



Raves from the Graves.

President's Report

Welcome to the Summer 2016 edition of our Newsletter, *Raves from the Graves*, and greetings to all our new members. The Committee of The Friends extends a warm welcome to all our new members, and thanks to our current members for their continued support of the group and our aims.

This has been a positive year for The Friends of Cheltenham group, with three very successful tours during the year. We introduced new tour topics which were well received. Our aim is to represent all demographics of the area, not just the more notable citizens of Cheltenham and surrounds. The Committee were pleasantly surprised by the attendance for the Women's tour, then the Convicts tour—both events were sell outs. The decision to present a tour that related to Children was taken, even though it would be a difficult subject, but the Committee felt that to represent all levels of the community, children must be included. Again we were surprised by the amount of interest, and numbers who attended.

Another focus for this year has been the new level rail crossing at Cheltenham station. The land on which the station is situated was once part of the cemetery, so our interest as to how this development will affect the cemetery has been of concern, especially the impact it will have on the immediate surrounds. This prompted members of the Committee to attend all the community forums and make representation to the Level Crossing Authority, however to date we have not had any response back from them. It was also noted that the station buildings were not to be part of the new development, which prompted us to contact local Members of Parliament, and our concerns were presented to the

Index:

President's Report	1
Tour Reports	3
Research Articles	
Three Curran's	5
George Petroni	10
Cheltenham Station	12
Headstone Repair	15
Affiliates	16
Tour Details	16

Current Committee :

President: Rosemary Reddick
Vice President: Margaret Osborne
Secretary: Frank Ruse
Treasurer: Sue Beazley

Ordinary Committee
Members: Ric Norman
Steven Johnson

Contact details:

Friends of Cheltenham
Regional Cemeteries
www.focrc.org
info@focrc.org

PO Box 2958,
Cheltenham 3192

Ph: 03 9497 1318
(Rosemary)

FoCRC



Minister for Transport, Jacinta Allen. The Friends of Cheltenham Committee is generally a group of quiet unassuming people who go about restoring headstones, researching and creating interest in the two Cheltenham Cemeteries, however we do view the matter of the Cheltenham Station to be worthy of our time and voice, as it forms part of a heritage precinct within the Cheltenham area. It would be such a shame to lose that historical environment.

My work with the War Graves Working Group (WGWG), a subcommittee of the Vic RSL Heritage Committee, is progressing well. Steven Johnson, a Committee member, has devoted hundreds of hours to walking around the Cheltenham Pioneer Cemetery, reading every headstone and inscription in an effort to determine if any individual interred within, may have served in WW1, as many family graves did not record details of service for their country. And our articles in this edition relate to four of these gallant men, who served in World War 1, three of them from the same family. We hope you enjoy the articles and other details in this edition of The Friends Newsletter.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank The Committee of The Friends for all their hard work and tireless efforts to keep the group moving forward, everyone has their own speciality, which makes for a very cohesive and unified group. I would especially like to thank Sue Beazley for the remarkable work she has done, putting together very high quality tours that she presents, and the hours spent researching on behalf of us all.

I wish you all a happy and festive Christmas, with a safe and healthy 2017 to follow.

We look forward to hearing from you, if you have feedback, concerns or stories you would like to share.

Rosemary Reddick

South Eastern Historical Association (SEHA) meeting

The Friends of Cheltenham hosted the final SEHA meeting in November for 2016.

SEHA is a great organisation which brings together many of the Historical Societies, and other historical research type groups. It is a wonderful network of like minded people, and The Friends of Cheltenham are pleased to be one of the groups within the association.

The meeting was well attended, with over 25 participants. The main Committee met first, and was followed by the General meeting. The final event for the day was a brief tour around the Pioneer Cemetery. The Friends of Cheltenham believe it is important to be part of these type of affiliations, as they offer support, ideas and knowledge outside the sphere of our group.

Membership Subscription

Membership is open to anyone from around the world with an interest in the Cheltenham Cemeteries, Melbourne Australia. For just \$A15.00 per annum*, members receive a range of benefits. We also welcome organisations. Please download a membership application form, complete & return to PO Box 2958, Cheltenham Vic 3192 or email to info@focrc.org. Payment details are available from the website www.focrc.org.

* Plus \$A10.00 joining fee for new members.

FoCRC

WALKS AROUND *Cheltenham Pioneer Cemetery 2016*

The Friends of Cheltenham Regional Cemeteries has reintroduced guided tours/walks. There has now been three successful walks this year. Conducted by Sue Beazley & Marg Osborne, with assistance from Ric Norman & Frank Ruse.

Children of the Cemetery—October 2016

Much to the delight of the Committee, this was another very successful tour, brilliantly presented by Sue Beazley. The subject matter for this tour was always going to be sad, but heartfelt, making it rather difficult to decide whether we should tackle it or not. But, with Sue's commitment we decided to at least attempt it, then gauge the response. We were pleased that the subject matter did appeal to some, making it a success. The weather was also in our favour, even though it was a somewhat cloudy day, that made it perfect weather for strolling around the cemetery. Many who attended were surprised and shocked to learn that over 2000 babies were buried in a, seemingly small lawn area of the cemetery, over towards Cheltenham Park.



The lawn area adjacent to Cheltenham Park.

And, then there is Strangers Ground which is a section of the Pioneer Cemetery that is peculiar to the Cheltenham Cemetery. This area was for those whose religion was not known, travellers or those who did not believe in any religion. There were 186 burials, with 158 being still born babies. One baby, sadly, was only listed as Unknown – Mordialloc 16 Sept 1876.

FoCRC



Our illustrious and brilliant tour leader, Sue Beazley, who has the crowd enthralled with her knowledge and research.

The Convict tour was one of our successful tours of 2016. Stay tuned for future dates in 2017.



Julie Busch, SMCT Trust Board Member; Lois Comeadow of Brighton Cemeterians & Rosemary Reddick at SMCT Annual Meeting, Bunurong Memorial Cemetery.

Have you received your copy of our Newsletter?

If you have not received any previous Newsletters and you are a financial member, please notify Rosemary Reddick.

info@focrc.org

RESEARCH ARTICLES

The Story of Three Currans

Researched and written by Carol Curran.

MICHAEL BENEDICT CURRAN

Michael Benedict Curran was born 24th March, 1869 at Pleasant Creek, near Stawell in Victoria, and was the 8th of 9 children to Patrick James and Margaret Teresa Curran *nee* Kelly.

Sometime between 1869 and 1894 Michael's family moved from the Stawell area to the Beechworth area, where Michael began to show that he was a gifted athlete and axeman, competing in many events including the Easter Cup at Stawell.

On the 22 January, 1894 Michael married Annie Roche, at Beechworth, and worked as a contractor in the district. Annie was born in



Annie and Michael Curran

Allans Flat in 1869 to Robert Roche & Sarah Devaney. Michael and Annie's first child, James Patrick Joseph was born in December, 1894 followed by a further 9 children, but sadly, like all families of those times there was also children who didn't survive. Cecilia Letitia, who was born in 1896, died in 1904. The last child John Philpot was born during 1909. After the birth of John, Annie developed lactation fever, and was admitted to the Beechworth Mental Asylum in June, 1910. With the help of the older children, Michael looked after the family.

Michael & Annie's eldest son, James Patrick enlisted in the First World War, in August 1914.

There is a family story revealing that when Michael heard his son, James Patrick had been wounded whilst fighting overseas, he decided to enlist in the Army. Michael sent the younger children to St. John's Orphanage at Thurgoona near Albury, where they were placed in the care of Sister Mary Domenic. When he joined up Annie was in the care of the Master in Lunacy, so his Army pay was distributed between the younger children, Lucy, Mary & John.

Michael enlisted in February 1916, and was attached to the 8th Light Horse Regiment, 18th Reinforcement. His service number was 2588. The unit sailed from Melbourne on the RMS Mongolia, in July, 1916 and arrived in Moascar, Egypt in mid-August, 1916. He was admitted to hospital in May, 1917 Michael was suffering from Gastritis, and was further injured when the hospital was bombed. He received slight injuries to his right hip. In June, 1917 he was transported to Cairo and admitted to Abbassia Camp, and subsequently admitted to the 14th Australian General Hospital, Egypt, after suffering a gunshot wound to the right hip and buttock. He was discharged from the hospital on the August, 1917 and was returned to Moascar. But, again in September, his health suffered and he was admitted to the 26th Stat Hospital, Ismalia, then transferred to the 14th Australian General Hospital for further treatment on the gunshot wound. In the November of 1917 Michael was sent to the Port Said Rest Camp, and eventually, due to his wound, and suffering from shock he was transferred from the camp to the HT "Wiltshire". He was discharged from the Army on the 18th March, 1918.

When Michael arrived back in Australia he returned to Osborne's Flat and brought his children home from St. John's orphanage. On 15th November 1919, Michael sold 40 acres of freehold land at Osborne's Flat, by public auction. One acre was held under Miner's rights, and a comfortable 6 roomed WB dwelling was erected here, with household furniture and effects. Michael also auctioned a racehorse named "Avenger" and a first class gig. After auctioning off this property Michael and the younger children, Lucy, Mary & John, relocated to Melbourne, purchasing a property at 480 Hawthorn Road, Caulfield. Michael lived here until his death on the 8th June, 1956. He is buried at the New Cheltenham Cemetery.

The following article from the **Yackandandah Times** 16th July, 1917, is a testament to Michael's character and strong sense of obligation to his family. "A contractor by profession he took an interest in all athletic exercises. As a wood chopper he won numerous prizes and at his best was handicapped to concede a start to C. Miller, who afterwards become world's champion. Trooper Curran was also a pedestrian of note, and was equally smart at either sprint or distance running.

At one sports gathering in the Yackandandah district he qualified for the finals in the Sheffield Handicap, 440 Yards handicap and Wood Chop.

While in camp at Seymour early last year, Trooper Curran defeated all comers to the wood chopping contests. When the war broke out, Trooper Curran's eldest son promptly enlisted and he has spent three birthdays at the front. He went through Gallipoli campaign, and is now in France. Though he had crossed the half century, Trooper Curran who is now 54 years of age felt the call to the colors. With him there was no pleading of being over the military age when the Empire was in danger. He enlisted in February, 1916 and went to the front a few months later. His name appeared as wounded in a recent casualty list. Trooper Curran has a family of 11 children and his business is now being carried on by his second and third sons aged 19 and 17 respectively. "Mick" was a frequent competitor at sports meetings at Bright some years ago."

**In the above article it states that Michael was 54 years old when in fact he was 1 month short of his 47th birthday. Also in all the research I have only been able to find 10 children.

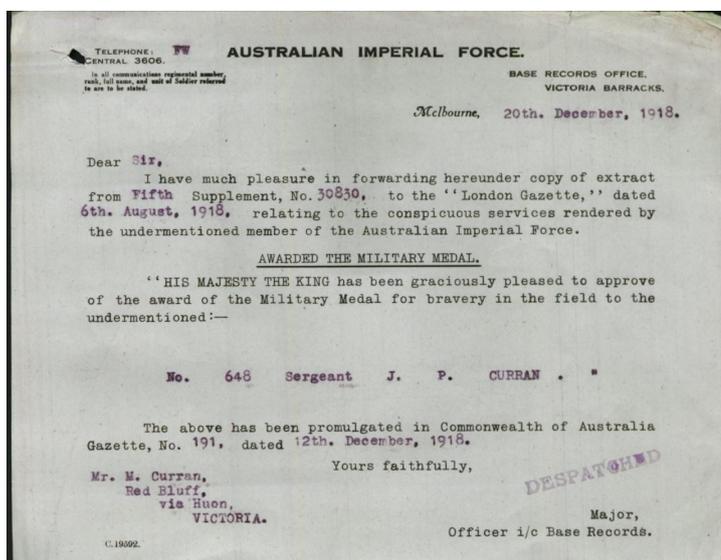
Medals awarded were: British War Medal, Victory Medal.

JAMES PATRICK CURRAN

James Patrick Curran was born at Beechworth, Victoria on December 31st, 1894 the first of 10 children to Michael Benedict Curran and Annie Curran *nee* Roche. His schooling was at Sandy Creek and Allan's Flat, Victoria, and later he worked as a labourer until he enlisted. As his mother Annie, had been hospitalised in 1910, there is no doubt that James, as the eldest would have shouldered a great deal of the family burden with his father Michael.

James enrolled in the 4th Battalion, AIF in Sydney, on the 27th August 1914, and his service number was 648. He sailed on the HMAT Euripides from Sydney on the 20th October, 1914. James served at Gallipoli, landing on the 3rd July, 1915. In August, 1915 he was sent to the Dardanelles on the NT Mitovian, then in December he was despatched to Alexandria. On the 23rd March, 1916 he was sent on the HT Simla to Marseilles in France. In France, James endured tough conditions and had trench feet from being in the wet and muddy trenches for so long. He was also endured being gassed with Mustard gas.

James rose quickly through the ranks, being promoted to Sergeant, in the field on the 5th October, 1916. Part of his duty was to send men to the front line. They had very heavy casualties. One day when the Captain of the unit asked James to send more men to the front line, James replied that he would only do that if the Captain and he went as well. He was demoted because of this action, but later was reinstated to the rank of Sergeant. James was awarded the Military Medal during August, 1918.



National Archives file

His citation is as follows:

“At Strazeele during the night 16th/17th April, 1918, this N.C.O. was ordered to take his platoon forward to support another Company. During the advance under very heavy artillery and machine gun fire it was principally due to his absolute fearlessness and fine leadership that the platoon was taken forward intact. Later, although wounded, he supervised the wiring of the front line posts under intense machine gun fire. Wounded head and shoulder at duty.”

On the 3rd August, 1918 James sustained a gunshot wound to the left buttock and hip. He was evacuated to Eastbourne Military Hospital, England where he was sent to recover. My father-in-law told me that the wound became infected and to clean the wound on a daily basis, a length of copper wire was inserted into the wound and was doused with iodine. James left England on the 3rd December, 1918 to return to Australia and was discharged from the Army in March, 1919. He disembarked in Melbourne and went to an Aunt’s home at Caulfield before returning to Beechworth to live.

James met Ethel May Vodden at a local dance and they were married at the Church of England, Wodonga on December 24th, 1920. The marriage produced 13 children. Not long after they married they moved to Melbourne and lived in Glass Street, Richmond. James joined the Victoria Police force during October, 1921, and was later involved in the Police strike on the night of 31st October 1923. The two main causes of discontent being the so-called ‘spooks’ – plainclothes supervisors detailed to secretly observe and report on constables – as well as the loss of police pensions. In his police record it states “Conduct good until date of refusing duty.” James never returned to the Police force and for the rest of his working life worked for the Tramways as a maintenance and points cleaner. Later the family moved to Foster Street, South Yarra and then to Fitzgerald Street, South Yarra. They lived at Fitzgerald Street for many years. During 1957 James and Ethel moved to Holmesglen. Ethel Curran died 8th August, 1966 and after her death James was no longer able to live alone. Some of his children shared the care of him and he moved between their homes.



James Patrick Curran

During August, 1971 James was admitted to the Repatriation Hospital at Heidelberg, where he died on the 29th August, 1971. James is buried with his wife, Ethel, at the New Cheltenham Cemetery.

Medals Awarded were: Military Medal, 1914/15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal.

FoCRC

ROBERT FRANCIS CURRAN

Robert Francis was born 28th April, 1898 at Allans Flat and was the 4th child born to Michael Benedict and Annie Curran. Robert was educated at schools in Sandy Creek, Upper Gundowring, Red Bluff, Osborne Flat and Allans Flat Primary Schools.

When Robert's father, Michael enlisted in the First World War, Robert and his younger brother Michael took over the family contracting business that had been run by their father.

Robert enlisted on the 31st July, 1917 in Wangaratta. His application to enlist paper states "His Guardian, was his Aunty, a Mrs. C. A. Goodfellow of Bond Street, Caulfield and gives consent". Robert's father was already on active service abroad, and his mother Annie, was not able to provide consent as she was in the care of the Master of Lunacy in the Asylum for Insane at Beechworth.

Robert, whose service number was 2493, sailed from Melbourne on the 21st November, 1917 aboard the HMAT Nestor A71, as part of the 13th Light Horse Regiment – 21/ 23 Reinforcements. He arrived at the Australian Camp, Suez, Egypt on the 15th December, 1917, and disembarked at Southampton on the 24th January, 1918. Like his brother James, Robert rose through the ranks to become a Sergeant, but once the operations he was involved in, ceased, then he reverted to the rank of Private.

During part of his deployment Robert was transferred to the Australian Army Veterinary Corps. And when the war ended Robert was given the task of selling the horses, as they were unable to be returned to Australia. He travelled to Belgium to try and sell some of the horses. During this trip, he was in a field and there were dead men everywhere; he heard a noise and found one man alive. He was a Belgian soldier. The soldier asked Robert to take the things out of his pocket, gave Robert his wife's address and asked him to take his personal effects to his wife. Robert did this. On the conclusion of the selling of the horses he returned to Australia on the "Fredsiehshrue" leaving on 8th July 1919 and arriving in Australia 10th August, 1919. He was discharged on 25th September, 1919.

Robert returned to live in the Yackandandah/Allans Flat area, and married Myra Rebecca Mackinnon at Wagga Wagga in 1925. They had two children Robert and Pauline.

After their marriage they moved to Caulfield in Victoria, then later to Traralgon. Robert was a fitter and turner by trade and found a position with the Australian Paper Mills. During his time at Traralgon, Robert with four others, was instrumental in forming the Traralgon Racing Club. Robert and Myra lived in Traralgon for many years, but later moved back to Malvern in Victoria. During their time in Malvern a relative asked Robert to manage a hotel at Cudgewa near Corryong. So they made the move, and during their time at Cudgewa Myra had a car accident and broke her back. After the accident Robert and Myra decided to move to Sydney to be near their daughter Pauline and her family.

Robert started working for a horse trainer. Tommy Smith was looking for a Foreman, and a Vet that knew Robert told Tommy he knew the right person for the job. Robert was offered the position and worked for many years as Foreman for T.J. Smith. During 1971 Robert came down to Melbourne to visit his son Robert. Whilst visiting his son, Robert became ill and was admitted to the Repatriation Hospital at Heidelberg where he died on the 20th August, 1971. He is buried at Springvale Cemetery.



Robert Francis Curran

Medal Awarded: British War Medal.

Our latest book

The Cheltenham Pioneer Cemetery: Where History Rests

After 150 years serving the community, the Pioneer Cemetery is worth remembering...

Written by Travis M. Sellers, *The Cheltenham Pioneer Cemetery: Where History Rests* is the fifth book in the *Remembering Them* series published by the Friends of Cheltenham and Regional Cemeteries Inc. With an index of over 800 names. It is a rich source covering not only the history of the Pioneer Cemetery, but snippets of local history featuring persons buried at the cemetery. The publication contains a number of appendices including a summary of the trustee minutes (1863-1932).

[Download the index and see if your ancestor is included!](#) [PDF-177KB]

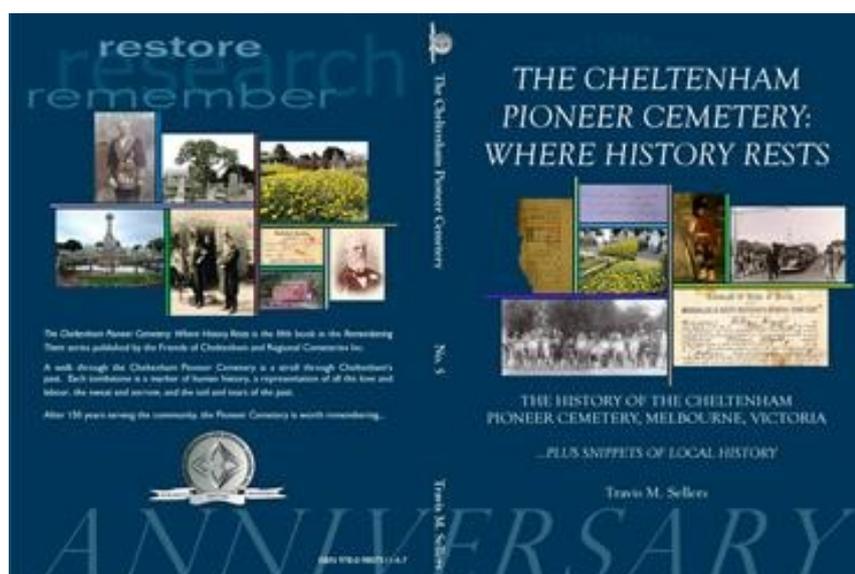
Limited print run of just 105 copies, each book is individually numbered and signed by the author. Paperback.

\$40.00 incl. postage and handling (\$36.00 for financial members)

Purchase your copy using PayPal or download an **[Order Form](#)** [PDF-426KB] and return with your cheque or money order.

http://www.focrc.org/forms/Order_Cheltenham.pdf

Pay Pal details at <http://www.focrc.org/shop.htm>



The story of George Whorton Patroni

Researched and written by Lauren Long

George Whorton Patroni was born in South Melbourne on 17th July 1896, to Peter Patroni and Isabella Victoria *nee* Penman. He was the third of their five children. Peter Patroni, at age 17, had arrived alone from Sernio Italy, a beautiful mountain village near the Swiss border, and Isabella Victoria Penman was born in Victoria to a Scottish father and an Irish mother. George Whorton was also the third of five George Whortons born into the Penman family, but the only one spelt with an "o". George's confirmation name was Patrick and he sometimes used it on documents.

George was a keen footballer and played for the Frankston team after his arrival home from the War. His father, Peter, owned The Pier Hotel and The Prince of Wales Hotel, both in Frankston where George also worked. In 1921 he married Emily Amelia Hillas and soon had three daughters Patricia, Iris and Margaret. George and Emily bought the Royal Hotel at St James, a small settlement near Benalla, North East Victoria, and this is where their



George Patroni is second from right



George Patroni with Iris & Margaret



George Patroni and wife Emily at Ranges Hotel Gembrook

third daughter, Margaret was born. Emily's parents were also living with them and both died while there. When George sold the Hotel, the family returned to Melbourne.

George stayed in the Hotel business working with his father and they bought the Ranges Hotel in Gembrook, staying for a number of years. In 1936 George's wife Emily died, and tragedy was to strike again in 1956 when his daughter Iris died. They are buried together at



Margaret Patroni/Long and Lauren Long



George Patroni in Melbourne city

Cheltenham Pioneer Cemetery, but unfortunately the headstone belonging to the grave in the next plot was built on their grave site.

Eventually George was to remarry, an Alice Maud who had two grown sons. They settled in South Yarra and lived there for around 30 years. George is buried with



Iris Patroni, Lawrence Long, Margaret Patroni & George Patroni

his second wife at Cheltenham Memorial Park. His daughter Margaret Emily Patroni, along with her husband Lawrence Francis Long are also buried at Cheltenham Memorial Park.

George was a lively young lad, and came home one day March 1915 to tell his father that he had enlisted in the Army for WWI. He was 18 years old.

George's father, Peter signed the consent form thinking the discipline would do his son good, and six weeks later George left for the then unknown horrors of WWI.

George was enlisted into the 24th Battalion, which was raised at great haste. The original intent was to form the fourth battalion, of the 6th Brigade from the "outer states", but a surplus of recruits at Broadmeadows Camp in Victoria lead to a decision being made to raise it there. The battalion was formed during the first week of May 1915, and sailed from Melbourne at the end of that week.

The Moascar Isolation Camp, Alexandria, was set up to screen those soldiers arriving in Egypt as reinforcements.



Moascar camp

Most soldiers stayed around two weeks in the camp to see if any illness showed if not the soldier was passed on to the training unit. Other soldiers who had contracted an illness stayed until they were fit.



Men of the 24th Battalion

Gallipoli

Training shortfalls were made up in Egypt in July and August, and on 4 September 1915 the Battalion went ashore at Gallipoli, spending the next 16 weeks sharing duties in the Lone Pine trenches with the 23rd Battalion. The fighting at Lone Pine was so dangerous and exhausting that the battalions rotated every day. The front line at Lone Pine was heavily shelled by the Turks as the 24th Battalion (Victoria) was moving in to relieve the 23rd (Victoria) Battalion.

Private Timothy Ahern, 24th Battalion, wrote:

... lasted three hours with all kinds of shell. They buried a lot of our men alive. 264 casualties in all, we were digging them out for three days. I hope I never have the same experience again.

The attack on the Turkish trenches at Lone Pine had began on 6 August. It was one of the Turks' strongest positions. The fighting was vicious, men fought with bayonets, bombs and fists. The dead piled three or four high and the reinforcements ran over them to get to the fighting. The Turks were unable to recapture Lone Pine, although they stopped the Australians advancing further. The dead Australians and Turks were either buried, stacked in heaps, thrown over the parapet, or used to block the Turkish communication trenches along with sandbags and soil.

George told the story that while he was running back to the trenches under fire, he saw a mate get shot in the knee, he went back to help him and as they were making their way back to the safety of the trenches, his mate was shot in the other knee.

Over two nights — 18/19 and 19/20 December — all of the remaining 20,000 Australians and New Zealanders were withdrawn from the ANZAC area of Gallipoli. The last man to leave at 4.10 am on 20 December from North

Beach, was Colonel J Paton who was in charge of the 'rear-guard'. There were virtually no casualties – to the end the Turks were unaware that a major evacuation was taking place. The battle at Gallipoli went from April 1915 to January 1916 and is thought to have claimed half a million lives.

On 10th January 1916, George arrived back in Egypt, and after a short stay, proceeded on to France in March.

France - Pozières and Mouquet Farm - Wounded

The Battalion was reunited in Egypt in early 1916 and proceeded to France in March and transferred to 2nd Pioneer Battalion. It took part in its first major offensive around Pozières and Mouquet Farm in July and August 1916. At midnight on 23 July 1916, thousands of Australians stormed Pozières. Forty-five days later they were relieved, having suffered 23,000 casualties to gain a few miles of barren landscape. Despite the toll, the operation was heralded as a stunning victory but victory came at a terrible cost. On 1st August George had suffered gunshot wounds to his neck, leg and arm, and was evacuated out to England.

When patrolling no-man's land the men of the 24th adopted a unique form of snow camouflage - large white nighties bought in Amiens.

When George returned home shrapnel was left inside him but posed no problems throughout his life. He was discharged in Melbourne and listed as medically unfit, in Feb 1918. George lived till he was eighty.

In 2015 for the 100 years of the landing at Gallipoli Georges' great granddaughters, and Laureen's daughters, Natasha Nomikos and Kartier Falkenberg, attended the commemorations at Gallipoli and Lone Pine. Although we were lucky to have George return home, my girls were

proud to acknowledge the sacrifice of all men there.





Level Crossing Development at Cheltenham Station

The Friends of Cheltenham Cemeteries are generally a quiet group, working on raising funds, family research and arranging restorations. As a group, we aren't at all political, however we do view the matter of the Cheltenham Station to be worthy of our time and voice, as it forms part of a heritage precinct within the Cheltenham area. It would be such a shame to lose that historical environment. Our aim is to assist in retaining the station buildings in their present sites, or at least have one or both situated close by; possibly as a community centre for the Cheltenham area.

Whilst my next statement is not intended to suggest that the forthcoming development at the Cheltenham station, is in any way contrary to the law, or even like the recent demolition of the Corkman Irish Hotel, in Carlton, it does sharply bring into focus the inadequacies of the current heritage legislation that is meant to protect heritage sites. Professor Charles Sowerwine recently discusses, in the Royal Historical Society of Victoria (Issue 327 Nov/Dec 16), that it is legal development that we must be troubled about, as weaknesses in the Legislation allow 'legal' development at the expense of heritage sites. Without regulation that repairs the weaknesses in the system, heritage buildings are not safe. Victoria's problem has come about because of a two tiered system, whereby most heritage buildings and sites are only offered a Heritage Overlay (HO), issued by Councils – however these sites are not listed on the Victorian Heritage Database. Even if a local Council does its best to protect a site or building by placing a HO on it, the HO is not binding and much weaker than state database heritage listings – thus exposing much of our heritage to be lost to us all.

The Cheltenham station buildings are listed as some fine examples of the last intact buildings, architecturally known as The Cheltenham style. (Ward & Donnelly, *Victoria's Railway Stations: An Architectural Survey*, Volume 1 - 1982), Kingston Historical Website – Graham Whitehead.

“Ward & Donnelly in their survey of Victoria's railway stations point out that five stations on the Frankston line were built in what they categorize as the Cheltenham Style... The Cheltenham 'down' station in 1982 retained the original yards and lamp room while the toilets remained close to their original condition. Given this situation Ward & Donnelly judged the Cheltenham building to be the most important of its group to survive”.

The Cheltenham station is a vital, focal point in what has become Cheltenham's historical precinct, along with the Pioneer Cemetery and the Cheltenham Primary School. Which brings home the significance of retaining part of our heritage, as these heritage sites become an integral part of the urban fabric.

The Level Crossing Rail Authority (LXRA) have lacked transparency about what the plans for the redevelopment at Cheltenham station are. From early on in the consultation process they have stated that the old station buildings



were to go, either demolished or relocated – but did not inform the community as to why. Did they already know if they were building over or under Charman Road? The Friends of Cheltenham Cemeteries has attended every community consultative sessions conducted by the LXRA, and have made written, email and telephone call representations – none of which, to date, have received a reply. Below is the email sent to LXRA on 30 Oct 2016, and was assured that a response would be received – but, as yet, this has not occurred.

The Friends of Cheltenham Regional Cemeteries 30 Oct 2016

Committee members from The Friends of Cheltenham Regional Cemeteries have attended community sessions regarding the proposals for Cheltenham railway station & Park Rd. At the most recent community session I raised the question of groundwater affecting the cemetery - with a project manager Adam, and another consultant named Dash. I also provided Dash with contact details - including email and was promised a response - to which I have received nothing? These contact details have been provided to LXRA at all community sessions - with no response from anyone to date? The concern regarding the groundwater is that the levels are already quite high at the cemetery, so if a trench rail option be chosen, then how will that impact on the cemetery?? There was no reference to the cemetery in the Hydrogeology report? I understand that the trench option is probably the most preferred, however, has any groundwater testing been done for the effects on the cemetery? LXRA may feel that because it is only cemetery that there may not be any community concerns, however that is not the case. My great grandparents are both buried quite close to the fence line, closest to the station - so apart from my interest over-all in the cemetery for The Friends group, I am also interested from a personal point of view. As are all of the Committee members. We all have ancestors buried in the Pioneer Cemetery.

Can I please receive a response regarding when the groundwater testing in relation to effect on the cemetery, will go ahead and could these results be made public? The project manager I spoke with - Adam - was keen to tell how the trench will be dug and the logistics of building a type of concrete bath to keep away the groundwater from the station - but the concern of The Friends group & myself is where that groundwater goes - and as the station is right next door - and with ground that is already disturbed by burials - it may have a detrimental impact upon the cemetery.

Our other main issue is the station building itself. Obviously we are keen to see it retained. Why is it not being incorporated into the new station? There are a number of points that have been made by others and I would like to reiterate them here.

The weatherboard station buildings at Cheltenham were constructed in the 1880s -specifically, Frankston-bound (1882) and City-bound (1889). Following demolition of other stations along the Frankston line in the 1950s and 1960s, including for example, Bentlyigh and Moorabbin, the station buildings at Cheltenham remain one of few surviving examples of 1880s station architecture, in which the station master's cottage has been integrated into the design of the station. And it remains in situ.

The architectural style of the station buildings at Cheltenham is referred to as "Cheltenham style" by Ward and Donnelley in their survey of Victoria's historically noteworthy railway station buildings, published in 1982. This design was only used over a period of two years between around 1882. Few station buildings along the line were therefore constructed in this style, and other examples of this style have already been lost, for example at Frankston. Others no longer have their slate roof tiles preserved and therefore are no longer intact – for example Highett and Mordialloc. This should add weight to the argument that Cheltenham's station buildings deserve preservation in recognition of the fact that they unique examples of this architectural style that are still complete.

The architectural style is also in keeping with Cheltenham Primary School (founded in 1855; making it the fifth oldest primary school in Victoria) and the caretakers cottage at the Cheltenham Pioneer Cemetery. The preservation of this 200 metre or so stretch of Charman Road in Cheltenham should therefore be a priority as it is the most significant reminder of Cheltenham's past in which the relationships between these buildings can be appreciated. Cheltenham's station buildings have an historical overlay. Other stations with similar overlays located on the Cranbourne/Pakenham corridor - including Carnegie and Murrumbeena - are to be preserved and integrated into the new stations there. The Committee of The Friends therefore believe there is no reason why a similar solution cannot be found for Cheltenham.

If the final decision is that the buildings not be integrated into the new station, then the most satisfactory option would be that the building be maintained as a community type centre, fully intact, in a different location. Possibly the Cheltenham Park?

*Rosemary Reddick
President, The Friends of Cheltenham Regional Cemeteries
Cheltenham*

Murray Thompson has also spoken of the matter when addressing the Heritage Bill, on 24 Nov 2016.

If you would like to voice your concerns please contact your local MP, or LXRA 1800 762 667

HERITAGE BILL 2016

HANSARD ASSEMBLY PROOF

Thursday, 24 November 2016

Recently I met with a number of people from the Cheltenham area. I had spoken at a Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA) meeting with Dr Katrina Witt. I have also spoken with Dr John Waugh and the Friends of Cheltenham and Regional Cemeteries, some wonderful keen-minded people, including Sue Beazley, Rick Norman and Rosemary Reddick. They have taken a long-term interest in the history of the Cheltenham district and the wonderful interface between some of the older buildings in the local area.

Cheltenham station has some outstanding qualities as a station precinct. I urge the government and the LXRA on behalf of the local community to see what clever steps can be taken to recognise the history and preserve it in a way that will be meaningful to the local community. The works to be undertaken will inevitably involve the deconstruction of some of the heritage features. In relation to whether they can be rebuilt or interpreted in the new design, there is a great enthusiasm to see what can be done. Its marvelous architecture is similar in some ways to a number of buildings within the botanical gardens and the late 19th century building styles that were developed and adopted.

HEADSTONE RESTORATION

Fund Raising for **Oldest Headstone** at Cheltenham Pioneer Cemetery

Recently the oldest headstone has succumbed to the ravages of time and weather. The Friends of Cheltenham Regional Cemeteries are currently trying to raise funds to have this headstone repaired. Hopefully it can be saved for a few more years to come.

The headstone was erected sometime after 1865 and represents 8 individuals buried in 3 graves, with 4 being babies. Richard Tilley d 1865, George Tilley d 1927, Mary Ann d 1908, Thomas Tilley d 1876, Alice d 1882, Emily d 1886, Reginald d 1887 & George E 1889.

If you would like to contribute to the costs of repairing this historic monument please contact us at info@focrc.org or make a payment via the details below:

Bank: Bendigo Bank Limited
Account name: Friends of Cheltenham and Regional Cemeteries Inc.
BSB: 633-000
Account: 130896830

Or take advantage of paying by PayPal. It's free and secure. Just visit our website <http://www.focrc.org/joining> and click on the "Donate" button. Payment can be made by credit card.

Alternatively, our postal address is:
PO Box 2958
CHELTENHAM VIC 3192



Current Total: \$533

FUTURE TOURS

Stay tuned for updates
of up-coming tours for
2017.

Details will be will be posted on our
Facebook page, and on our website
www.focrc.org

Directory

Current Sponsors:

- Astral Monuments,
ph: 1300 729 432
- Janet Tacken – Civil Celebrant.
www.jennyfuneralcelebrant.com.au
ph: 0430 181 820
- Peaberry's Café,
Charman Rd, Cheltenham.

Affiliated Associations:

- Brighton Cemeterians
- St. Kilda Friends Group
- Sandringham & District Historical Society
- Dingley Village Historical Society
- Moorabbin Historical Society
- Bayside Historical Group
- South Eastern Historical Group
- War Graves Working Group
- Southern Metropolitan Cemetery Trust (SMCT)

Tours at Affiliated Cemeteries

St.Kilda Cemetery

Albert Jacka Commemorative Service

Sunday 15 January at 2pm **2017**

Jacka was the first member of the AIF to be awarded the Victoria Cross in WW1, the highest decoration for gallantry "in the face of the enemy" that can be awarded to members of the British and Commonwealth armed forces.

For further details please contact : email info@foskc.org

Brighton General Cemetery

Sunday February 12th at 2pm – **2017**

Market Gardeners of the Brighton General Cemetery

For further details please contact www.brightoncemeterians.org

FoCRC