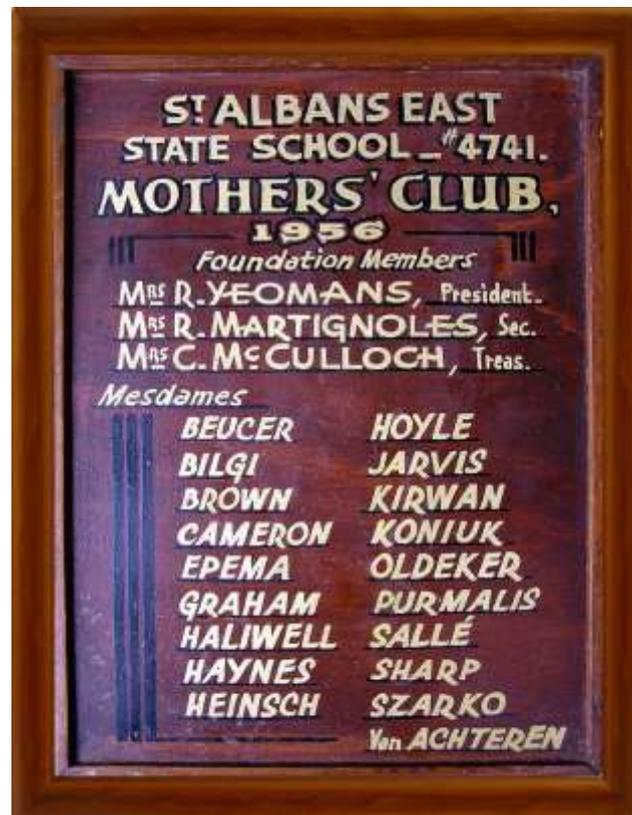


THE FOUNDATION MEMBERS OF ST ALBANS EAST STATE SCHOOL MOTHERS' CLUB 1956



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January 2026

ISBN

Published by

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historyofstalbens.com
5 Harding Street
Ascot Vale Victoria 3032

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Acknowledgements

Many thanks to all the people who supplied information and images including Nick Szwed (class photos), Jutta Szwed (Irene Heymig), Sylvia Blumel (Sylvia Kopmann class photos), Martin Martignoles (Phyllis Martignoles), Kellie (Keith and Bess Haynes), and Elvia Connell (Jacqueline and William Hoyle). Other images sourced through National Australia Archives and Ancestry.com.

Front cover

Honour Board for the St Albans East State School Mothers' Club from the St Albans East School archives.

INTRODUCTION

The establishment of St Albans East State School in 1956 coincided with one of the most significant periods of social change in local history. Postwar migration, rapid suburban growth, and the arrival of refugees, displaced persons, and sponsored families from across Europe transformed what had once been a village set amidst grazing paddocks into a diverse and vibrant community. In 1950 St Albans had a population of about 850, mostly of Anglo background. By 1956 the population was over 5,500, mostly of non-Anglo background. At the heart of this transformation in East St Albans was the school – and, crucially, the women who supported the integration of their children into the mainstream community. The Foundation Members of the St Albans East State School Mothers' Club were a committee of 22 women – some stayed briefly, others became community leaders for more than 50 years. Unfortunately, the histories of five members have not been discovered: Mesdames Beucer, Bilgi, Graham, Jarvis, and Kirwan.

This collection of profiles documents the backgrounds of most of the founding members of the Mothers' Club, formed in 1956 under the leadership of the school's first Head Teacher, Joseph Noel Pruden. These women – including newly-arrived migrants and longer-established Australians – brought with them a remarkable range of experiences shaped by war, displacement, hard work, and resilience. Through fundraising, running the tuck shop, supporting classrooms, and building social connections, they created a vital bridge between home, school, and the wider community.

What follows is not simply a list of names, but an acknowledgement of lives lived across continents and cultures, woven together in one neighbourhood. Individually, these biographies tell stories of migration, service, loss, and perseverance. Collectively, they reveal how ordinary women, often working quietly and without recognition, helped lay the foundations of a multicultural suburb and a thriving school community.

These stories remind us that communities are not built by institutions alone, but by the everyday efforts of people who give their time, skills, and care to others. The women of the Mothers' Club may not have sought public recognition, yet their contribution endures in the school they supported, the children they nurtured, and the sense of belonging they helped create. Preserving their stories ensures that their quiet leadership and shared commitment are not forgotten, and that future generations understand how much of today's community rests on the dedication of those who came before.

As we celebrate the school's 70th anniversary in 2026, these stories invite us to reflect on the strong foundations laid by the families who helped build St Albans East State School from its earliest days. The women of the Mothers' Club gave their time, energy and care to ensure the school was not only a place of learning, but a place of belonging. Their legacy lives on in the spirit of community, inclusion and shared responsibility that continues to define the school today. Honouring their contributions reminds us that each generation plays a role in shaping the school's story, just as future students and families will carry it forward.

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YEOMANS Myrtle May



Myrtle May Hills was born in Carlton in 1912; her ancestry goes back to 1703 in Huntingdonshire England. Her family came to Victoria through Mr Alfred Charles Hills who arrived pre-1860 and wed Sarah Elizabeth Mallett in Chewton, Victoria. One granddaughter was Lilian

Violet Hills, whose daughter Myrtle May Hills was born in 1912 in Carlton, and worked as a knitter. Myrtle May Hills married Richard Yeomans in 1938.

Richard William Yeomans was born in 1914. He traces his forebears to 1571 in Derbyshire, England. His family came to Port Phillip Bay in 1852 through William Richard Yeomans, whose son, also Richard William Yeomans, was the father of the St Albans' resident Richard William Yeomans. Myrtle and Richard raised four children: Robert William, Pamela, Valerie Fay, and Neil.

The Yeomans came to St Albans in the early to mid-1940s and moved into one of the Coleman houses in Oberon Avenue, part of the Pinnacle Estate that was developed by Walmer Ewart Coleman from the 1920s.

Myrtle Yeoman's role in St Albans is not well documented, though she was occasionally mentioned as raising funds through running stalls and baking cakes. She was a Foundation Member and President of the St Albans East State School Mothers' Club in 1956 and was honoured by being made a life member. She was also a member of Sunshine Technical School Parents' Association for over a decade.

Richard Yeoman's received excellent coverage in the local press because of his involvement with Keilor Council through the St Albans Progress Association and his formative work to establish the first local kindergarten.

Richard had been on the old State School Committee and was Chairman of the St Albans East State School Committee for nine years starting in 1956. He retired from the St Albans East committee when his youngest son Neil transferred to Sunshine Technical School.

The Yeomans moved to Ridley Street, Albion, by 1963 and were there at least a decade. By 1977 Myrtle and Richard Yeomans were at Bulltown Road in Ballan, and Richard was once again working as a sign writer.

Richard Yeomans died in 1987 aged 73.

Myrtle May Yeomans nee Hills died in Bacchus Marsh in 1991 at age 79 years, and was buried at Preston General Cemetery.

MARTIGNOLES Phyllis May



Phyllis May Worthington was born in 1908 in Cheshire, UK, to John Morton Worthington and Olive Dewhurst Blacklidge. The Worthington ancestry goes back to 1856 in Lancashire in England. The Blacklidge ancestry goes back to 1800 in Lancashire in England. Phyllis May Worthington

married Robert Victor Martignoles in 1933. His parents were Alec Martignoles and Mary Ann Nicholson who were from Plimco, London.

Phyllis and Robert Martignoles came to Australia under the United Kingdom and Australian Government Agreement and arrived in Melbourne in 1955. Their accompanying children were Robert James and Alec Michael.

The family settled in McArthur Avenue St Albans. Their youngest son, known as Michael, started at the old State School in 1955 and moved to the new East School in 1956:

"Going to this school the day it first opened was a great experience for me. I had just arrived from England in 1955 when the new school was just starting up. We were at St Albans State School in West Esplanade and we all walked down to the new school, bright clean and excitingly new. The Head Teacher I remember was Mr Pruden ... The Lady Senior Teacher was Mrs Bartholomew, feared by most girls at the time. I did up to grade 6 then went to St Albans High in 1961. I left there in 1963 to work in the Post Office at St Albans, then I joined the Air Force for 23 years. I got to the rank of Warrant Officer, left the RAAF and obtained qualifications in the Medical field as a Hearing Specialist. I am now retired at age 76 and living in Tasmania. I will never forget the school and the Fife and Drum Band that I enjoyed playing in. Thanks for the opportunity to achieve my goals."

Phyllis May Martignoles was elected Secretary as a Foundation Member of the St Albans East State School Mothers' Club in 1956. She probably volunteered in the tuck shop but no details have been recorded.

In 1963 the family was living in McArthur Avenue, St Albans. Robert Martignoles was working as a factory hand and Phyllis was occupied in home duties.

In 1972 Robert and Phyllis were living in Chelsea. In 1977 they may have retired to Essendon. Robert Victor Martignoles died in 1986 at age 78. Phyllis May Martignoles nee Worthington died in 1988 at age 80.

MCCULLOCH Emily Alice



Emily Alice Goss was born in Bendigo in 1917 – her parents were Arthur George Egbert Goss and Isabelle Mary Milne. The Goss ancestry goes back to 1824 in Devonshire, England. The Milne ancestry goes back to 1806 in Scotland.

Emily Goss married Clifford George McCulloch in 1940. He was born in Maldon in 1917 to William Paul McCulloch and Ellen Rachael Woodman. The McCulloch ancestry goes back to 1750 in Kincardine, Perth, Scotland. The Woodman ancestry goes back to 1823 in Zeal Monachorum, Devon, England.

Emily and Clifford initially settled at Footscray about 1942 and Clifford worked at Wiltshire Files. The family were living in Vincent Avenue St Albans between 1954 and 1980. Emily and Clifford's children included Lorraine, Cliff, Margaret, Helen, and Robin.

Emily was Treasurer and a Foundation Member of the St Albans East School Mothers' Club from 1956 and was also very active at the St Albans Community Youth Club. Emily supervised many debutante balls in the club's early years. Clifford and Emily McCulloch were made life members of the club because of their dedication to its establishment in the inaugural years. Lorna Cameron recalled:

"Em and Cliff McCulloch were very active during this time and ran a dance every Saturday night for many years, supported by many of the above couples. They were a popular and talented couple who introduced calisthenics, 50/50 dancing, choir, softball, and concerts. They drew in a lot of support."



Clifford was supervising the table tennis sessions at the youth club until Kon Haumann took over in the late 1950s. Cliff was also an elder of the Presbyterian church in the 1950s, the others included John Stevens, Fonga Elzinga, and Clem Buckingham. Cliff

later worked as the manager of the electrical department with the Stevens family when they had a store in Main Road East.

Clifford George McCulloch died in 1991 at age 73. Emily Alice McCulloch nee Goss died in Sunshine in 2010 at age 93.

BROWN Kathleen Mary Coral



Deloraine, Tasmania.

Kathleen Mary Coral Somers was born in 1928 to Arthur Roy Somers and Gwendoline Alice Thow. The Somers ancestry goes back to John Emanuel Somers in 1853 in Hobart North, Tasmania. The Thow ancestry goes back to William Thow in 1872 in



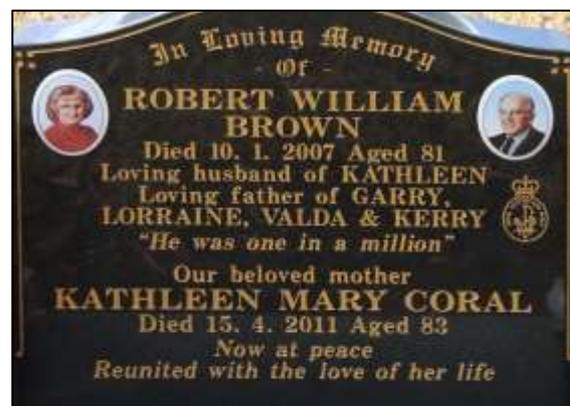
1791 in St Laurence, Gloucestershire, England. The Elsley heritage goes back to 1822 in Marylebone, London, England.

Robert Brown was a glass blower who served with the Royal Australian Naval Reserve as Stoker in the 1940s. In 1949 Robert and Kathleen were living in Newmarket, Victoria, and Robert was still with the RAN. In 1954 they were in Perry Street, St Albans.

Kathleen and Robert had four children: Garry, Lorraine, Valda, and Kerry. The family established early connections with St Albans East State School; Robert was on the School Committee and Kathleen was with the School Mothers' Club from the start in 1956.

Robert William Brown died at St Albans in 2007 at age 79 and was buried at Fawkner.

Kathleen Mary Brown nee Somers died in 2011 at age 83 and was buried at Fawkner.



CAMERON Lorna Frances



Lorna Frances Yates was born in Korumburra in 1920 and grew up on a soldier settlement farm in Poowong, Gippsland. Her father was Leslie Yates who was from Kew in Melbourne and had served overseas during WW1. Her mother was Lillian Mabel Phillips who was

from Beechworth and became a teacher. Lillian and Leslie married in 1916 and raised four children: Lorna, Muriel, Ronald, and Phillip. The family moved to Preston in the 1930s. Lorna attended MacRobertson Girls High School and also became a teacher for a while.

Lorna Frances Yates married Albert Jack Cameron in 1945. He was from New South Wales and had enlisted in the RAAF during WW2. They settled in a St Albans' bungalow in 1949 and soon became involved in community life, especially through the St Albans Community Youth Club. Lorna joined the St Albans East Mothers' Club:

"1956 was a hectic year as several new primary schools and St Albans High School were built. Jack (my husband) and I were active in raising money for the schools, especially the East Primary. I was able to find the grounds for the east school and the high school because there were lots of empty paddocks near my house."

She also joined the inaugural Parents and Friends Association of the St Albans High School in 1956 and remained connected with the school for many years. During the early 1960s she was employed there as librarian.

Jack Cameron died in a car accident in 1962, leaving Lorna a widow with five children to support: Les, Garry, Elaine, Jean and Roy.

Lorna continued with her community work. She was on the vestry of St Alban The Martyr Church and the Kindergarten committee. Her biggest contribution to the neighbourhood was through her leadership at the St Albans Community Youth Club. The Club was (and still is) based in the Nissen army hut on Errington Reserve, which gave it the affectionate name of The Tin Shed. During the 1970s the Club became a neighbourhood house supported by many volunteers. It started targeting a broader constituency, including isolated women through discussion groups, play groups, art and craft sessions, and English language classes. Lorna continued as the main leader until she retired in 2004 after more than 50 years of service.

Lorna Frances Cameron nee Yates died peacefully at home in 2014 aged 94.

EPEMA Johanna

Johanna Henstra was born in 1915 in Groningen, Netherlands to Anne (Jake) Henstra and Anna Janstra. Jake's ancestry goes back to 1885 in Dantumadeel, Friesland, Netherland. Anna's earlier heritage is unknown.

Johanna Henstra married Jilt Epema in Leeuwarden in 1937. He was born in 1915 to Bauke Epema and Dooitske Jilts de Jong. Bauke's ancestry goes back to 1751 in Idaarderadeel, Friesland, Nederland. Dooitske's ancestry goes back to 1819 Dantumadeel, Friesland, Netherlands.

Johanna and Jilt Epema emigrated in 1955 under the Australian Netherlands Migration Agreement. Their children include Anna, Jacob (Jake), Dooitske (Dora), Christina, Yvonne, and Bauke (aka Bouke or Bourke). They must have moved to St Albans pretty quickly as in 1956 Johanna was on the St Albans East School's Mothers' Club. They are another family about whom very little is recorded in local history.

Steve Kozlowski remembers the family because they were neighbours at the eastern end of St Albans, at 30 Avondale Avenue:

"Another Dutch family was Epema.. Their son loved horses. They later moved to Braybrook. We went to visit her years later and she looked at me and said 'You're the one I used to chase with a broom.' She was laughing her head off. We sat and talked for hours."

The late Alie Missen wrote that Jilt and Johanna were share farmers around St Albans:

"On the southeast side of Stensons Road was an 8-acre property; part Lot 4 owned by Mr and Mrs Charles Stenson, who had established the very first vineyard in the municipality. Mr Stenson also owned Lot 3 consisting of 19 acres - this allotment abutted the quarry. ... At one stage, the farm property was share farmed by Bill Epema, originally from The Netherlands."

The Epemas later established the pet shop on Main Road East, a few doors east from Unger's newsagency.

Jilt Epema died at Footscray in 1985 at age 70.

Johanna Epema Nee Henstra died in 1999 aged 84 and was buried at Altona Memorial Park.

Little is recorded about their children. Jacob married Renata Stevens, moved to Bendigo and became known as 'Jake The Painter'; he died in 2014 and was buried at Eaglehawk. Yvonne was in Sunbury in the late 1970s working as a cashier. Bauke married Regina Wilhelmina Vanveen in 1959 and moved to Werribee.

HALLIWELL Doris Eileen

Doris Eileen Churchman was born in the United Kingdom in 1922; her family history is unknown. She married William Halliwell who was born in the United Kingdom in 1921; his family history is unknown. They married in the early 1940s and had two children. Their daughter Lesley Anne Tasia was born in 1945, and their son Laurence Garton was born in 1947.

The family emigrated to Australia in 1954 under the Assisted Passage Migration Scheme, departing on the ship Arcadia. Their initial settlement in Victoria has not been traced.

They had probably arrived in St Albans by 1956 as Doris Halliwell was most likely on the first mothers' group at St Albans East State School in that year. They were living in Ivanhoe Avenue and William was working as a brick layer. They are another family about whom little is known in local history.



Undoubtedly Lesley and Laurence would have attended the East St Albans State School. Lesley Anne started at St Albans High School in 1958 and she was a Form Representative for Class 1E. In 1959 she was in 2G and had achieved some more visibility by writing an

article for the Alba annual school magazine. Her class colleagues included Glenda Barlow and Hannelore Henske.

The Halliwell family were still in their Ivanhoe Avenue home in 1970, but had moved out by 1974 according to the Sands and McDougall street directory. Their whereabouts and history after this time has not been discovered.



HAYNES Bess



Bessie "Bess" Mellords was born in 1925 in Oakleigh Victoria to Bessie Regina Arnold and John Segleigh Mellords. The Arnold ancestry goes back to 1776 in Oxfordshire, England. The Mellords ancestry goes back to about 1800 in Yorkshire England; Joseph Mellords

emigrated in 1890 and married Annie Millar Moller – they were Bessie's grandparents.

Bessie Mellords married Keith Edward Haynes in 1946. The Haynes' local heritage goes back to Geelong in the 1870s and John Edward Haynes who married Agatha Wharlon. Their son George Wharlon Haynes married Mary De Wand and their son was Keith Edward Haynes, born in 1925.

Bess and Keith raised six children: Ray, Philip, Graham, Bronwyn, Elizabeth, and Geoff. The family came to St Albans about 1953. Their home was in Main Road East near where the High School was built in 1957.

Bess Haynes was one of the inaugural members of the St Albans East State School Mothers' Club and was active with the St Albans Community Youth Club from its infancy in the early 1950s. At one stage when the youth club hall was used as a child-minding centre, Bess was one of the organisers. She was also a committee member of the High School's Parents and Friends Association in the 1960s.



Keith and Bess Haynes worked at St Albans High School from 1957 as cleaners and maintaining the facilities; Keith was leading hand cleaner for over 20 years. His contribution to the school included care of the grounds and providing some sport coaching, especially

in cricket. Bess and Keith held many a pie night at their home while he was helping to look after the Youth Club's footy team.

Keith Edward Haynes died in 1979 at the young age of 54, and Bess took over as leader of the High School's cleaning team.

Bessie "Bess" Haynes nee Mellords died in 1992 at age 65.

HEINSCH Irene Margarete Erna



Irene Margarete Erna Kolle was born in Hannover, Germany, in 1930; her family background is unknown. In the late 1940s she had married Max Hensch and they had two daughters: Angelika was born in 1950, and Cornelia was born in 1954.



Max Anton Heinsch was born in 1928 in Strehlen, Silesia, which was part of the Eastern Prussian provinces of Germany that later became part of Poland. His parents were Anton Heinsch of Oberstein Silesia and Paula Werft of Plottnitz Kreis Nimptsch, Schlesien.

The family were classified as displaced persons and emigrated in 1955 under the Australian German Assisted Passage Scheme. Their early settlement history in Melbourne has not been found but they were probably in Harmon Avenue, St Albans, in 1956, because the St Albans East State School Mothers' Club has a "Mesdame Heinsch" listed for their inaugural year. Both Angelika and Cornelia would have attended the school.

Max and Irene Heinsch obtained their naturalisation certificates in 1961, which confirmed their address being 48 Harmon Avenue in east St Albans. Max worked as a carpenter and may have been associated with several other Dutch builders in the area.

Cornelia Heinsch attended St Albans High School from 1967 and contributed several poems to the 1968/69 school magazine. Irene Heinsch also gave birth to a son, Falkner Richard "Rick" Anton. Apart from these items, the children's histories are unknown.

Irene Margarete Erna Heinsch nee Kolle died in 2010 at age 80, and a funeral service for her was held in the Chapel of Repose, Altona Memorial Park.

Max Anton Heinsch died in 2010 at age 89, and a funeral service for him was held in the Chapel of Repose, Altona Memorial Park:

Heinsch – Max Anton. Passed away peacefully at Sunshine Hospital, aged 89. Adored husband of Irene (dec.). Loved father of Rick and Trish, Angelika and Cornelia. Reunited with the other half of your heart.

HOYLE Jacqueline Elsie



Jacqueline Elsie Sykes was born in 1926 in Blackpool, Lancashire, England, to Percy Sykes and Hilda Roberts. The Sykes heritage goes back to 1900 in County Lancaster. The Roberts ancestry goes back to 1797 in Bagillt, Flintshire, Wales. In 1945 Jacqueline Elsie Sykes married William Edward Hoyle in Blackpool, Lancashire. William Hoyle was born in 1921 in Fylde, Lancashire, England, to George Young Hoyle and Mary Annie Ford. The Hoyle ancestry goes back to 1849 in Ashton, Lancashire, England. The Ford ancestry goes back to 1857 in Tipton, Staffordshire, England.



Jacqueline and William Hoyle had three daughters: Christine Edwina, Jacqueline Elvia, and Avril Elizabeth. The family emigrated in 1954 under the Assisted Passage Migration Scheme.

The family settled in St Albans by 1956. William worked at the Altona Mobil oil refinery and rode his bike to work. Two older daughters attended St Albans East State School and Jacqueline was on the Mothers' Club. Jacqueline gave birth to three Aussie sons: Bill, Robert and Michael. The family did not stay long in St Albans. In 1958 they were in Heidelberg West and William was working as a spray painter.

The family moved to Elwood in the early 1960s. William worked for GMH Fisherman's Bend and died in 1969 in an accident on way to work. He was 47 and was buried at Springvale. Jacqueline Elsie Hoyle nee Sykes died in 1998 at age 72 and was also buried at the Springvale Botanical Cemetery:

"Hoyle - Jacqueline Elsie, passed away peacefully on Oct. 22, after a long hard fought battle. Much loved and loving wife of Bill (dec.). Loving friend to her devoted companion and carer, Graham. Adored mother of Christine, Elvia, Avril, Bill, Robert and Michael. Special Mum to Ian, Harold, Geoff, Caron and Alida. Loving Nanna and friend to Andrew, Amanda and Caroline, Vanessa and Anthony, David, Peter and Scott, Vivian, Geoff, John and Jamie. Proud Great Nanna of Jamie-Lee (dec.), Cory, Samantha, Tayla, Lachlan and baby Aidan."

Jacqueline Elvia Hoyle married Harold Connell in 1964 and settled in Greensborough.

Christina Hoyle wed Ian Hauser in 1969 and had two children, Vanessa and Anthony. Christina died in Melbourne in 2016 at age 71.

KONIUK Helena



Helena Koniuk was born in 1925 in Kuldiga Latvia. Her husband Grigory Koniuk was a car mechanic who was born in 1921 in Dubno in the Ukraine which became part of Poland. Their daughter Nadija was born in 1949 in Hamburg, Germany. In 1950 they were displaced persons housed in Germany who were listed as being of Polish-Ukrainian background and accepted for migration to Australia.



The family arrived in Victoria in 1950 on the Fairsea IV. Grigory was sent to work for the SEC at Thomastown. Helena and Nadija were sent to the Department of Immigration Holding Centre based in Mildura. Grigory soon became known as Gregory. He was a car mechanic in Poland but in Australia his main employment was as a painter.

Helena may have been the *Mesdame Koniuk* on the Mothers' Club in 1956 though it has not been confirmed when they came to St Albans. However, they were the only Koniuk family on the St Albans electoral roll in the 1960s. They were living in William Street in St Albans when they obtained their naturalisation certificates in 1961 and they were still there in the 1980s. They had two daughters, Nadija (Nadia) and Vera, both of whom attended the St Albans East school.

Nadia Koniuk started at St Albans High School in 1962 and graduated in 1967 – she contributed to the school magazines POE and Alba. Nadia married Robert Szuhan and they settled in Manor Lakes. She later worked as a teacher's aide at the St Albans East School.

Vera Koniuk worked as a machinist, married Stewart, and they might have settled in Tarneit. Their daughter Lara became a long-serving teacher in Wyndham Vale.

Gregory Koniuk died in 2002 at age 81 and was buried at Altona Memorial Park:

Treasured father of Nadia and Robert, Vera and Stewart. Loving grandfather of Gregory and Denise, Lara and Joshua. Doting great-grand father of Natalie, Mathew and Tylah.

In her later years, Helena Koniuk was living in Tarneit before moving to Glendale Aged Care. Helena died in 2023 at age 98 and was buried at Altona Memorial Park.

OLDAKER Josephine

Josephine Oldaker was born about 1922 in England, possibly in the London area, but her ancestry has not been traced. She married Thomas Oldaker about 1945. He was born in 1913 to May Shaffer and Henry Oldaker who were from London. Thomas and Josephine had one son, Thomas John, born in 1946. In 1949 Josephine and Thomas were in Lambeth and by 1951 they had moved to Stepney.

Josephine, Thomas and Thomas junior emigrated to Australia about 1951 under the UK-Australia Assisted Passage Migration Scheme. Their initial settlement in Victoria is unknown, but they would have been housed in one of the migrant settlement centres. Thomas was an engineer so his skills were probably in demand in the Melbourne-based industries.

The family moved to Manfred Avenue St Albans by 1954. It was an exotic little area with Dutch, Russian, Ukrainian, Polish, English, and German-born residents.

Thomas John, known as Johnny, would have started at the old St Albans State School in West Esplanade, before transferring to the new St Albans East State School that started in 1956 and was a lot closer to their home. His transfer to the new school was probably the incentive for Josephine Oldaker to join the inaugural St Albans East Mothers' Club when it was formed in 1956. It is not known if she had time to join other local organisations – in the 1960s she was employed as a process worker with the Railways Department in their electrical workshops in Spencer Street, Melbourne.

Steven Kozlowski was a neighbour in St Albans and remembers the family:

"Johnny Oldaker ... was of British background. We called him Turk because of his swarthy complexion ... his parents were Josephine and Thomas. ... The mother was a very jovial person but it was bit hard to understand her at times because in England they also had different dialects and hers was a broad accent. That's where we learnt how to drive a car because Turk's father bought a little Morris Minor. Sometimes when the father was at work we would take the car out for a spin. Sometimes Mr Oldaker would take us for a run in the car and we would watch how he drove. So we were self-taught. When he wasn't home we would take the car and practice by driving around the block."

The late 1960s was a difficult time for the family. Josephine lost her job with the railways and her husband Thomas died in 1967 at age 53; he was buried at Altona Memorial Park.

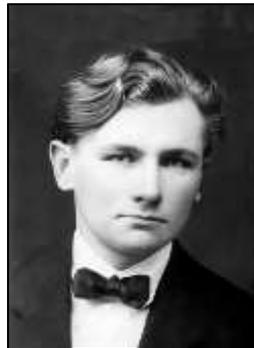
Josephine Oldaker and her son returned to England in the early 1970s. It appears that she died in Leicester in 1981 at age 56. Both husband and wife had died relatively young.

PURMALIS Anna



Anna-Klotilde Tisons was born in 1910 in Virtsu, Laane County, Estonia, to Janis and Klotilde Tisons. She became a teacher and a nurse. She had emigrated to Australia in 1948 and married Argods Purmalis in Victoria in 1950. They had one son, Argods

Purmalis junior, born in 1950.



Argods Purmalis snr was born in 1908 to Christos and Emilia Purmalis. He was a Latvian national who worked as a farmer and driver. He had married and had three children – it is not known why the family separation had occurred. He emigrated to Victoria in 1948 and

was housed at the Bonegilla holding centre before being sent to work at the Department of Army at Diggers Rest, Victoria. His later work was at Rosella Foods Australia in Richmond (1948/49). Between 1951 and 1973 he was working as a carpenter for the Melbourne Harbour Trust in Port Melbourne.

Anna and Argods settled in 63 Williams Street, east St Albans. Anna was on the East State School Mothers' Club in 1956, which probably meant she also helped out at the school canteen and with other fundraising events. Argods junior "Argie" had started school that year. He later attended the Footscray Technical College and obtained an Associate Diploma of Electrical and Electronics in 1978. He worked for Telstra for many years and became a principal technical officer. He established his own home in Walmer Avenue.

Anna and Argods Purmalis received their naturalisation certificates in 1959, so they were committed to making Australia home. The Latvian community in St Albans was very small, but there was the Peace Lutheran Church in West Esplanade which provided scope for some social interaction.

In 1983 at age 75, Argods Purmalis died of a heart attack at St Albans, opposite the Telephone Exchange in Victoria Crescent. He was buried in the Lutheran section at Fawkner Memorial Park.

Anna Purmalis nee Tisons died in 1992 at age 81 and was buried at Fawkner in the Lutheran section.

SALLÉ Christina Maria Wilhelmina



Christina Maria Wilhelmina nee Greven was born in 1922 in the Netherlands. Unfortunately her family background has not been traced. In 1947 at age 25 she married Jacobus Antonius Sallé at Amsterdam, Noord-Holland, in the Netherlands.



Jacobus Antonius Sallé was born in Amsterdam, Noord-Holland, Nederland, in 1923 to Johannes Jacobus Fredricus Sallé and Johanna Maria Antonia van Rijn. The Sallé ancestry goes back to 1853 in Amsterdam, Noord-Holland, Nederland. The van Rijn ancestry is unknown.

Christina and Jacobus Salle emigrated in 1952 under the Netherlands Australian Migration Agreement. Their accompanying children were Jacobus Johannes (1947) and Maria (1950). They proceeded to Melbourne destined for the Williamstown hostel pending employment. Jacobus also spent some time at the Maribyrnong Hostel pending employment.

The family may have moved St Albans by 1954, though they left few footprints. During 1954 "Mary Salle" was advertising her dressmaking business in Millawa Avenue (near Station Avenue) through the Sunshine Advocate. The East State School Mothers' Club has a "Mesdame Sallé" listed as a member in 1956. The Sands & McDougalls directory for 1960 listed "J A Salle" at 47 Millawa Avenue St Albans (near Station Avenue).

The family appears to have stayed less than a decade in St Albans, as in 1965 they were no longer at their Millawa Avenue home. It is not known what happened to them – no trace has been found of any of them in local media or electoral rolls.



SHARP Isobel Winifred



Isobel Winifred Sharrock was born in Hamilton in 1919. Her parents were Joseph John Sharrock and Eleanor Mary Cottier. The Sharrock heritage goes back to 1841 in Birall, Sussex, England. The Cottier heritage goes back to 1819 in Glenfaba, Isle of Man,

via Ohio, USA. Joseph enlisted in 1915 in the AIF and served overseas where he was wounded. He was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal. Joseph and Eleanor married in 1918 and Isobel may have been their only child. Joseph enlisted again in 1940 in the Reserves and was discharged in 1945.

In 1942 at age 24 Isobel Sharrock was living in Moonee Ponds and was employed as a process worker. She enlisted in 1944 and served with AWAS (Australian Women's Army Service) Army Citizens Military Forces. She was discharged in 1945 as being medically unfit.



Isobel Sharrock married James Sharp in 1945. He was born in Scotland 1906 to Thomas and Georgina Sharp. In the 1940s he was a truck driver with his parents at Vine Street in Moonee Ponds. He enlisted in 1940 and served as a driver with 2/6 Australian Supply Company in the

Middle East, New Guinea and Borneo. He was discharged in 1945.

Isobel and James raised two sons: Ian James and Andrew Joseph. In 1946 the family was living in Grosvenor Street, Maribyrnong. They moved to St Albans in the 1950s and settled in Station Avenue.

Isobel Sharp became a supporter of the scouts in St Albans, presumably because her sons were involved. The local group had reformed in 1955 and Isobel was an early president of the club which flourished for almost 20 years. It was based on Errington Reserve. It was well supported by the women of the district and leaders included Jean Pringle, Oriel Jeffrey, Magdalena Krois, Betty Bradley, Pat Lee, Thelma Nuske, Doreen Thorpe, Fran Glidden, Mary Thurgood, Estelle Mackenzie, Beryl Hill, Elaine Young, and Mrs Baker.

James Sharp died in 1977 at age 77.

Isobel Winifred Sharp nee Sharrock may have died in 1978.

SZARKO Maria



Ottomarie "Maria" Szarko was born in 1928 in Erfurt Germany and worked as a domestic. She married Wasyl Szarko, who was born in 1924 in the Polish-Ukrainian village of Turynka; he was a farmer. They had a son Pyotr (Peter) who was born in Wentorf (Hamburg) Germany in 1948. They were classified as Ukrainian nationals.



The family became displaced persons living in Germany after the war and were accepted for migration to Australia. They arrived in 1950 per Langfitt III and might have been sent to Bonegilla. Wasyl was sent to work for the State Rivers and Water

Supply Commission in Melbourne.

Maria and Peter were destined for the Department of Immigration Holding Centre in Cowra, New South Wales. Their daughter Helga was born in Australia but the details have not been found.

The Szarko family moved to St Albans by the mid-1950s. They built their home in Biggs Street opposite Oberon Avenue, and became naturalized citizens in 1959. Wasyl was working as a trades assistant. Maria was a friend of Helena Koniuk and also joined the East School Mothers' Club in 1956.



Peter Szarko attended the East State School, and the nearby High School in 1961. In 1964 at age 16 he signed up for 12 years' service with the Australian Navy and was with HMAS Yarra (destroyer escort) during the 1970s. After finishing with the Navy he seems to have settled in New

South Wales. His family were still in their St Albans home in the 1960s, but by the late 1970s Maria Szarko is no longer listed in the electoral roll for that address.

Helga Szarko moved to Queensland and married there in the 1980s.

Wasyl Szarko died in Queensland in 2011 and was buried at Mudgeeraba Cemetery on the Gold Coast.

VAN ACHTEREN Maria Elizabeth

Maria Elizabeth Wolterbeek was born in 1927 in Rotterdam, Zuid-Holland, Netherlands to Simon Wolterbeek and Barbara Elizabeth Ruighaver. Maria married Teunis Paulis Achteren in Rotterdam in 1947. He was born in 1917 in Rotterdam, Zuid-Holland, Netherlands to Albertus van Achteren and Teuntje Pauline Habermehl. Maria and Teunis had two children: Paulus Antonius (1950) and Elisabeth Barbara (1953). The family emigrated in 1954 under the Netherlands Australian Migration Agreement for Sydney.

The family had settled in St Albans by 1956. Teunis was working as a presser and Maria joined the St Albans East School Mothers Club, presumably as their son Paul would have started at the school.

It appears that Maria and Teunis had separated in the late 1950s. Maria married Paul Micallef/Jones/Costa in 1960 and they may have moved to Benalla from where she applied for her Naturalisation certificate.

Maria Wolterbeek moved to Queensland by the early 1980s. In 1982 she married Eric Charles Pope who died a few months later. She married Dragolub Peter Pertovic in 1985 and he died in 1987. Maria then married Alexander John Sellars in 1999 and they were together until his death in 2017.

Maria Elizabeth Sellars nee Wolterbeek died in Queensland in 2022 at age 95.

Teunis Paulis van Achteren became a naturalised citizen in 1960. He married Clara Agnes Bowles (her first husband William Cashmore died in St Albans in 1959) and they settled in Hawthorn; he worked as a presser and she as a ledger machinist. Clara's ancestry goes back to 1827 in East Sussex, England; her grandfather came to Victoria in 1853.

Teunis van Achteren died in 1996 in Queensland at age 79, and was buried at the Cooloola Coast Crematorium. Clara Agnes died in Melbourne in 1997 at age 81.



ST ALBANS EAST STATE SCHOOL

The severe overcrowding problems at SS2969 St Albans West, caused by an influx of displaced persons from Europe, reached a climax in the early 1950s. The problem grew so acute that many children travelled by buses daily to schools at Yarraville, Albion, and Deer Park. A new school of six classrooms was built in 1955 on 5 acres of land that were resumed in Station Ave. ... Temporary HT, J. Noel Pruden, enrolled 370 children transferred from SS2969, representing Grades 1-5, on 13th of February 1956 and, with staff and parent assistance, began the onerous task of moulding a school on their share of the basalt plateau that was St. Albans. During 1956 heavy rains turned the school area into a quagmire and closure was narrowly averted. For years the surrounding roads were unmade and consequently, during wet weather, children and staff alike trudged around in thick mud.

In 1956, 83% of the scholars came from migrant families from twenty-three countries and 60% of these were handicapped by a language problem. As the displaced migrant usually had a fair knowledge of German, most information could be disseminated by the use of English, German and Maltese. From its outset the school has lived with the problem of assimilation and the teaching of English has presented the greatest of its difficulties. In February 1957, W. Jack Carney became the school's first permanent HT. He became such an institution that the school was generally known as 'Carney's School'. In his quiet way he became guide, philosopher and friend to many migrant parents. The 1956 foundation members of the Mothers' Club were Mrs R. Yeomans (President), Mrs R. Martignoles (Secretary) and Mrs C. McCulloch (Treasurer). ...

The school is indebted to the untiring and industrious efforts of the members of these and later bodies, who have provided many school amenities, partly from the money earned by the tuck shop which they designed and which has been copied throughout the State.

The provision of further accommodation in 1956 and 1960 eventually proved inadequate and, in 1967-68, the school population exceeded 1,000 pupils. ... In February 1969 R.G. White became the second permanent HT. W.J. Carney, who transferred to Rosebud, coped successfully with many problems in his twelve years of pioneering work at the school.

(Extract from History of Education, Port Phillip Western Region p167.)



St Albans East State School Grade IA 1956



St Albans East State School Grade IB 1956



St Albans East State School Grade II 1956



St Albans East State School Grade III 1956



St Albans East State School Grade IV 1956



St Albans East State School Grade V 1956



Mrs Irene Heymig at St Albans East State School c1956



Sylvia Kopmann at St Albans East State School 1957



Sylvia Kopmann at St Albans East State School 1957



Sylvia Kopmann at St Albans East State School 1957