family, so that's probably where her strength came from.

She was impressed when she saw some of the Asian mothers with their young children in the playground, because she could see the mothers knew of the equipment and made sure the children tried them all properly.



St Alban kindergarten and recreation hall 1960s

When the kindergarten was built it was part of a multi-use hall. When the church burnt down the church services moved into the hall, so the kindergarten equipment had to be packed away. The hall was used for everything. The Blue Light Disco was there, bazaars were also held there, there was a stage and even the high school used that occasionally. That was also where you had afternoon tea after church. That was a hard time for the kindergarten because they had to pack everything away, which was not a small job.

In those days the churches were always open; you could always drop in if you were going past. The churches were meeting places and hubs of activities. That's what built communities.

They wrote to the Sunshine Council asking for land to build a library. Commissioner Holland who was managing the City of Sunshine City at the time refused the request,¹ so the committee decided to acquire a bus to store the toy collection and act as a mobile library in the district. They promoted the idea through public community meetings, fund-raising events such as dances and theatre performances. The local media helped by

¹ Sunshine Council later provided the funds to buy a bus and convert it into a mobile library.

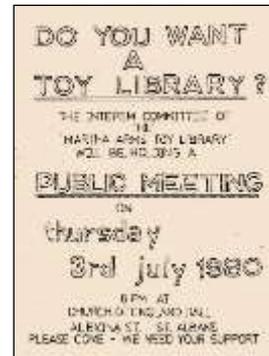
providing publicity about this new venture. Martha Arms with the backing of her committee prepared a submission explaining the background to this new service concept.

When Martha became sick with cancer she wrote of her history and published the book "The Days Before Yesterday". She gave me a copy and wrote on it "to a modern pioneer, Evelyn, with love from Martha". The dedication is to Australia's pioneer women of yesterday, today, and the days before.

A thanksgiving service in memory of Martha Cameron Arms was held at St Alban the Martyr Anglican Church on 27 February 1981.



Evelyn Mullenger & Matha Arms



Written by Evelyn Mullenger 2020

1961 – Victor and Veronika Gross



Viktor Gross was a pharmacist who was born in 1922 in the Czech Republic. He married Veronika Vera Grescheit who was from Slovakia. They were registered as Jewish displaced persons or refugees who had arrived in Melbourne on the Surriento in

October 1950.

Victor's parents were Joseph Ephraim Gross and Regina Gross from Kosice, Slovakia; their earlier histories are not known. Veronika's parents were Rezzo or Gregon Gescheidt and Valeria Berger who were from Rimavská Sobota, Slovakia. The Gescheidt origins go back to 1816 in Balassagyarmat, Nógrád, Magyarország, Nograd, Hongrie. The Berger origins go back to 1866 in Hungary.

Victor's occupation on arrival is listed as pharmacist, but it seem that he had to repeat his studies. He passed the Pharmacy Board's intermediate examinations in 1952, the University Technical Examinations Pharmacy in 1953, and the Final Exams Results of the final exams, conducted by the Pharmacy Board of Victoria, was published in the Age.

Victor and Veronika were in St Albans by 1961 as they made a donation for the printing of High School's 1961 Alba magazine, noted as "the generosity of Gross's Pharmacy, Main Road East, St. Albans". Victor was the pharmacist and Veronika was the cosmetician.

In 1963 Veronika and Victor Gross were living at 31 Main Road East St Albans, between the Goddards and the Hounslows in what has been described as one of the very fancy-looking homes for the time. Harry Unger, Victor Gross, and Jack (Jacob) Rogozinski were Jewish men who were working in St Albans about the same time and near each other in Main Road East, and they would often socialise together.

The Grosses must have moved by 1965 as their home was then occupied by Kevin Bourke, and Woolworths supermarket was built there by 1970. However, Victor Gross was still operating the St Albans Pharmacy at 320 Main Road East between the Sparta licensed grocery and Gilbertson the butchers. They were still there in 1974. The Gross family had moved to Aroona Road, Caulfield North, by 1972. One story is that some friends arrived from overseas and settled in Caulfield and Mrs Gross wanted to join them because it was a

better area with better schools, so that's when they ended up doing.

In 1967 Veronica and Victor Gross were living in Broadway St Kilda. In 1972 they were at Aroona Road, Caulfield. Both were still working in their usual roles, Veronika as shop assistant and cosmetician and Victor as chemist. They became involved in community activities, Veronika with the Moriah College Mothers' Club and Victor was Assistant Treasurer of the Kakoah Soccer Club, and later President. They also were on the committee of the Theodor Herzl Social Club of which Victor was President. They would hold committee meetings and social functions at their home and some fundraising events such as fashion parades. They supported a number of local and international charitable and philanthropic organisations.

Victor and Veronika had two daughters Judy and Mimi (Evelyn Miriam), and a son Michael. Judy married Ben Siegal. Mimi married Solly Janover. Michael married Evelyn Ungar.

Victor Gross died in 1996 at Melbourne aged 74 years: "It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of our devoted husband, father and grandfather Victor Gross on Monday, 12th August 1996, 27th 2H Beloved husband of Veronica, Devoted father and father-in-law of Michael and Evelyn, Judy and Ben, Mimi and Solly, Adored Papa of Jasmine, Max, Renee, Nicole, Elliot, Rodney and David, Loved brother of Alex, Tibor (dec.) and Zolly (dec.). Always in our hearts."¹

Veronika Gross nee Grescheit died in May 2009 at Melbourne, aged 81 years. Her obituary notice has not been discovered.

V. GROSS

Your Family Chemist

★ Prompt Dispensing Service
★ Gifts. Cosmetics. Toilet Preparations

— at —

**320 MAIN ROAD EAST
ST. ALBANS**

Phone: 65-9166

¹ Australian Jewish News 16 August 1996 p30

1961 – Emilija Kriksciunas



The Kriksciunas family came to Australia on the vessel M/S Nelly as Displaced Persons in September 1949, through the IRO's Group Resettlement Program. They had been accepted for permanent residency. The family included Emilija (age 27),

Juozas (age 25), and their young son Algis (age one year).

They were Lithuanian nationals but immediately prior to emigration they had been residing at Tübingen, Germany.

Emilija was born in 1922 in Latvia in Liepaja, which is a port city on Latvia's west coast. Her parents were Petras Gaidelionis and Ona Gaidelioniene. Her entry papers to Australia describe her as being blond-haired and blue-eyed.



Juozas Kriksciunas was born in 1922 in Lithuania in the small town of Lazdijai located about seven kilometres east of the border with Poland. He was described as being blue-eyed with dark hair. The young family thus fulfilled that era's

desirable image of "Beautiful Balts" that the Australian Minister of Immigration, Arthur Calwell, was trying to attract to its shores after the end of the Second World War.



M/S Nelly at Melbourne 1949

The family were separated after arrival. Emilija and her son were accommodated at the Department of Immigration Holding Centre in Woodside, South Australia, while Juozas was sent to work for Mr Dohnt of Nangwarry near Mt Gambier. Mr Dohnt managed a well-established business as a logging contractor and also had a vineyard at Penola. Undoubtedly, Juozas was sent there to work most probably as a labourer, though his listed occupation was a driver. When the family moved to Victoria he worked as a labourer before obtaining a position as a metal worker.

Emilija and Juozas' second son, Peter, was born in 1950 at the Mount Gambier Hospital and was the last baby born at the hospital for that year, on 31 December. At this stage the family was living in Yahl, a suburb of Mount Gambier.¹

Emilija and Juozas became naturalised British subjects at Mt Gambier in 1956. Emilija expanded her childcare and housewife roles by enrolling in a teacher training course.

It is not known when the family moved to Victoria, possibly in the late 1950s. By the early 1960s they were living in Brighton and stayed there at for at least that decade. The boys appear to have attended Brighton High school as Peter was there in 1966. The family moved to Moorabbin in the early 1970s.



Emilija obtained a teaching position at St Albans High School in 1961. Her qualifications were listed as university subjects and Trained Teacher Certificate from South Australia. She may have obtained her university subject overseas (as did other teachers at the school) but that has not been traced. At this time it was not unusual even for the Australian-born teachers to have their qualification listed as "Uni Subs".

The school started in 1956 in Sunshine and transferred to St Albans in 1957 as the first local secondary school. In 1961 the school had 900 students and 35 teaching staff – 12 females and 23 males – and two female office staff. The St Albans population was about 7,000 people, so the high school students represented 12% of the township.

¹ Border Watch, Mt Gambier, 4 January 1951, p1



Teaching staff 1962.

Emilija taught at the St Albans between 1961 and 1968, one of the several migrant teachers in the maths/sciences stream over the decade who were remembered for their dedication and passion.

St Albans in the 1960s was expanding rapidly as refugees and displaced persons left their government-sponsored accommodation in migrant hostels to start a new life by becoming independent and building their own home. St Albans was attractive because land and housing were relatively cheap and factory work was available in nearby suburbs along the railway line. St Albans grew from 900 people in 1950 to 7,000 by 1960 and St Albans High school was the only secondary school in the district at that time, and there was pressure on the school to accommodate lots of children.



Mrs Kriksciunas with Form 1L, 1962.

Barry Rayner recalled that there were several migrant teachers who did a wonderful job at St Albans High during the 1960s, in

particular Mrs Kriksciunas, Mrs Burden, Nick Bolvari, and Paul Pavlov.

Joan Butler-Rayner also remembered Emilija as having interests broader than routine classroom lessons: "Mrs Kriksciunas and Sandra Crofts organised evening theatre visits for students, which was quite outside the organised school curriculum but introduced students to a wider experience of the arts."

Sandra Hatch-Crofts: "Mrs Kriksciunas and I would sometimes organise theatre visits for students, which was outside of the normal school curriculum and gave students a broader introduction to the arts. Some of the younger, single teachers stayed after school and socialised with each other and senior students. There was even the occasional joint attendance at social events such as the football club ball in 1967."

By 1977 the family had moved to Moorabbin and Emilija was still working as a teacher. Unfortunately, no information about their life at this stage has been found.



Mrs Kriksciunas and class 1967

Emilija Kriksciunas passed away in April 2004, aged 81 years. Loved wife of Juozas. Loved mother to Algis and Peter. Loved grandmother to Tara and Christopher. Loved mother-in-law to Helen. Will always be lovingly remembered and be forever in our hearts. In accordance with Emilija's wishes a private family cremation was held. (Published by Legacy Remembers in April 2004.)



Mrs Kriksciunas and Form 5, 1968

1961 – Nicholas Bolvari



Nicholas Bolvari was born in June 1920 in Budapest, Hungary, to Gergely Bago and Maria Fuis. Nicholas studied theology with the aim of becoming a priest originally, but in his own words “I liked women better than the priesthood.”

He married and had two children by his first wife, but both children were stillborn, which may have contributed to the divorce of the couple.

Nicholas Bolvari's original name was Mihaly Miklos Bolvari Bago. His father's surname was Bago but the family decided for complicated reasons unknown to adopt the Bolvari surname. When Nicholas Bolvari came to Australia, he changed the last letter of his surname to a 'y' as the Italian community assumed that he was Italian and wished him to join them. This assumption was further fostered by the fact that he spoke reasonably fluent Italian and also taught this later in schools. He Anglicized his name for various reasons to Nicholas Michael Bolvary after swapping the Michael (Mihaly) to Miklos (Nicholas), as it was easier for Australians to remember and pronounce.

Bolvari left Hungary because of the political unrest which led to the Hungarian revolution. The Soviet Union occupied Hungary in 1944 and imposed hard conditions. Bolvari was involved in various war occupations but his later family stated the stories are too painful to narrate. He ended up as a Displaced Person in Villach, Austria. In 1949 he was in Naples on his way for resettlement in Australia. He arrived in Fremantle per Skaugum in January 1950 as Miklos Bolvari. He was on his own, a divorced Catholic, aged 29, and his occupation was listed as a clerk and landworker.

His movements and allocated work arrangement after arriving at Fremantle are unknown; usually the person was assigned to a migrant hostel and had to work as directed by the authorities for two years. Nicholas had lived in Sydney for a while where he ran a cake-making shop with a partner for a few years. He was living in Melbourne by the mid-1950s.

The great majority of Hungarians who were accepted as Displaced Persons under the mass resettlement scheme to Australia came in 1949 and 1950 – there were 10,400 people who came in this period, representing 87% of all Hungarian arrivals to Australia

between 1947 and 1954. After the Soviet repression of the Hungarian revolt in 1956, the Australian Government offered settlement assistance to a further 14,000 Hungarian refugees.

The Hungarian diaspora in Melbourne started organising themselves soon after arriving. There was a Hungarian guest house or boarding house in Melbourne in the early 1950s. The first Hungarian Society was formed in 1954 and the first Hungarian House as a community centre was established in Richmond in 1957. The Hungarian Reformed Church held services in Fitzroy at the Presbyterian Church in Napier Street. The first ethnic Hungarian festival took place in Melbourne in 1964 and Bolvari was a part of the entertainment as a leading bass baritone.

The Hungary-born community of Victoria peaked by 1961 at 10,700 but has decreased since then, with 5,000 people recorded in 2016. In 1986, St Albans had 115 people who were born in Hungary, representing just 0.2% of the local population. In comparison, the larger of the overseas-born cohorts were people from the former-Yugoslavia 5,200 (10.5%) and Malta 4,600 (9.3%.) Years later the St Albans' Hungarians established their Senior Citizens club that still meets at the St Albans Community Centre.

Nicholas Bolvari married Maria Kamaris in 1957. Maria was of Hungarian nationality and emigrated to Australia in 1957 under the Hungarian Refugee Assisted scheme. They were both Roman Catholics and wanted to get married in church, but were forced to marry in a registry office as the church did not condone divorce so they could not sanction a church wedding.

Bolvari became a naturalised citizen in 1957 under the name Miklos Mihaly Albert Bolvari, with a contact address care of the East Melbourne Post Office. His family do not know where the 'Albert' addition came from as that was not part of his name. The name started out as Mihaly Miklos Bago in Hungary, was changed to Miklos Mihaly Bolvari (also in Hungary), and when he came to Australia it was further changed to Miklos Mihaly Bolvary (Nicholas Michael Bolvary).

In 1958 Nicholas Michael A Bolvary and Maria Bolvary were living in Kew and he worked in town (Melbourne) as an engraver. He had also worked as a locksmith but when and where this occurred is not recorded. When he was teaching at St Albans High he organised the allocation of lockers and keys for school users and had a group of students as locker and key monitors responding to student's routine problems such as lost keys.

He also organised master locks for the school buildings.



1961 Staff, Bolvari in last row second from left.

Bolvari started teaching French at St Albans High School in 1961. He spoke at least eight languages, which was undoubtedly a benefit at parent-teacher nights in St Albans, because the school's enrolment consisted of over 30 nationalities. There were not many Hungarian students at the school though one of the earliest ones was Rosemary Kiss who was one of "the most academic-minded students one could wish to have in a school" and did well academically, worked as a public servant, lectured at Melbourne University, was active in local government, and became an arts philanthropist on retirement.

In 1963 Nicholas Michael Bolvari was living in Beaver Street St Albans, just around the corner from the High School where he was teaching. Luba Szwed remembers him as being a friendly neighbour: "Mr Bolvari, who was my French teacher at the St Albans High School, moved into Beaver Street for a while and became good friends of the family."



Bolvari with Form 1F, 1962

In 1964 the school started raising funds to build a school assembly hall, which for students meant holding raffles and white-elephant jumble sale, monster fetes, and anything else they could think of. As his contribution, Bolvari organised a weekly French crossword puzzle competition with prizes and bragging rights for the winners.

German Translation.

ENGLISH UNTERRICHT

Jeden Montag und Mittwoch
Abend, von 7 bis 9 Uhr abends wird
in der St Albans High School
Englisch unterrichtet.

Es sind zwei Klassen – eine für
Anfänger und eine für die Fort-
geschrittenen.

Der Unterricht ist gratis und alle
Erwachsenen Einwandiger, denen
es interessiert Englisch zu lernen,
sind herzlich eingeladen.

Herr M. Bolvary, ein Lehrer der
St Albans High School ist in der
Schule (Raum 31), im südlichen
Gebäude abends um 7 Uhr
Montags oder Mittwochs zu sprechen.

His community contribution that year was teaching English. On Monday and Wednesday evenings from 7 to 9pm Mr Bolvari was teaching English to local residents. There were two classes, one for beginners and one for advanced students.

The publicity information was translated into German in one of the school publications (Calling All Parents May 1964) so it might have been targeting German speakers, which is not surprising as Bolvari spoke German fluently. Advertisements for his English classes were placed in Calling All Parents, May 1964.

It is not clear when he left St Albans High as there were no annual school magazines published in the years 1964-1966. He is not listed amongst the 1967 staff.

Bolvari's extra curricula activity at the school was taking charge of locks and lockers and he recruited a team of student volunteers to carry out the routine tasks. Nick Szwed and Joe Ribarow were key and locker monitors under Bolvari's guidance during the mid-1960s. There was a little office at the back of a classroom that was set up with locksmith equipment and it was here that duplicate keys were cut and master keys made.

Bolvari also participated in theatrical events. In 1964 he was the bass baritone narrating, in song, the legend of the White Elk, as part of the Hungarian Art Festival in Melbourne, which about 7,000 people saw at three performances. The festival was produced by the famous ballet artist Kalman Solymossy. Solymossy and his wife Elizabeth Mrongovius were Bolvari's compatriots and the families were known to socialise.

Solymossy was a renowned dancer with the Budapest Opera House who fled Hungary due to his participation in the 1956 revolution. He came to Melbourne in 1958 and became involved with the Victorian Hungarian Association and the Richmond Hungarian House. They arranged performances at venues such as the Fitzroy and Prahran town

halls. He founded the Solymossy Ballet and Music Academy which started in the Richmond Hungarian House and became the largest dance academy in Australia with groups in some Melbourne suburbs - Mrongovius even held ballet classes at the Methodist Ladies' College in Hawthorn.

In 1967 Maria and Nicholas were living in Frankston. In 1980 Nicholas Bolvary was still working as a teacher and living in Oakleigh with Maria (home duties), Andrew (process worker), and Nicholas Gregory (factory hand).

Nicholas Bolvary died in October 2010 aged 90 years and was buried at the Springvale Botanical Cemetery.

On reflection, his family say that Nicholas was much more than a teacher of French. His son, Miklos Bolvari, writes:

"He spoke at least eight languages - I remember Hungarian, English, Italian, German, French, Latin, some Yugoslav and White Russian (which was the language of the Russian aristocracy). In his later years, he attempted to learn Japanese but by that time it was far too difficult for his memory.

"He also taught Geography, History, Religious Education and most of the languages that he spoke. I always spoke to him about putting down his life in a book but he said it was too hard to make a living and do that as well. He was a good cook and he taught my mother to do that early on in the marriage whereupon he put his nose to the grindstone and tried to keep our place to live.

"He was good at cakemaking, cooking, singing, engraving, teaching, stage comedy, scriptwriting and so much more."



Bovari as bass baritone in White Elk
National Archives of Australia.

1961 – Frances Hewitt



Frances Joyce Hewitt was born in 1912 in Chewton, Victoria, to Ethel Louise Lloyd and William Dixon. Frances had two sisters, Constance Gwenllian (1906) and Marion Lloyd (1914), and two brothers Harry Lloyd (1904) and Allan William Lloyd (1908).

Ethel Louise Lloyd's family were from Bobinawarra, Moyhu, Indi, Victoria, and their origins go back to 1739 in Chirbury, Shropshire, England. Charles Westall Lloyd emigrated to Australia in the 1860s and married Ann Elizabeth Kirkham in 1869 – they had six sons and one daughter, Ethel Louise Lloyd, who became Frances Hewitt's mother.

William Dixon's parents were Joseph Dixon and Mary Jane Kinsman. The Dixon family heritage is traced back to 1700 in Sunderland, Durham, England (there was a family crest); Joseph Dixon was born in 1833 in Liverpool, Lancashire, England, and emigrated to Victoria in the 1850s and married Mary Jane Kinsman in 1858.

Mary Jane Kinsman was born in 1833 in Redruth, Cornwall, England, and emigrated to Victoria in the 1850s; her paternal ancestry is traced back to 1510 in Marhamchurch, Kilkhampton, Cornwall, England (there was a family crest). Mary married Joseph Dixon and had at least four children: Mary (1861), William (1863), Joseph (1866), and Emily (1870).

The children of William Dixon and Ethel Louise Lloyd include:

Harry Lloyd was born in 1904 at Beechworth. In the mid-1930s he was the Headmaster of the State school at Sale. He married Norma Rose Graham in 1935 but they divorced in 1939. In 1940 he enlisted with the AMF – he was single, aged 35, worked as a bank officer, and had previously served as corporal with the 30th Battalion. This time he served until late 1945 and was serving some of that time in Queensland. During the 1950s he was living at the family home in Ivanhoe and worked as a teacher.

Constance Gwenllian was born in 1906 in Brunswick. In the 1930s she was living with her parents in Waterdale Road, Ivanhoe. Constance enlisted in 1939 but her application or service details are not published. In 1955 she married Leonard Ruben Bailey, who was a builder of Ivanhoe, whose first wife had died in

1952. Unfortunately, Leonard died in 1960. Constance died in 1981 at age 75 and was buried at Fawkner Memorial Park.

Allan William Lloyd was born in 1908 at Williamstown. In 1931 he was living in Alphington and was working as a chemist. In 1937 he had moved to Devenport in Tasmania and was still working as a chemist. He might have died in 1964 in Tasmania and was buried at Hobart.

Frances Joyce was born in 1912 in Chewton and became a primary school teacher. She married Albert Smythe Hewitt in 1941 and had three children. Frances later became a secondary school teacher and taught at St Albans in the 1960s.

Marion Lloyd was born in 1914 in Chewton. She married Geoffrey Hindhaugh Entwisle of Lake Boga in 1940 and they settled in Tresco which is near Lake Boga and Swan Hill, where they became orchardists. They had at least one daughter, Susann, born in 1944. In 1969 Geoffrey was appointed by the Victorian Government as an inspector of dried fruits. Marion died in 1984 at age 69 and Geoffrey died in 1997 at age 85.

To reiterate, Frances Joyce Dixon was born in 1912 in Chewton, country Victoria, but the family later moved to Ivanhoe and she seems to have done most of her schooling in Melbourne. She completed her School Leaving Examination in 1927, the Melbourne University Public Examinations in 1928, and was on the University of Melbourne Public examinations Leaving Honours class list for 1929. She was a student from the MacRobertson Girls High School. She is also recorded as passing the Melbourne University exams in 1932. In 1933 she obtained a provisional selection for training at the Melbourne Teachers College.

Frances Dixon became a primary school teacher, as was her older brother, and in 1935 she was transferred or promoted to the state school at Pimpinio West, which is north of Horsham and south-west of Warracknabeal which is further away. (Pimpinio is an Aboriginal word for 'man squatting'.)

Her work at the school no doubt brought her into social contact with the broader regional community, and possibly that is how she met her future husband, who was a farmer from Warracknabeal. They became engaged in January 1940: "Frances Joyce Dixon, second daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. Dixon, of Waterdale road, Ivanhoe, to Albert Smythe Hewitt, only child of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Hewitt, of Warracknabeal."¹

Frances Dixon and Albert Hewitt

married in Ivanhoe in October 1941. Albert was the son of Herbert Albert Hewitt and Isabella Wall of Warracknabeal. The Hewitt ancestry goes back to the early 1700s in Welford, Northamptonshire, England; William and Sarah Hewitt emigrated to Victoria in 1851. The Wall ancestry goes back to the 1750s in Norwich, Norfolk, England; William Wall came to Tasmania as a convict in 1835. He married twice and fathered 16 children. Albert Smythe Hewitt was his grandson, whose parents Herbert and Isabella Hewitt had established themselves as farmers in Warracknabeal in the early 1900s.

Albert Hewitt was born in 1916 and followed the family tradition of farming. He enlisted in 1941 at age 24 and was assessed as being in one of the reserved occupations of agriculture; he was discharged in 1942.

Albert Smythe Hewitt and Frances Joyce Dixon (sometimes known as Joyce) had three children: Michael Lloyd (1943), Quentin Smythe (1946) and Carolyn. Albert's father died in 1945 and Albert continued running the family farm.



Mrs Hewitt in centre of second row 1961

Mrs Hewitt started at St Albans High School in 1961 as a teacher of English. Little is reported about her in the available school magazines. She is remembered as being one of the maturer teachers on staff who had some health problems, described by some students as being akin to epileptic fits or diabetic blackouts which sometimes occurred in the classroom; some students remember her "cranky" mood changes before an impending episode.

Her resilience to life in general might have been effected by family estrangement – in 1965 after 24 years of marriage, Mrs Hewitt became divorced. It is not known when the separation started. The family history is that

¹ The Australasian 27 January 1940 p17

Albert Hewitt continued working on the farm at Warracknabeal and that their son Quentin continued in that tradition. Frances, however, had moved to Melbourne and restarted her teaching career. During the 1960s she was living in suburbs like Malvern and Hawthorn. But she persevered.



Mrs Hewitt with home class 1966

In 1967 the Alba school magazine notes that: "Various students under the expert guidance of Mrs. Hewitt held the inaugural meeting of the High School Drama Club". There is a photo of Mrs Hewitt with a senior girls class dated 1968, which might have been her last year at the school, as she is not on the 1969 staff list.



Mrs Hewitt as Form Teacher 1968.

Little is known of Mrs Hewitt's activities in later life. In the early 1970s she was still working as a teacher and living in suburbs like Malvern and Hawthorn. Her former husband died at Warracknabeal in 1974. By 1977 she had retired and moved to Mornington.

Frances Joyce Hewitt nee Dixon died at Mornington in September 1989 at age 77. Sadly, she was never to know that between the 1990s and the 2010s, her 17-year-old granddaughter, Lauren Hewitt, would represent Australia at three Olympic Games, three Commonwealth Games, and six world championships, obtaining two Gold, one Silver and three Bronze medals, as well as clinching twelve Australian titles.

1961 – Elizabeth Fielder



Elizabeth Joyce Fielder nee Humphreys was a Physical Education and English teacher who started at St Albans in 1961 and stayed to 1970. She had a Diploma of Physical Education and an ACTT with the Melbourne Teachers College. Elizabeth was born in 1925 in Kent, United

Kingdom, to John Thomas Humphreys (1896-1968) and Constance Ann "Annie" Burke (1894-1997).

John Thomas Humphreys was a miner and his ancestry goes back to 1740 in Bwlchbychan, Hirnant, Montgomeryshire, Wales. Constance Ann Burke was born in Hampshire and her ancestry goes back to 1864 in Portsea Island, Hampshire, England. John and Constance married in Kent in 1919 and raised three children: John Eric (1920), Elizabeth Joyce (1925), and Kenneth Ernest (1931).

Elizabeth Joyce Humphreys married Peter Norman Fielder in Kent in 1946. His family ancestry is not known. He might have served in the WW2 Royal Marines Forces as a Temporary Second Lieutenant but other details are unknown.

The Fielder family arrived in Sydney on the "New Australia" in December 1951 under the Assisted Passage Migration Scheme. Peter and Elizabeth were quite young – both aged 26 years – and had two daughters: Margaret Elizabeth born December 1947, and Carol Anne born December 1949. They were initially housed through the Department of Immigration in Sydney. By 1954 they were located in Moe, Gippsland, where Peter was working as a fitter and Elizabeth was occupied in the traditional home duties.

They must have moved to Melbourne by the late 1950s as Mrs Fielder started at St Albans High School in 1961. By 1963 they were resident at 66 Errington Road, St Albans. At this stage Norman was a supervisor and Elizabeth was a teacher.

Mrs Fielder taught English and was active in sports and athletic activities with several groups of students being under her supervision. At various stages she led groups such as the house captains, girls' athletics, the school athletics team, the swimming team, and the tennis team.

She also assisted with other events and in 1963 arranged the National Song and

Dance Tableau that was performed as part of the High School Concert held in the Anglican Hall – these performers reflected the students' multi-cultural backgrounds and included Egyptian, Greek, German, Dutch, Australian, British, Lithuanian, Polish, Russian, Byelo Russian, Ukrainian, and Yugoslavian. A wonderful time was had by all.



Vlad Turok and Polish dancers 1963

During the mid-1960s she served on the Advisory Council of the school's Parents and Friends' Association. 1964 must have been a particularly busy year for them as they were raising money to build the assembly hall.

Mrs Fielder is another teacher whose personal history is largely unknown. Even her daughters who attended the school have left few reminders in the school magazines, though Margaret is noted as Form Captain for 2A in 1962, a class which was described as "quite a noisy, mischievous form, but there is rarely a dull a moment."

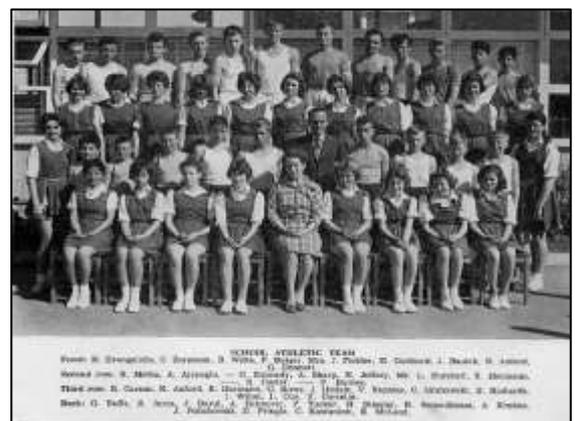


Yvonne Correlje recalls: "I went to St. Albans High School in 1961 and was there for only four years, till the end of 1964. It started off alright in years 7 and 8, but then I lost my friends. Margaret Fielder went to Castlemaine."

Leo Dobes recalls: "There was a farm house that fronted the rough cattle track that used to be Stenson's Road, but I don't recall ever seeing the occupants. It was rumoured that Mrs Fielder, a teacher at St Albans High in the early sixties, lived there because her two daughters kept horses."

The Fielder family moved to Elwood in the mid-1970s. Elizabeth Joyce Fielder nee Humphreys passed away in Melbourne in 1995 at age 69.

Peter Norman Fielder passed away in Melbourne in 2008 at age 83.



1961 – Tom Scarff



Thomas Gerard Scarff was born in Ballarat to Thomas Jeremiah Scarff jnr (1906-1964) and Grace Olive Bailey (1912-1981). The Scarff family heritage goes back to 1832 in Carlow, Ireland; William Scarff emigrated to Victoria and married Mary Power in 1857; they were in Ballarat by

1859. The Bailey family heritage goes back to 1817 and George Bailey was in Yarmouth, Hampshire, England; George emigrated about 1840 and married Ann Hazelby in Launceston; they moved to Ballarat in the 1860s.

Thomas Jeremiah Scarff snr (Tom's grandfather) was a well-known grazier of Millbrook, near Gordon, who died in 1941. His son, Thomas Jeremiah Scarff jnr (Tom's father), was a wood merchant in the 1930s and trading regulations must have been tough in Ballarat as he was charged for delivering wood at 2pm on a Saturday:

"Thomas Scarff jun., wood merchant, was charged in the city court on Tuesday with having carted wood after 1:30 on the afternoon of Saturday, October 10. James A McNeil, wood merchant, stated that he saw Scarff at a customer's house at 5 minutes past 2 o'clock, and said, 'This is a bit over the odds.' The defendant said that he had been delayed owing to an accident, his horse having taken fright at a motor truck, and that as a matter of fact he had delivered the wood at 1:15, and had remained talking to his customer. He called evidence to support his statement. The case was dismissed."

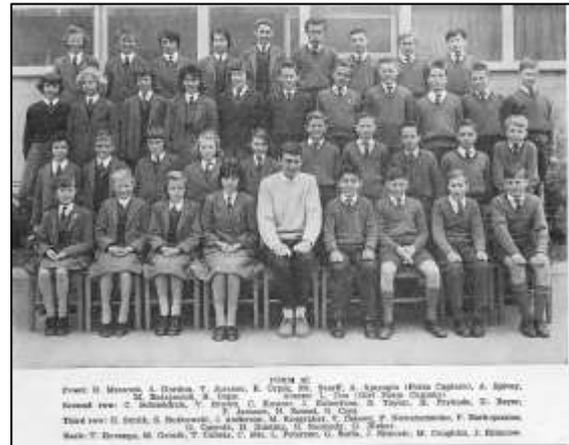
Thomas Jeremiah Scarff jnr married Grace Olive Bailey in 1936. They established their home in Rodier Street Ballarat, and raised six children: Susan Marie, Brian, Daryll, Jillian, Richard, and Thomas (our St Albans teacher).

The sons attended Ballarat's St Patrick Catholic College for boys and Thomas did rather well in his Matriculation year of 1954:

"Thomas Scarff is a College Prefect. He is the son of Mr. Thomas Scarff, of Ballarat East, who attended St. Pat's about 1916. His uncle, Dr. W. Scarff, also attended St. Pat's. Tom has two brothers attending College - Brian is in Leaving and Darryl in Second Year. He is studying for his Matriculation and he holds an executive position in the College Section of the Holy

Name Society, Ballarat East. He is a keen golfer, likes tennis and he rowed No. 3 in one of the College junior crews. Tom is a Sergeant in our Cadet Corps."¹

By 1958 Thomas Scarff was teaching in Ballarat, possibly in the primary school as he had attained his Trained Primary Teacher Certificate. He started at St Albans High School in 1961 with qualifications listed as T.P.T.C. and Uni Subs 2nd Hon (Education). He continued his academic studies while working, and completed his Bachelor of Arts qualifications at Melbourne University in 1967.



Tom Scarff and Form 1C 1961

There is little information about his history at St Albans High School as few annual magazines were produced in his era. In 1961 he was the Form Teacher of Class 1C. He taught in the "commercial sciences stream" and stood out because of his height and friendly manner with students.

Joan Butler recalled that: "I was teaching mainly Forms 5 and 6, to kids who had already made it fairly well through the school system. I remember there being large classes. I had the girls in the commercial stream for English - we used to call them "Scarffies' girls" because he used to kid with them. Worland was another one who used to kid along with them. The girls loved it."

Tom Scarff taught at St Albans High School until 1965 or perhaps 1966, as -he was not on staff in 1967. People remember that he moved back to Ballarat where his family was located.

Tom Scarff married Carmel Marie who was also a teacher. They were living in Camberwell in the early 1960s and moved to Ballarat by the early 1970s, which is where his family came from. In later years they were recorded as being at Mt. Helen, which was a fast-growing southern suburb of Ballarat.

¹ College Chronicle S.P.C. Ballarat September 1954



Tom Scarff and Form 5 1965



Tom Scarff and teaching staff 1965

1962 – Erasts Ziemelis



Erasts Herberts Arnolds Ziemelis was a Latvian national who was born in 1920 to Herberts and Olga Ziemelis. Erasts Ziemelis married Vilma Berzins and they raised two daughters: Sarmite who was born in 1943, and Zaiga who

was born in 1947.

During the war in Europe the family was registered as "Foreigners and German Persecutees". They were accepted for settlement in Australia and travelled per USAT General W M Black, departing Naples and arriving at Melbourne in June 1949; Erasts' occupation was listed as labourer. There were about 770 passengers on board being resettled under the International Refugee Organisation Group Resettlement Program. Erasts' father, Herberts Ziemelis, accompanied them on this journey but the mother, Olga, was not included on the passenger list so she may have already passed away. The family was initially accommodated at Bonegilla, as they are included on the Bonegilla Migrant Experience website.



The family became separated after their arrival. Erasts was destined for the Army Camp at Balcombe (Mount Martha) while Vilma and the two children were going to join Mr Wilson in Dandenong Road, Frankston. Herberts Ziemelis was headed

for the Sale Hospital where his sponsors were Vija and Visvaldis Putnins who were Latvian immigrants who came to Australia in 1948; one must assume the families knew each other before migration and were probably relatives, as Vija's maiden name was Ziemelis.

The family became naturalized citizens in 1955. It was quite a productive year for Erasts, because he obtained his Bachelor of Arts at Melbourne University in the Faculty of Arts, and later obtained his teacher training certificate at Melbourne Secondary Teachers College. He was fluent in Latvian, German, and English. He started teaching at St Albans

High School in 1962 in the subjects of German and History.



Teaching staff 1962

In 1963 the family were living in Camberwell, with Erasts working as a teacher and Vilma as a process worker. Herberts Ziemelis was in Kooyong with Lidija Ziemelis and working as a cleaner. Herberts Ziemelis died in 1968 and was buried at Fawkner.



In the 1960s Erasts Zielemis was the guiding mentor for much of the school's involvement in the annual Inter-School Photographic Competition, and St Albans was declared one of the best amongst other High and Technical Schools and Colleges. In 1971 he was the supervisor and photographer for Alba, the school magazine. He was also involved within school and after-school hours in the photography classes for about twenty senior students.

Ziemelis was also active as a volunteer in the Latvian community and was one of the first leaders to establish the Melbourne Latvian High School. The high school level Latvian language course began at University High School before transferring to Melbourne Latvian House in St Kilda, which

was established in February 1972. Ziemelis would have been proud for the Latvian community when the Australian Government funded the language classes and the centre was officially named a school within the state of Victoria with the option to learn elementary and advanced Latvian.



Mr Ziemelis with Form 4E, 1965.

Sadly, Mr Ziemelis was able to savour this development only very briefly, as he died unexpectedly in March 1972 at the young age of 52 years. The St Albans High School Advisory Council, staff, and pupils placed funeral notices in newspapers as a mark of respect. His remains were cremated at Springvale.

Zaiga Ziemelis died in 1979 at the much younger age of 31 years.

Vilma Ziemelis nee Berzins died in February 1997 and her cremated remains were scattered at the Springvale Botanical Cemetery in Greater Dandenong.

Remembering Mr Ziemelis



Mrs Wright: Mr Erasts Ziemelis was a teacher of German background who was a good photographer. He was taking the school photographs in the early years and did a very good job with that, and was assisted at one stage by one of

the Costa boys. Mr Ziemelis also encouraged students to take an interest in photography, which a number did. There was gap in the school photographic records after he died, until they appointed a professional service to take over this responsibility.

Phillip Spivey: Mr Ziemelis had a passion for photography that he tried to pass on to students. He taught me to love photography by letting me practise with his beloved Leica Camera. My current passion for photography came from him, for which I am grateful. So, even though I didn't pick up on the academic side from the teachers, I did get inspired. Some teachers have the knack of doing that.

Albert Achteberg: The photography club was conducted at lunch time by Mr Ziemelis. He certainly was a great influence on my life as I continued doing part-time professional photography for the next 30 odd years.

Marilyn Anderson: In my final year (1967) at St Albans High, I was a prefect as well as being on the school magazine committee and was playing in the girl's hockey team. The magazine was a challenge because an official school magazine had not been published for several years. Mr Ziemelis, one of the senior teachers who taught German and was the school's unofficial photographer, was our guide and mentor; other students on this group included Maija Svares, Leo Dobes, Joachim Simovic and David Beighton. I'm happy to confirm that Alba was definitely published that year.



1971 staff - Ziemelis is on the right front row



School magazine committee members 1967
(L-R) Maija Svares, Leo Dobes, Joachim Simovic,
Marilyn Hulett, David Beighton

1962 – Norm MacLeish



Norman MacLeish was born in 1931 in Forres, Moray, Scotland. His parents were Reverend Norman MacLeish (1898-1949) and Gladys Margaret Burnett (1896-1980). The MacLeish heritage goes back to 1841 in Lochee, Forfarshire, Scotland. The

Burnett heritage goes back to 1850 in Strachan, Kincardine, Scotland. Norman MacLeish and Gladys Burnett married in Fife in 1926 and raised three sons: Dugald Fairweather (1926), Donald Gordon (1928), and Norman (1931). Reverend MacLeish was in charge of the Forres High Church (in Morayshire, Scotland).

In 1939 the family sailed for Australia when Rev. MacLeish was appointed Professor of Theology in Ormond College, Melbourne – it was seen as forming a new link between the Church of Scotland and the Presbyterian Church in Victoria. However, MacLeish had a closer link with some Australians, because at the age of seventeen he had enlisted for active service in WW1 and made contact with many Australian soldiers in France.

His induction ceremony was held in Scots Church and received good coverage:

With the detailed ceremonial of the Presbyterian Church the Rev Norman McLeish formerly of Forres Scotland was inducted into the Chair of Theology and Church History in the Theological Hall Ormond College University of Melbourne in Scots Church last night. The induction was carried out by the Presbytery of Melbourne West under instructions from the General Assembly and the service was conducted by the Moderator of the Presbytery (the Rev A A Mackenzie).

The service also marked the inaugural session of the Theological Hall for the year and was attended by the Moderator General (the Right Rev. Dr John Mackenzie) the Moderator (the Right Rev Karl Forster) the Master of Ormond College (Mr D K Picken) members of the Senatus of the Theological Hall representatives of other churches and theological students. The sermon was preached by the Minister of Scots Church (the Rev J Golder Burns). The steps leading to Professor MacLeish's Induction were narrated by the Rev. Dr. W. Borland and the address to the newly inducted professor was delivered by Dr Mackenzie Professor McLeish has been appointed to the chair in succession to the Rev Professor F E Oxer."

¹ Argus 8 March 1939

Rev MacLeish was included in "Who's Who in Australia" citing his M.A. (1st Class Hons. 1921) and B. Phil. 1922, Hons. Dip. His publications included "Ideal Manhood" (1926) and "The Nature of Religious Knowledge" (1938). He supported broad social concerns for the general welfare of the populace:

Those principles included that every child should be a member of a family housed with decency and dignity, and should have the opportunity of education until years of maturity, based on faith in God and with a focus in worship. Every citizen should be secure in possession of such income as would enable him to maintain a home and bring up children, and should have a voice in the conduct of the business or industry carried on by means of his labours. Every citizen should be assured of freedom of worship, of speech and of assembly, and should have sufficient daily leisure, sufficient weekly rest and, if an employee, an annual holiday with pay¹.

Norman "Torrie" MacLeish jnr attended Scotch College from 1941 and 1948 - the College was obviously the preferred choice for the family as a number of boys from the extended family studied there. (Norman's older brother, Dugald Fairweather MacLeish, taught there between 1950 and 1978.)

In 1948 Rev. Norman MacLeish died suddenly in Melbourne in May 1949 at the young age of 51 years, shortly before he was due to have his D.D. conferred in absentia at the Edinburgh University.

Norman jnr presumably continued his Bachelor of Arts studies at Melbourne University in the 1950s, where he attained his "university subjects" and his later A.C.T.T. qualification from Melbourne Teachers College, which were the basis of his teaching career before he completed his B.A. in the 1970s. Apparently he taught at the Ormond Colleges as well as at St Albans.



Norm started at St Albans High School in 1962 as an English and Sports teacher and was still there in 1971, so he put at least a decade of leadership and challenge into the school. Despite his athletic prowess he succumbed to the inevitable and the 1969 school magazine reports: "After travelling

to this school for years by train and becoming a familiar sight walking or running about the streets, Mr. MacLeish finally bought a Renault."



Jerry Osadczuk recalls: "I liked English literature as taught by Mr Macleish. He was another good guy who loved sports and running; I think he took up marathon running and did that regularly. He was at the school a long time."



MacLeish enjoyed the challenge of marathons and took the activity very seriously. He joined the Melbourne Bushwalkers club in the mid-1960s and was a regular walker and marathon runner. A tough cross-country run that he enjoyed was the "Bushies' Broadford to Yea", a distance of twenty-eight miles. He was still running in the

1980s and likely took part in events with the Victorian Marathon Club.

He joined the Melbourne Bushwalkers Club in 1982.

Norm's mother, Gladys Margaret Macleish nee Burnett, died at Camberwell in 1980 at age 84 years. It's possible that Norm had been supporting her at this stage as they had been living at the same address in Camberwell.

Norm MacLeish married in the early 1980s (details unknown) and had a son, Perry. Unfortunately the mother died when Perry was quite young, which must have been hard for son and father alike. Norm did not remarry and raised the boy on his own. In the 1990s they were living in Ferntree Gully.

¹ Age 6 May 1944 p3

Norman MacLeish died in his sleep at his home in Ferntree Gully in April 2003, at age 72, only seven years after retirement age.

Art Terry of the Melbourne Bushwalkers Club wrote a moving memorial:

Norm was a tough, no nonsense individualist, a man's man and the Iron Man of the Melbourne Bushies. He once swam the Murray River (very close to flood level) in June in the mid-70s adjacent to the Hattah/Kulkyne park. The water was freezing cold, the current so strong on the far bank prevented Norm from landing, so it was a non-stop swim. He seemed to be impervious to cold for as soon as he dressed, he said, "Let's go" and ran the five miles back to our camp on the Outlet Chalka, a remarkable feat by a superb athlete.

Norm was a thorough gentleman, a scholar with academic qualifications and a brilliant secondary school teacher at St. Albans and Ormond Colleges. He was fond of classical music; Tchaikovsky was his favourite and he was an avid reader. He was a devoted father to his son, Perry, who was only five years old when his mother died. Norm, who did not remarry, reared and cared for Perry who is now a fine young man, aged twenty years.¹



Norm McLeish and Junior Footy Champs c1966



Norm McLeish and Form 3B 1970

1963 – Arnold Shaw



Arnold Osterley Shaw was born in England to Joseph Shaw and Sarah Jane Roe. His father's ancestry goes back to 1793 in Leicestershire England. His mother's ancestry goes back to 1745 Lincolnshire England. Joseph and Sarah married in 1916 and

raised two sons: Ronald Joseph (1924) and Arnold Osterley (1929).

Ronald Joseph Shaw emigrated to Victoria and in 1949 was working as a tool maker in Ballarat. He married Gwenda Joy Lingenberg in 1954 and they had four children. Ronald died in Ballarat in 1987 at age 62.

Arnold Osterley Shaw emigrated to Australia and arrived in Melbourne per SS RANCHI in October 1951. His intended residential address was care of Mrs Kellet of Clyde Street, Ballarat. It's not known if Mrs Kellet was a relative, but possibly he was boarding there initially to connect with his brother who had already settled in the district.

In 1953 he was a resident at the Victoria Hotel in Ouyen and was teaching at the Ouyen High School. The school received some good publicity in the Weekly Times early in the year with a series of photographs of students and teachers, including Shaw.

Joseph and Sarah Jane Shaw, Arnold's parents, also emigrated to Australia, probably in the early 1950s, as they were living in Ballarat in 1954 and Joseph was working as a mechanic.

In May 1956, Arnold Shaw returned to England and married Joyce Edwards in Southwell, Nottinghamshire. Joyce's parents were Thomas Edwards and Elsie Wain. The Edwards' heritage is traced back to 1891 in Nottinghamshire. The Wain heritage is traced back to 1864 in Basford Nottinghamshire.

Arnold and Joyce Shaw returned to Australia in June 1956 and settled in Ouyen, where Arnold returned to his position at the Ouyen High School. They might have stayed there until the early 1960s before moving to Melbourne and establishing their home in Brosnan Crescent, Strathmore.

According to Bruce Alcorn, Mr Arnold Shaw came to St Albans High school in 1963 as a teacher of Art and Manual Arts, he became the time-tableer and so was responsible for day-to-day organisation of the school program: "In this task he evinced those

¹ Art Terry, The News of the Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc. Ed. 627, May 2003.

qualities of meticulous care, patience and thoughtfulness, always combined with a warm and pleasant attitude towards staff and pupils."

Shaw was also a 'team player' in the sense that he was part of the staff hockey team when they played against a student team in 1965. Unfortunately the student line-up has not been discovered.



Staff v. Students hockey match 1965. Rear: Mike Smith, Ian Smith John Grieve, Brian Belden, Brian Safe, Arnold Shaw, Norm McLeish, Martin Clancy. Front: Joan Butler, Katrina Boas, Judy Sandwell, Robyn Campbell, Seng Min Phua.

In the late 1960s, Frank Lancaster Jones published in the Australia and New Zealand Journal of Sociology his report "A Social Ranking of Melbourne Suburbs" which reported that St Albans was ranked last. A number of residents challenged Jones' thesis and rebuffed his conclusions. Mr Shaw and two other members of St Albans High School articulated their challenge in the school magazine:

"Recent surveys by sociologists have revealed that St Albans is one of the least desirable residential areas in Melbourne. How did they arrive at this conclusion? Have they noticed the large number of houses that are being erected in the area. Did they come to St Albans, interview the inhabitants and see the facilities offering, or did they issue a questionnaire to a group of people, place the results in a computer and so come up with a list of socially desirable areas? ...

"What is wrong with St Albans that it has to be labelled so?

The standard of housing is at least the equivalent of the majority of Melbourne suburbs, the people take a pride in their gardens, roads are good, it is well catered for with shops and schools there are no slums, no housing commission flats and no reputation for crime and violence. One obvious factor that could react against St. Albans is probably geographical – it is situated on bare wind-swept plain, treeless and monotonous in

outlook. However, most people who decry St Albans have not been here, lived here, or known people in this area - they judge St Albans by the sociologists' report and the reputation gained from that finding."



Arnold Shaw in front row four from right 1971

In 1969 Shaw was the Senior Master at the school. In 1970 he was the Acting Deputy Principal after Headmaster John McInerney died unexpectedly. He was still there in 1972, which was his last year, and he wrote a nice farewell column for the school magazine:

"It was with mixed feelings that I heard earlier this year than I would be leaving St Albans high school in December. To move on to tackle a new task in life made me feel eager to leave. Yet to say farewell to fellow staff members, to part company with many special students who have worked with me and to leave the school which has given me so many memorable occasions, made me reluctant to make a move. So many other teachers and ex-students to whom I have spoken have had similar feelings and would have returned had they been given the opportunity.

This surely could give the those of you who remain in 1972 an aim to develop greater pride in your school. In many ways St Albans high school is the best school in the state – always do your best to build up this reputation.

"I have known no other school of this size to have had such a friendly and united staff. My sincere thanks to all staff members, past and present, who have made my stay such a pleasant and valuable experience. Neither has any other similar school consisted of so many genuine and friendly students.

There are times when a teacher has to cross swords with his students in order to teach, but these have been few in comparison with the innumerable occasions when teaching has been a pleasure – this is I have always deeply appreciated and shall long remember. May I wish St Albans High School the very best for the future."



Arnold Shaw in front row four from left 1972

Some students recall that Shaw had high expectations of behaviour and would tackle issues directly.

Alex Andrianopoulos: "I remember Mr Shaw was the disciplinarian; I think he was one of the deputy principals. One day I shoved Ilio Di Paolo into the lockers, and of course I was given six of the best as a consequence. But those were the rules, and to be called to the Deputy Principal's office for six of the best was part of the learning experience."

Irene Lenc: "I remember Mr Shaw as being a fairly strict fellow. I started off the school year by being able to see the board, and then I couldn't see it properly, so I asked my friend next to me could I copy her work to put onto my book. I was so engrossed in exchanging the information that when Mr Shaw slammed the book on my desk I jumped a mile high. ... He didn't accuse me of cheating, but said that I was distracted, not paying attention to him and that I was disrupting the class. I thought he was picking on me. As it turned out, I soon found out why I couldn't see the board – I was shortsighted and needed glasses."

Mr Shaw had left St Albans in 1972 to become Deputy Principal at Laverton High, from where he moved to take up the Principal's position at Point Gellibrand High School.

Unfortunately stories about his time at these schools have not been traced, but Luba Uwarow (Szwed) came across him:

"I started teaching at Williamstown Girls High School in 1973 and had the pleasure to work with some wonderful Principals (all ex-St Albans High teachers) including Mr Arnold Shaw, Ms Irene Wescott, and Mr Davis (who was once my Art teacher at St Albans)."

Arnold Osterly Shaw passed away unexpectedly in February 1977 and was buried at Fawkner Memorial Park, Moreland (Merri-bek) City, Victoria. He had passed away at only 48 years of age.

1963 – Ivan Patrick Mathews



Ivan Patrick Mathews was born in 1918 in Lismore, Victoria. His parents were Arthur Mathews (1872-1932) and Ellen Winifred Doyle (1872-1965). The Mathews heritage goes back to 1770 in County Cavan Ireland, and the Doyle heritage goes back to 1790 in

Kilkenny, Ireland.

Hugh Matthews (sic) and Margaret Mary nee Clarke emigrated to Victoria in the late 1850s and settled in Rokewood. They had 5 sons and 7 daughters (2 of whom did not survive). Arthur Mathews (sic) was their youngest son, born in 1872 in Rokewood. He married Ellen Winifred Doyle in 1902 and they raised at least seven children: Hugh Arthur (1903), Clarence (1905), Muriel Mary (1909), Gladys Agnes (1913), Aiden Joseph (1915), Ivan Patrick (1918), and Mary Alice (1921).

Ivan Patrick Mathews was born 3 March 1918 at Lismore, Victoria, and grew up at "Helenslea" in Werneth. Werneth, Rokewood and Lismore are located south-west of Ballarat, over 150 kilometres west of Melbourne. The Aboriginal name for the area was Bongerimennin and the Lismore township as established by the British colonists was named in 1853.

Ivan's father, Arthur Mathews, died in 1932 when Ivan was just 14, so life could not have been easy for a widow with a couple of children still at school. Ivan continued his education and passed the Intermediate and Leaving levels. He became a teacher at state secondary schools and obtained a BA from Melbourne University by 1943.

In 1940, Ivan Patrick Mathews enlisted in the Australian Military Forces at age 22 years and was based at the Mt Martha camp for some months. He was single and working as a secondary school teacher. His mother is listed as next of kin and residing at Werneth, but Ivan at this stage had been living at Barkers Road in Kew.

Mathews re-enlisted in the Australian Military Forces in 1943 at age 25 years. He was still single and living with his mother at "Greenways" Leslie Manor, west of Geelong. He was assigned to the Department of Defence Vocational Guidance Unit and later the Psychological Unit. He served with CMF 1942/43 and AIF 1943/46. He held the ranks of Sergeant, Acting Senior Sergeant, Senior

Sergeant, Warrant Officer Class 2, and Warrant Officer Class 1. He was discharged in December 1946. He may have received a War Medal and an Australian Service Medal. He later became a member of the RSL.

In 1944 he became engaged to Anne Mary "Nancy" McCann who almost a 'local' as she was from Essendon. They married in October 1945 and established their home in Canterbury Road, Middle Park. They raised six children: Bryan, Helen, Vincent, Moya, Desmond, and Aidan.



Mathews in front row fifth from left 1963

Mathews started at St Albans High School in 1963 as the Senior Master, having taken over from Mr Sinclair. Mathews is mentioned in the student magazine that year as supporting the formation of the Students' Representative Council. His teaching forte was in English Literature and many students remember him for his inspirational guidance, as attested below.



Ivan Mathews in front row four from right 1967

Ivan Mathews did not stay long at St Albans. He left at the end of 1967 and was appointed Principal at Brunswick High School in 1968. He was aged about 50, which might have been fairly young to be promoted to a milestone position at a reasonably large suburban school. It is not known how Mathews' career progressed after this, but presumably he would not have retired from teaching until the early 1980s.

The 1980s was not a good decade, because Anne Mary Mathews nee McCann died in 1986 at age 68 and was buried at Warrandyte, Manningham City.

Ivan Patrick Mathews died in August 2006 at age 88 and was buried at Warrandyte, Manningham City.

Mathews - Ivan Patrick (Chief) Died peacefully at Carnsworth Nursing Home [in Kew] on Aug. 22, 2006. Loving husband of Nancy (dec.). Dearly loved father of Bryan, Helen, Vincent, Moya, Desmond and Aidan. Respected father-in-law of James, Jenny and Mandy. Greatly admired grandfather of Narelle, Fiona, Kate; Justin, Lucille; Steve, Mike; Jack, Tom and Sam; Patrick and Conor. Great grandfather of Ethan, Ben and Heidi. An inspirational father, teacher and friend. R.I.P.

Remembering Ivan Mathews



Barry Rayner: There were some really good, inspirational teachers: people like Allison Gliddon, Ivan Mathews, John Conroy, Eric Ford, and Doug Hill. There were also several migrant teachers who did a wonderful job, in particular Mrs Burden, Mrs Kriksciunas, Nick Bolvari, and Paul Pavlov. Many staff, including people like Ivan Mathews and Alison Gliddon, would get together at weekends at somebody's place to socialise.

Joan Butler: When I arrived at St Albans it was such a great experience because it was the first time that I met people from various cultures. Those particular first students were very aspirational, very friendly. There was that incredible mix of nationalities and the sheer joy of being there. Many of the staff were young and I had excellent mentors in Ivan Mathews and Alison Gliddon – he was the senior master and she was the senior mistress.

Leo Dobes: Ivan Mathews taught English Literature and introduced me to Shakespeare, just like he introduced Shakespeare to a whole lot of other people. Mathews later went to Brunswick or East Brunswick as the headmaster, I believe. I once tried to get somebody enrolled at his school. The kid was a Czech migrant who came out after 1968 and he wanted to go to school, but he couldn't get in anywhere. I phoned up Ivan Mathews,

because I knew him, and asked if I could get this kid into his school. Much to my dismay he said no, because the person concerned did not live in the school's intake area. And much to my chagrin the next day the kid phoned me up and said he'd gone round there on his own, went to the front office, enrolled himself, and was already in the school.

Peter Karol: Once I was legally able to drive a car I was allowed to borrow either mum's or dad's car. I was the first person in the form to get their license, and certainly the first to get ready access to a car. So it was great fun taking a bunch of colleagues out for a drive. Sometimes we'd do this during lunchtime, but you had to be careful to get back on time. One day we got back late and Mr Mathews, the senior master, had us all lined up wanting an explanation. He knew I was the driver. "Whose car do you have?" he demanded. "Which one?" was all I could think of saying, because I would alternate between the two. He was a bit taken aback by my response, but calmed down when he realised I was fully licensed and had my parents' permission to use their cars. Mathews was an okay fellow, but he did tell us not to skip any classes in future.

Alex Pliaskin: I teach at Victoria University because I really love doing what I'm doing and feel that I can get across to the students. I feel as if I am doing something worthwhile. I can still hear the words of Ivan Mathews from 40 years ago when he said that ... "teaching is a no bull profession". That inspires me.

Christa Albrecht: Mr Mathews is responsible for my becoming an English teacher. He gave me a lot of encouragement and read one of my essays to different classes. St Albans High was a tough time for me and he helped me to cope. Barry Rayner and John Morrison did too. ... It may interest people to know that one of the former students (me) has been living in Europe for 30 years and been teaching English as a Second language for 25 years.

Henry Goralski: Mr Mathews in the short term had a great effect on me. Up until then I took language and the classics for granted but he gave me a bit a love for that. I developed a bit of a thirst for reading and finding out more about the cultural side of life. My attitude changed because people like Mathews, who was an English master, stimulated your imagination. I remember doing Julius Caesar with him. When we started reading the book it made no sense to anyone, because that style of language was unknown to anyone who wasn't familiar with

Shakespeare. After a month or so Mathews took over the English class and he made that book come alive for us all. He would stop at the end of each page and explain what the language meant and we speculated what was going through the minds of the characters. In this way we discovered how cleverly it was written. By the time we finished the book I developed a bit of a love for Shakespeare. Mathews excited my imagination by acting as a translator for old English and made it understandable and enjoyable.

Marin Gunew: I have fought against various ridiculous authorities, culminating probably in my largest challenge, which was when I was called up for National Service and Vietnam. I declined the invitation. They spent the next three years trying to lock me up. They didn't succeed. Being anti-military and anti-organised-religion, even I was surprised that I had an early member of the RSL (my English teacher and senior master of St Albans High, Mr Mathews) giving evidence on my behalf.

Stefan Czyz: Mathews was a very caring person and kept an eye out for me after that. When I mentioned that my bike wasn't working he brought half a bike from home so that I had spare parts to fix mine. He became our language teacher in Form 6 and was very good on stories. One school afternoon he took Lindsay Chatterton and myself out to play tennis at the Sydenham courts. We had a few sets and then came back to school. That's the sort of Vice Principal he was.

Lindsay Chatterton: Another occasion I remember going over to Joe Attard's at lunch time with a group of others and getting into a flagon of port. Then on the way back to school or maybe at the school we got picked up or were taken out to Mr Mathew's car, an old Vanguard. He read us the riot act. I am sure he could have done much more than that. He was a good person, big hearted, and would always talk to you first.



1963 – Alison Gliddon



Alice Gliddon's maiden name was Alison Marjorie Pickford. She was born in June 1928 to Edna Marjorie Ball and Edward Henry Pickford. Edward Pickford was a clergyman with the Anglican church St Paul's in Bendigo; he was born in 1888 in Gloucestershire, England, and came

to Australia pre-1926. Edna Ball was born in 1894 in Kew, Victoria; her heritage goes back to 1690 in Somerset, England; George and Ann Ball came to Port Phillip in 1852.

Alison attended the Girton Grammar School in Bendigo, which was an independent school, between 1934 and 1945. At that stage the school had no class equivalent to Year 12 so Alison probably sat for matriculation at Bendigo High School.

In 1946, to complete her education, she went into residence at Janet Clarke Hall (Melbourne University) where she completed her Arts Degree and Diploma of Education. After further university study in England (Bachelor of Education) she returned to Australia.

In the 1954 electoral roll she was listed as a teacher and her address was St Pauls Rectory, Bendigo, which was her parents' home. Allison Pickford married Leigh Sabine Gliddon in 1954; he was an Anglican Church Minister for the parish at Kangaroo Flat, Bendigo, and was said to be handsome and immensely popular. He was born in Victoria in 1929 to Gilbert Alexander Gliddon and Kathleen Gertrude Cox.

The Gliddon family came to South Australia prior to 1853. The Cox' family origins are not known. Leigh had graduated from Ridley College with second class theological honours and was made a deacon by the Bishop of Bendigo in 1951 and became a priest the following year. As a curate at All Saints' Cathedral, he did invaluable work among the youth of the diocese as youth director.

The biggest tragedy in Alison Gliddon's life occurred when her husband's dead body with two bullet wounds in the chest was found on the side of the road a few miles from home; there was a rifle nearby. Police reconstruction

of the tragedy indicated that Rev. Gliddon, after wounding himself, either accidentally or by design, painfully reloaded the rifle and fired another — a fatal shot. His friends believed that Rev. Gliddon, who had been studying hard to add to his already considerable scholastic ability, was the victim of a sudden mental storm which drove him irresistibly to death.



Alison Marjorie Gliddon returned briefly to England in August 1958. She didn't stay long because she was teaching at Camberwell High School between 1959 and 1962. She received a promotion to transfer to St Albans High School in 1963, taking over from

Miss Taylor as Senior Mistress.

Gliddon was a much-respected Senior Mistress with a passion for literature and poetry and taught at St Albans until the end of 1969, after which Mrs. Irene Wescott took over. Gliddon was due to become Deputy Principal at St Albans in 1971 but she may have been promoted elsewhere as Mr Shircore was the Deputy Principal by the end of that year.



Gliddon at Camberwell High School 1962

Mrs. Gliddon continued her teaching career with the Education Department and was appointed Principal of various Melbourne schools, including Canterbury Girls' School and Vermont High School. She was amongst the first female Principals to be appointed to a co-educational school in the State Education System. In 1984-85 she was principal at Koonung High School at Mont Albert North.

Alison Marjorie Gliddon nee Pickford died in November 2012 at Maryborough; she was aged about 84.

The funeral service was held at Christ the King Anglican Church in Maryborough and her remains were cremated.



Remembering Alison Gliddon

Cathy Hatjiandreou: Someone I remember very vividly, because I loved any-thing to do with literature, was Mrs Gliddon and the way she conveyed literature to us. She was my best teacher, but she was my mentor as well. She certainly had time for you, especially for females because she was the senior mistress. Mrs Gliddon opened up a whole new world, not only academically but also socially - she was a person with many attributes which she wanted to convey to her students as well. I used to travel on my own on the train or sometimes with groups of friends and after an outing walk home after 11 at night. That didn't mean a thing because I was not afraid. The world was somehow safer and more naïve then. I remember dressing up nicely - you'd make sure all the clothes matched whenever we went to the city for a performance.

Mrs Gliddon encouraged us to see Shakespearean plays, Greek tragedies, musical comedies or opera as well. We used to get a season ticket to the Youth Orchestra at the Melbourne Town Hall. They used to do this once a year and there would be a series of them. I would go with Maija Svares, Eva Radiskevics, and others. Maija and Eva were good piano players, whereas I didn't play any instrument. We used to visit theatre groups like La Mamma. I became a member of the Melbourne Theatre Company. These were formative years that opened up a lot of things for you. I must say it was all due to Mrs Gliddon. I was not only impressed by it but it became part of me.



Rosemary Keegan: ... when I started at the school and Mrs Gliddon was Senior Mistress in 1963 when I was doing the Matriculation year. I think she came from Camberwell High so she had some experience and coming to St Albans into a senior role was a promotion. She was the daughter of a clergyman from Bendigo. She went to Melbourne University for her B.A. and Dip.Ed, and then went to England for her B.Ed. so she had good qualifications. She taught us Matric English and was keen on Shakespeare and especially King Lear. She encouraged us to study the characters by acting them out in class. I was King Lear and practically knew the part by heart. Gliddon also introduced me to the works of Patrick White who was one of my poetry inspirations.



Mrs Gliddon had been an Anglican but had converted to Catholicism – she must have had a strong conviction to do that because her father was an Anglican clergyman. When I was applying for Melbourne University she encouraged me to consider St Mary's Hall as a residence because it was a

Catholic facility. One of her former pupils whom I met at university told me Mrs. G. was a widow who had been married to an Anglican Canon. Perhaps she mixed it up with Mrs. G's father who was an Anglican clergyman.

When she taught us in 1963 Mrs Gliddon was very concerned that I should re-discover my Catholic roots - the gift, she said, that she had discovered later in life. She said she wanted me to experience the sort of intellectual Catholicism that she had come to know.



Alison Gliddon and teaching staff 1969

1966 – Albert Tilton



Albert Tilton was the postmaster in St Albans during the late 1960s and the early 1970s. Albert Edward “Eddy” Tilton was born in June 1922 in Wangaratta. His parents were Thomas Henry Joseph Tilton (1880-1952) and Ada Mary Watkins. The Tilton

heritage goes back to Berkshire England in the 1730s; Thomas and Eliza Tilton emigrated to Hobart Tasmania in 1852 before moving to Creswick in Victoria about 1857.

The Watkins heritage goes back to County Cork, Ireland, about 1818; John Watkins was convicted in 1838 to seven years transportation for stealing a chest of tea and arrived in New South Wales in 1838. He married Julia Desmond in 1850, and Ada Mary Watkins was their granddaughter.

Albert Edward Tilton enlisted in 1942 at age 20; he was single, a postal employee, and had previously served with the AMF. This time he served as a signaller in the Northern Territory (1943/44) and New Guinea and Morotai, Indonesia (1945/46). He was discharged in June 1946 and returned to his position at the Shepparton Post Office. In 1948 he married Joan Loe and they settled in Spurling Street, Footscray North.



Joan Lesley Loe was born October 1924 in Shepparton, Victoria, whose parents were James Arthur Loe and Edith Mella May. The Loe heritage goes back to the 1770s in Selbourne, Hampshire, England; John Clear Loe and Mary Aline Murray emigrated in 1912 and settled in

Shepparton,, Victoria. John enlisted and served with the 21st Battalion.

The May heritage goes back to the 1790s in Marther, Cornwall, England; William John May married Mary Ann Dunscombe and they emigrated in 1866.

Joan Lesley Loe enlisted in 1944 with the AWAS from Shepparton at age 19 (thus classified as a minor); she was single and had been working as a shop assistant. She was discharged in December 1946. Her parents were living in Footscray which may be why

Joan and Albert settled in the district. Albert continued in his previous occupation as a postal clerk.

Joan and Albert raised two sons: Geoffrey and Gary James. The family were long-term residents of Maidstone, and it seems that Albert is the only member of the family who had a direct connection with St Albans.



St Albans Post Office 1950s from Terry Vyner

In 1966 Albert Edward Tilton replaced Francis Curtain as that postmaster at St Albans. In 1968 there were thirteen people working in the office servicing a population of about 20,000 with over 1.5 million postal items handled at the office.

According to the late Tom Rigg, Tilton stayed about a decade in St Albans, from 1966 to 1975. In the mid-1970s the Tiltons were still living in Maidstone and Albert was still working for the post office. By 1977 they moved to Landsborough, Fisher, Queensland. Albert was aged 55 and Joan was aged 53.

Joan Leslie Tilton nee Loe died in September 1986 in Queensland at age 61, and was buried in the Buderim Lawn Cemetery, Maroochydore, Sunshine Coast Region.

Albert Edward Tilton passed away in September 2004 at age 82, and his remains were cremated at the Caloundra Crematorium, Sunshine Coast Region, Queensland.



St Albans Post Office 1968 National Archives Australia

1967 – Fred and Meryl Scheurer

Fred Scheurer was a Sydenham resident with links to St Albans through work and family connections. Frederick James Scheurer was born in 1911 in Riddells Creek, Victoria. His parents were Charles Edward Scheurer and Elizabeth Louise Humphries.

The Scheurer family heritage goes back to Mathias Schurer (sic) in 1839 in Berne Switzerland; he emigrated and married Rosina Margaret Gugger in Victoria in 1871. Rosina was from Ins, Berne, Switzerland, and came to Melbourne in 1869. Her first child was Charles Edward Scheurer (sic) who was born in 1878 in Wildwood, Sunbury.

The Humphries family heritage goes back to John Humphries in 1763 in Ditton Priors, Shropshire, England. William Humphries emigrated in 1819 and married Louisa Jane Arpin in 1883; they moved to Melbourne and had twelve children, several of them being born at Batmans Swamp, Melbourne. Elizabeth Louise Humphries was born in Riddells Creek in 1880 and married Charles Edward Scheurer in 1904; they had eight children and Frederick James Scheurer was a middle child, born in October 1911.

In the 1930s Frederick Scheurer was working as farmhand in Clarkefield. In 1941 he was in Sydenham playing cricket and active on the Sydenham Progress Association.¹



Scheurer's Sydenham General Store

In 1942 he was in Sydenham and working as a storekeeper. He married Meryl Elsie Honnor Stirrett in 1943; she was born in Yarraville in 1921 and in 1942 was in Vincent Avenue, St Albans, and working as a clerical assistant. They married in St John's Anglican Church, Footscray:

The bride was given away by her uncle, Mr. C. G. Cox, Vincent Street, St. Albans, and looked exceedingly charming in her trained gown of ivory duchess. satin. The unusual heart-shaped bodice and three-quarter sleeves were

¹ Sunshine Advocate 30 May 1941 p3

beautifully beaded, whilst the skirt fell into soft folds from a long, pointed waistline, with the train beaded to match the frock. A honiton lace veil mounted on double tulle was caught to the head with a high coronet of orange blossom and lily of the valley. A sheaf of gardenias, camellias, roses and blossom formed the bridal bouquet, and hung on her arm was her mother's lucky horse shoe. Three maids attended the bride Misses Lynette Walker, Beryl Reilly and Marjory Burn, all of whom wore frocks of slipper satin with full circular skirts and tight fitting bodices, in melody blue, magnolia and rose pink shadings. Their short tulle veils were caught with top-knots of pink and cream camellias, and they each carried sheafs of pastel flowers.²

Fred continued with the Progress Association and in 1944 was elected Auditor.



In 1967 Fred was working as a real estate agent and Meryl Elsie was listed as assistant, so they must have disposed of their all-purpose store by the train station. That's possibly the time that Fred established his real estate business in St Albans on the corner of Collins Street and Main Road. For some years that corner was known as Unger's Corner as a meeting spot for people; it also became known as Scheurer's Corner for the same purposes. He was always cheerful in conversation.



Scheurer's Corner at Collins Street & Main Road East

Fred Scheurer died in May 1987 at age 75 years. Meryl Scheurer nee Stirrett died in November 2003 at age 82 years.

² Sunshine Advocate 13 August 1943 p3

1967 – Raymond Fehmel



Raymond Richard Frederick Fehmel was born in 1897 in Victoria to Richard Friederich Fehmel and May Christian Stent. The Fehmel family origins go back 1803 and John Christian Fehmel in Sachsen, Deutschland (Germany). Richard Friedrich Fehmel came

to Australia and married May Christina Stent in 1896. The Stent family origins go back to 1786 and James Stent in Christchurch, Hampshire, England. Thomas Stent came to Victoria in the early 1850s and married Ellen Eliza Sarah Austin in 1858; they raised ten children and May Christina was their youngest daughter born in 1872. Richard Fehmel and May Stent had two sons: Raymond Richard Frederick (1897), and Walter Leonard (1901).

Raymond must have been musically gifted. In 1908 he started as a chorister with St Paul's Cathedral at age eleven. (Two decades later he returned to St Paul's and was acting as honorary assistant organist at the Cathedral.) In 1914, when he was only 17 years of age, he was appointed organist at Christ Church, Brunswick. Later, he filled the position as organist at St Martin's Church of England in Hawksburn for four years. It appears that being a church organist was not a lucrative source of income, and he resigned in 1920 "due to the increasing demands of business on his time".¹ It appears that Fehmel over time had several honorary positions, which means he was performing gratis – a noble but not necessarily financially sustainable enterprise.

Fehmel had been working with Messrs Carnegie, of Melbourne, as a 'piano expert' or 'expert demonstrator'. He left the firm in early 1920 and started working as an independent piano tuner, even travelling to country areas to offer his services. For example, in August 1920 he was in Numurkah: "Owing to the amount of business he is receiving, Mr Raymond Fehmel, piano tuner, has decided to prolong his visit by one week, and orders left at this office up till Wednesday of next week will be promptly attended to." It is not known how long this work lasted but presumably piano tuning provided some income.

He returned to Melbourne and filled

the position of organist at St Martin's, Hawksburn, and at Christ Church, St. Kilda.



Raymond Fehmel married Zilla May Williams in 1924. Her parents were Henry Williams and Annie Liversidge. The Williams heritage goes back to 1796 in Gwinear, Cornwall, England; Henry came to Australia in the 1880s. The Liversidge heritage goes back to 1612 in Yorkshire, England; Eldred Liversidge came to Australia in 1859 and married Caroline Elizabeth Day; their daughter Annie was the mother of Zilla. Raymond and Zilla raised four children, including Ruth, David Frederick, and Richard Maxwell.

By April 1922 Fehmel was appointed as organist to Christ Church, St Kilda, in succession to Mr Maconachie, who had earlier trained Fehmel. As well as being the organist during church services, Fehmel instituted a regular series of organ recitals after vespers. In 1923 he was appointed organist and choir-master at St. George's Anglican Church in Malvern. In 1933 he was appointed organist of the Australian Church, in Russell Street, Melbourne.

He received some good publicity in the Melbourne newspapers for his achievement as a craftsman:

"Mr Raymond Fehmel, organist of the Australian Church, and deputy-organist of St Paul's Cathedral, will give a recital on Saturday evening at his home, Sylvester Grove, Caulfield on an organ which he has built himself. The work has taken eight years to accomplish, and it has been a labor of love. When Mr Fehmel was a boy in St. Pauls Cathedral choir his ambition was to possess an organ of his own, and his imagination was fired by the magnificence of the Cathedral organ. Thus it

¹ Herald 27 March 1920 p20

came about that he studied organ building, and in his spare time made the fine instrument which he now possesses. The organ is valued for insurance at £1000."¹

In 1937 he enjoyed the luxury of a six-month study tour that took in London, Leipzig, Salzburg, Vienna, and the United States.

In 1938 he became director of music at the Australian Church, and was unanimously appointed conductor to the Victorian Railways Institute Choral Society. In the following year it was reported that the Boronia Choral Society was making excellent progress under the baton of Raymond Fehmel. He was also giving free organ recitals in aid of the Bush Fire Relief Fund. On another occasion it was for the 22 Field Regiment Comforts Fund. Undoubtedly there were more.

By 1940 Fehmel was in Essendon. He wrote occasional letters to the editor regarding musical trends and concerns, and in May he penned a humorous/sarcastic missive:

Sir - Last week a distinguished medical man informed us that a machine has already been marketed, which, in a few years, will make pipe organs out of date. Yesterday a distinguished organist told us of another machine, which will drive the orchestra, as we know it, off the map. I now feel impelled to disclose that I who am neither a well-known medical man nor a distinguished organist, am working on an apparatus which will make vocalists unnecessary. When it is completed, voices of all timbres will be available at the turn of a dial. To make it really lifelike, it will be fitted with stops, giving vowel distortion, wobble, and faulty intonation. It will, of course, be incumbent on me to invent a synthetic audience seated in an ersatz town hall. This, I am ready to do. But as art is long and life all too short, I shall leave it to someone else to produce all automatic de-composer, so that the required music may be written for what I feel sure are and will be, marvellous contraptions.²

The 1940s might have seen some change of career and Fehmel might have been working at Melbourne High School. He was still active in promoting choral performances, some of which evolved significantly. Fehmel and Betty Wood established the Mont Albert Choral Society in 1943; the group later became the Youth Operatic Society and performed Gilbert and Sullivan operas at town halls around Melbourne. Their headquarters moved to the Hawthorn Town Hall in 1952 when it became known as the Hawthorn Operatic Society. It then became the Victorian Light Opera Company, Victorian Opera Company, before

evolving to become the Victoria State Opera Company in 1976.³



Age 13 October 1938 p22

Fehmel appears to have taken up more work with schools as musical director during the 1950s. He was Director of Music at Presbyterian Ladies College Melbourne in 1952, where they had an orchestra consisting of strings, woodwind, brass and percussion; the study of the piano was stressed and encouraged. He had been the music master at Melbourne Boys' High School, and had transferred to Camberwell with the students.

Some more excellent publicity in the Argus appeared in 1954 when Fehmel was performing for a 150th celebration in front of Prime Minister Menzies with a message of greeting from the Queen for the occasion:

The Queen has sent from Government House, Melbourne, a message of greeting to the British and Foreign Bible Society in the Town Hall tomorrow afternoon. The society celebrates 150 years of operation on Sunday. It will meet tomorrow in the Town Hall. The guest chairman, Mr. Menzies, Prime Minister, will be introduced by Archbishop Booth, Victorian chairman of the society. Raymond Fehmel will give an organ recital.⁴

In 1956 he was supporting the Hawthorn Operatic Society and was also the organist at St Thomas' in Essendon, which probably was his local church.

Unfortunately, Fehmel's career in the late 1950s and early 1960s has not been traced. He was teaching at St Albans High School during 1967 and 1968 but there are no details of his activities reported in the school magazines. He was clearly a veteran of his trade, not only referring to his seven decades

¹ Herald 6 December 1933 p10

² Argus 2 May 1940 p7

³ <https://collections.artscentremelbourne.com.au/#browse=enarratives.3919>

⁴ Argus 6 May 1954 p8

of life experience, but particularly his six decades of musical talents and performance, stretching back to 1908. His qualifications were impressive – in a decade when some staff at the school had 'university subjects' as their entry to teaching, Fehmel had achieved Trained Teacher Certificate (Royal College of Music), Member of Royal College of Organists, and Associate of the Royal College of Music (ARCM), which was a professional qualification equivalent to a university first degree, that was awarded by the Royal College of Music.

Bruce Alcorn recorded that the school was fortunate to gain the services of Mr Fehmel as its music teacher, as he brought to the school a wealth of experience and developed the appreciation of music significantly. Moreover, he generously made it possible for the school to possess one of his valuable grand pianos.

Zilla May Fehmel died in December 1980 at age 80 years. Raymond Fehmel died in January 1984 at age 87 years. They are both buried at the Box Hill Cemetery, Whitehorse City, Victoria.



Fehmel in back row second from right 1967



St Albans High School Prefects 1976

1970 – Adair Bunnett



Adair Brice Bunnett nee Taylor started at the St Albans High School in 1970 with a Bachelor of Arts (1960) and a Diploma of Education (1970) as her teaching credentials. She was a graduate of Monash University's Faculty of Arts and was part of

the "radical student movement" of the late 1960s and 1970s; she described her time at university as challenging and exciting.

It certainly was an exciting time in St Albans as the community was grappling with significant change. In 1950, St Albans was a small village with a population of 850 residents with one school and eight shops. When the post-WW2 migrants started settling in, the neighbourhood soon grew to 7,000 people and 78 shops (1960) and by 1970 the population had reached 20,000. Anti-war and anti-conscription debates that started in classrooms spilled onto streets with new agency as the voting age was reduced. Teenagers were obtaining their university qualifications and becoming involved in direct community action and political renewal.



St Albans students at Vietnam moratorium rally
Photo by Max Costa 1969

When Professor Lancaster-Jones conducted his 'Social Survey' of Melbourne in the late 1960s, it was rather a shock for St Albans residents to receive the wooden spoon. A local perception was that the predominantly migrant population in the working-class neighbourhood at the end of the railway line was being judged as antithetical to social progress and cohesion. This survey had widespread publicity and put St Albans on the map and local police news was quoted unfavourably and often unjustly.

Mrs Bunnett penned a strong rebuttal of the Professor's methodology and conclusions, which appeared in the 1971 school magazine.

Adair Brice Taylor married Christopher Lindsay Bunnet, possibly in the late 1960s, and in the early 1970s they were living in South Melbourne. Christopher studied law and eventually established his own business as Christopher Bunnet Lawyers of Collins Street, Melbourne. (His parents came from Numurkah, Victoria.)



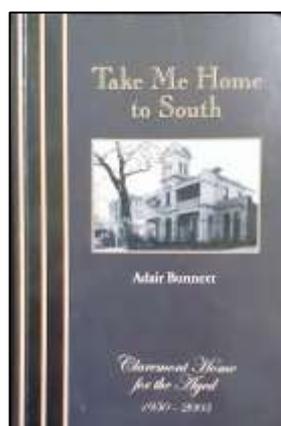
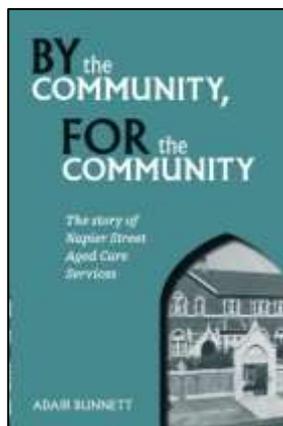
Adair's father was Fred Taylor, and though their family history has not been traced a brief article about them has been published about him receiving his B.A. Degree from Monash University in 1990, at the age of 68.¹

Adair Bunnett was a history teacher at St Albans High School – unfortunately the available school magazines do not indicate how long she stayed, though she was still there in 1971.

History became a life-long passion for her and she continued these interests well after retirement from teaching.

In the 2008 Queen's Birthday Honours (Australia) awards, Adair received the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for "service to the community, particularly through the preservation and promotion of local history and as a proponent of responsible urban development."

She has written a series of books about early Melbourne settlement.



1970 – Irene Wescott



Irene Wescott was a western suburbs girl from her childhood, so she would have fitted in well with the district. Irene Alfreda Wescott was born in the 1920s. Her parents were Alfred Edward Burkitt and Florence Irene Burton who married in 1924 and raised two children: a daughter Irene Alfreda, and a son Edward.

Alfred Burkitt was born in 1897 in Taranaki, New Zealand, but his family background goes back to the 1830s in Barnoldby le Beck, Lincolnshire, England. Florence Burton's family origins have been hard to trace but they might have been from Thaxted, Essex, England, in the late 1700s.

Alfred Edward Burkitt worked as a butcher. The family were living in Echuca in the early 1920s before moving to Healesville, and they finally settled in North Footscray in the 1930s.

In 1935 Irene received some educational recognition in an Essay competition for Religious Instruction in the Intermediate section. She attended the Williamstown High School in the late 1930s and some photos of her from that era have survived.



Irene Burkitt (front row two from right)
Williamstown High School 1938

¹ Monash Reporter Vol. 27, No. 229, June 1990

She attended the MacRobertson Girls High School and in 1941 obtained an Ormond College Scholarship in the non-residential exhibition for European/British History. (The Argus 1941)

Sadly, her father passed away in 1943 at the family home in Footscray, at the young age of 46 years.

Irene studied at Melbourne Teachers College and received her T.P.T.C. in 1946. (The Trained Primary Teacher's Certificate was a two-year course undertaken by students intending to teach general subjects at any level in a primary school.) She also obtained her Bachelor of Arts degree from Melbourne University in 1946. In 1949 she upgraded her teacher accreditation with a Diploma of Education, also from Melbourne University.

Irene Alfreda Burkitt of Gordon Street, Footscray, became engaged to Percival Clarence Wescott of Batman Street, Footscray, in 1949, and they married in the following year. She was a teacher; he was a turner. They made their home in North Footscray and raised three children: Ron, Geoff, and Jan. Irene would later relate that as a young mum with three children under five she enjoyed going along to the 1956 Olympic Games and cheering for the Aussies.

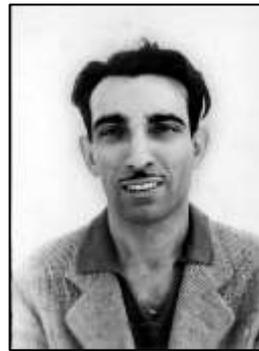
By 1963 they had moved to Ballarat Road, Sunshine. A decade later (October 1973) Percival passed away at the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital, and was buried at the Altona Memorial Park. (He had enlisted for WW2 service from Port Moresby, New Guinea, but his service records are not published.)

Irene Wescott started as Senior Mistress at St Albans High School in 1970. Unfortunately, the available school magazines of this period do not have much information about teachers. Irene Wescott moved to Williamstown Girls High School later in the 1970s. Luba Uwarow a former St Albans High who worked at Williamstown High remembered Mrs Wescott being there as Principal.



Irene Wescott (R) at 50th reunion 2006

1974 – Pino Calati



Giuseppe “Pino” Calati was born in 1916 and was of Italian background. He was one of six children born to Vincenzo Calati and Francesca Rusciano who were from Pulsano, Taranto, Puglia, Italy. The district is in south-eastern Italy near the coastline in the Gulf of

Taranto region with a history of ancient Greek and Roman settlements, and later there were French and Spanish influences contributing to the local culture.

The extended family had been living in the district for some generations. It is a fertile district and presumably the family were farmers, but Pino became a builder.



Pino Calati married Maria Poretti who was from the Valle d'Istra, also from the Puglia region, and they had two children: Laura (born in 1941) and Vincenzo (born in 1944). The family emigrated to Australia in 1949 on the ship USS General Howze –

interestingly, their nationality is listed as Yugoslavian and Pino's Christian name is given as Cosimo (and some records show Cosimo Joseph) but locally he was always known as Pino. He always claimed that the first meal he ever had on Australian soil was a meat pie. Everyone else on the boat was suspicious ... but true to his adventurous spirit, Pino ate his and asked for another!

The family was temporarily housed in Brooklyn, Victoria, before moving to Footscray. Pino and Maria with the two children settled into their permanent home in Tongue Street, Yarraville, and became Naturalised British subjects in 1959. Pino's younger brother Mario and his young family also emigrated to Victoria, but that was in 1960, and they settled in Heidelberg.

Pino had worked as a builder in Italy and in Melbourne he earned his living as a cabinet maker in a factory. One of Pino's carpenter mates was Albert van de Kuyt of St Albans, and they also shared a love of art and painting, which was Pino's earliest connection to art in St Albans, as he encouraged Albert's

daughter Thea to extend her drawing talents. Thea and Pino would later combine their artistic interests through art classes at the Tin Shed.

The idea of starting local art classes emerged in the mid-1970s when an art exhibition was held at the public hall under the auspice of the newly-formed St Albans Community Centre. One local artist suggested that a gallery be built that could be used by artists to display and sell their work. The gallery was never built but the idea was taken up by committee members of the Tin Shed. Pino had participated in that St Albans exhibition and with the help of Evelyn Mullenger they established weekly art sessions that continued until the 1990s, when Pino passed away.

The Tin Shed, more formally known as the St Albans Community Youth Club, officially became a "neighbourhood house" in 1974 and art classes were initiated by Evelyn Mullenger with Pino Calati as the art tutor. At this stage Pino was aged 58 years and presumably had at least partly-retired from his full-time factory work.

Pino would run his art classes every Monday afternoon in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere to guide the development of his students, including beginners and more experienced people. Lorna Cameron noted that Pino was touched by a spirit which preached that *"everyone who has a heart can paint"*.

Thea Dukic had joined Pino's art classes in the 1970s and remembered him fondly: "He was a heavy smoker and I think his wife didn't want him to smoke. He had a bad chest because of it; he got bronchitis. He would put cough mixture in his cigarettes so if he smoked it would help his chest. I thought that was funny. He was very dedicated. He wanted to put a little bit of art into St Albans because we didn't have anything really for years. That was the first community art class we had there."

The classes would sometimes paint images of local scenes such as a church, park or streetscape, and some of Pino's contributions to this genre have been retained by the club. The class arranged one outdoor session per month and would use the mini-bus for these excursions. They held an annual exhibition in the club and exhibited their work in other western suburb shows such as the Hunt Club Community Centre in Deer Park.

However, Pino's first love was sculpture which required more intricate crafting than was possible in his general classes, so he pursued this aspect from his home workshop. He had aspired to make a living from his artistic talents rather than through factory work,

but recognised that "his lack of English language combined with the necessity to earn a living for his family for the fact that he could not devote as much time as he wished to his talent." He received good publicity in the local press and, surprisingly, through the State Savings Bank of Victoria during the 1970s. He later also became an art tutor at other local venues in Sunshine and Keilor, so perhaps his aspirations of earning recognition through art were gradually being realised.



A local newspaper once referred to him as the local Salvadore Dali, because of his distinctive appearance and artistic innovations which were "as creative as a Picasso or a Cezanne". Pino tried to launch surrealism in Williamstown, but said "the experiment was 'floppy' because the public found it difficult to relate to the subtle combinations of silly things and interesting things that were presented in an exhibition format."

He was adept in drawing and painting, but his most creative talents were evident in his much beloved sculptures, the elongated, whimsical, cement sculptures that stood out in his St Albans and other regional exhibitions. The statues was constructed around steel framework, padded out with a fibreglass mixture and then sculpted and coated in a bronze finish. One local pundit said that Calati's elongated figures were reminiscent of Ciacometti's sculptures.



His bank exhibitions included Seddon (1975) and Footscray (1979). The displays would sometimes switch between bank branches after a fortnight. Press coverage in local newspapers helped generate publicity for the artist, the bank, and the cause they were promoting.



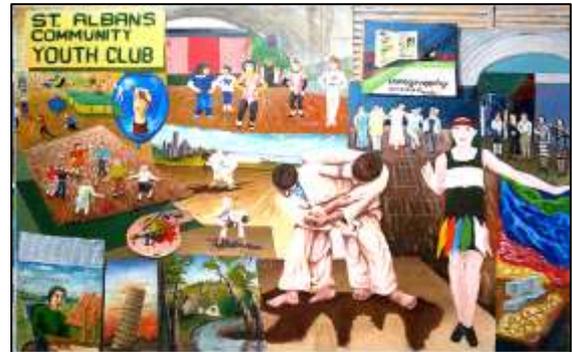
In 1979 the Rotary Club of Essendon commissioned him for a sculptural tribute on the theme "Reach Out". The sculpture "represents a lean, restless warrior reaching out to a world encompassed by the Rotary Wheel." The presentation was made at a luncheon attended by 600 Rotarians and guests, so Pino had an appreciative audience. That year he also had two entries in the Royal Melbourne Show Art Competition. Some of his later works that were submitted to art auctions were classified as "Fab Modern".



One of the Tin Shed's art group's earliest joint projects was to paint a mural depicting the history of the club. In 1986, as part of Victoria's 150th anniversary celebrations, Pino's art team created a four-part mural displayed in the St Albans Library section of the Public Hall, depicting events and people in the 165-year history of St Albans district, beginning with the aborigines, the first white settlers, the farms, the paddocks, the original

schoolhouse, the early railway station and the first migrants after World War Two.

It was intended that the mural be later transferred to the new library building, but unfortunately these items went missing.



Tin Shed artwork by unknown artist



Tin Shed artwork by Ray Sammut

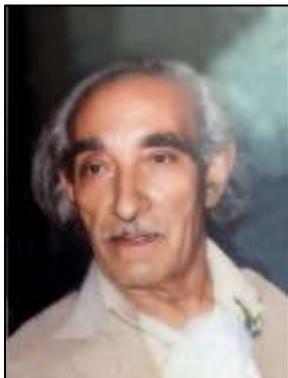
In 1986 the art class painted a mural on the east wall of the building depicting the skyline surrounding St Albans from a point at Green Gully where one can see the You Yangs, Tullamarine, Mount Macedon, and the City, as well as the clouds, the sky, and the Brimbank Park. Pino was now aged 70 and still going strong, artistically speaking.

In the 1980s the club was promoting its art to a broad audience: "The age limit is 90 years, for we cater for all young people up to that age. This is a particularly appealing pastime for retired people. It is simple to join the class. On the first day you will be supplied with adequate material for the first lesson, and Pino will diagnose and advise on your choice of artistic media so that your creative urges are fulfilled."

People with disability were also encouraged to join, and arrangements made to transport participants from the Multiple Sclerosis Society and spina bifida patients to attend sessions. Some of the art themes from this period can be seen in the work of Jack Freeland depicting birdlife, flowers, and bucolic rural themes.

Pino Calati passed way in 1993 at the age of 77 years. Lorna Cameron wrote a

dedication about him in the club's Annual Report: "Sadly but proudly we dedicate this space to a man who gave many their beginnings in expressing themselves through art. Pino Calati, our dear friend and a tutor at the Centre for more than 20 years, died in the last week of November after a short illness. We shall forever miss his gentle humour, his encouragement ... and his offer of half his lunch. We shall remember that he was never late, never imposed himself on anyone, never complained about the arrangements, never found blame for mistakes. He made us all feel he liked us. Pino gave us hope!"

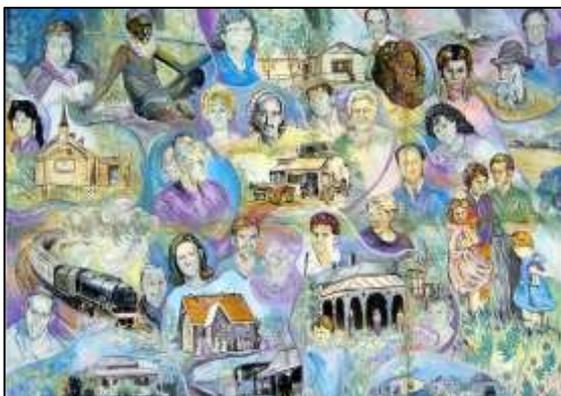


Though he has passed away, Pino has left reminders for us. He is listed in at least two stand-ard biographical art references – Max Germaine's "*Artists and Galleries of Australia*", and the "*Australia Prints + Printmaking*" list that is based on the print

collection of the National Gallery of Australia, which notes he was an Artist (painter) and Sculptor with works in Italy and Australia.

The Tin Shed's mural "Visions of St Albans" was Thea Dukic's major work for the club. In 1996 the Tin Shed received a George Seelaf Award for the Outdoor Arts Recreation Project which was devised by Sylvia Pawlish, Nellie Pacciocca and Thea Dukic of a banner, mural and sculpture and weathervane.

Thea was delegated the task of completing the mural, which depicts the history of St Albans through its people, the theme that Pino and his art class had proposed a decade earlier. Thea has included Pino's portrait as one of the central images.



Visions of St Albans Mural by Thea Dukic



Edenhope home of Agnes & James Stevens



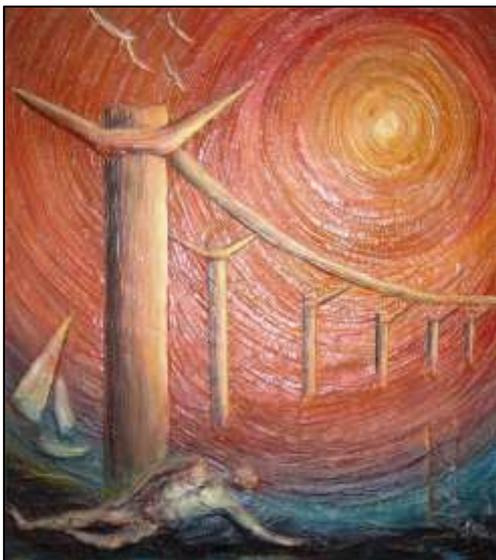
St Albans bungalow of the 1950s



St Albans Railway Reserve



Roadside Drain - Brimbank City collection



Inspired by the collapse of Westgate Bridge



The Ghosts of Hume & Hovell by Pino Calati



Old Presbyterian Church by Pino Calati