



AROUND THE GRAVES

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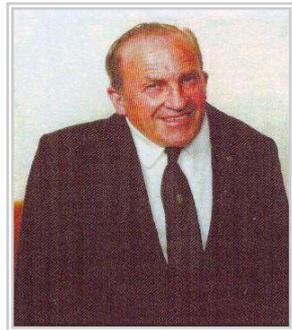
NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF CHELTENHAM AND REGIONAL CEMETERIES INC.

Farming Cemetery Land

Vale Frank W. Le Page, OAM

Less than five months after the Cheltenham Cemetery No. 2 opened on Wangara Road, the Trustees received a request from Mrs Tuxon, Secretary of the Sandringham Youth Centre "asking permission to use the unpegged half of the New Cemetery situated at Holloway [Wangara] Rd, Sandringham for the purpose of teaching the lads farming etc." Charles Bright, Secretary to the Cemetery Trust in seeking approval from the Commission of Public Heath explained that "they would be under strict supervision & no damage would be done & they would be a good distance from any graves (11 acres in size of half to be used). No profit would be made as there would be no charges made by the Trust for use of same".

The death of Frank Le Page, OAM in July marks the end of an era in which three generations of the community-minded Le Page family served as Trustees of the Cheltenham and Regional Cemeteries Trust as well as Councillors of the former City of Moorabbin. If Cheltenham had a monarchy, the Le Page family would be the Royal family. The Le Pages arrived in the district during the rush to be rich when Nicholas and Rachel Le Page moved from Prahran establishing a market garden in 1854. Frank Le Page was their great-grandson and the last of the family to serve as both a Trustee (1974-'90s) and Councillor (1964-89; Mayor three times); the "Frank Le Page Library" in Stanley Avenue, Cheltenham was named in his honour in 1986. He also served on most of the local community committees as well as the Mordialloc-Cheltenham Community Hospital until its closure. Raconteur Len Allnutt, whose father John Allnutt was also a Trustee and Councillor, was a fellow classmate of Frank at Cheltenham Primary School No. 84. Len said in an interview in September 2000;

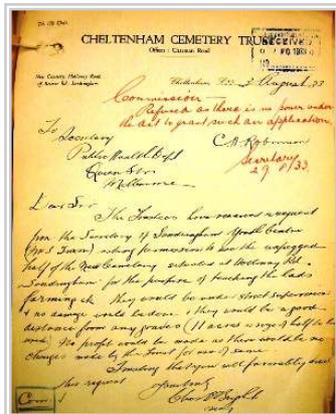


above:
Frank Le Page, OAM
(Image courtesy
Leonard Le Page, Esq)

"We were in the same grade. We sat in the same desk. I've been a lifelong friend with Frank...I say this sincerely, that I sat with him in school, I've known him all his life and I've never ever known him to do a mean or despicable act, ever, ever in his life. That's the truth. He's a fine fellow, Frank. He's been very good to me, and we're still close friends".

Frank was buried in the Cheltenham Pioneer Cemetery on 18 July 2008 (CofC "A" 3B) mourned by all who knew him.

(Source: Information supplied from Leonard Le Page, Esq; White, P., Interview with Len Allnutt, 2000, City of Kingston Historical Website—www.localhistory.kingston.vic.gov.au/pdf/179_2.pdf)



above:
Letter from Trust
(Image courtesy
Department of
Human Services)

The reply from the Commission can be downloaded by members from the Members' Area of our website and follow the links: www.focrc.org/members.htm

Did you know?

When the Cheltenham Memorial Park opened in March 1933, the original area of the land was 21 acres 3 roods 28 perches and cost the Trust £4,473. Initially, less than half the total area was developed for burials and is evident on the current map of the Cemetery showing the layout of the sections (numbers 1 to 200). Until the rest of the area was developed, Sections 92 to 102 (inclusive) being on the highest point of the Cemetery were much favoured.

Lodge Bros Pty Ltd have been a market leader in the manufacture and supply of natural stone memorials since the company was founded in 1918. The Friends use and recommend Lodge Bros for all our restoration needs. Visit their website www.lodgebros.com.au or ring 03 9484 0695.



Death at Friendship Square

On Argus Street, Cheltenham, opposite the Le Page Primary School and Friendship Square is located Lots 273, 275, 276 of the original Two-acre village that was laid out by Josiah Holloway in 1852. (Sir) Thomas Bent (1838-1909) purchased the lots for £29-10-0 on 16 July 1879 and it was a speculative transaction for soon after, the man who thrived on the land boom sold the land to Francis Joseph Cramling for £40. But unlike Bent, Cramling was not a land speculator and instead became a market gardener.

That same year, Cramling had a son Francis (Frank) Harvey and Cramling senior prospered like other market gardeners enough for Francis to attend Cheltenham State School No. 84 on Charman Road in the 1880s. In 1887, Francis experienced sorrow and joy. A student of the second class, he was awarded a prize for regular attendance under the interim of head teacher Daniel Ninnis. Then his mother Thomasina née Harvey died at the age of 32.

By the turn of the century, Cramling senior had remarried Ellen née Clifford and Frank's life was in disarray; in December 1892 a police warrant was issued for his arrest on the charge of vagrancy. No longer living at home, he had taken up a room at 'Our Lodgings' in Little Bourke Street, Melbourne. He found solace in the bottle and in the words of his father "was rather hasty tempered". On 14 November 1900, a "very quiet" Cramling went to Keys' Exchange Hotel, Cheltenham and was served "two or three"

glasses of Brandy telling the barmaid Prudence Brady that he would be back in an hour and a half. Cramling did return to the Hotel, but it was later in the evening.

What transpired was told by Francis' sister Rhoda Elizabeth Cramling at the Magisterial Inquiry conducted by Henry Comport JP at the Exchange Hotel.

"Deceased the subject of this inquiry was my brother, he came to father's place yesterday morning. I was digging the garden when he arrived. That was soon after 10 o'clock. He said 'Halloo Lizzy. You're home again are you?' I said 'Yes my father wanted me so I came home.' He said 'Did you get the sack?' I said 'No'. I saw that my brother was a bit drunk and I ran away from him because I was frightened of him. I was crying at the time. Deceased then pointed a revolver at me and said 'Stop your noise and stand still!'..."

Members can find out what happened next by visiting the Members' area of our website and follow the links:

www.focrc.org/members.htm



above:
Double gravesite at Cheltenham Pioneer Cemetery to the Cramling family

Albert Perry: Perry Bros Circus

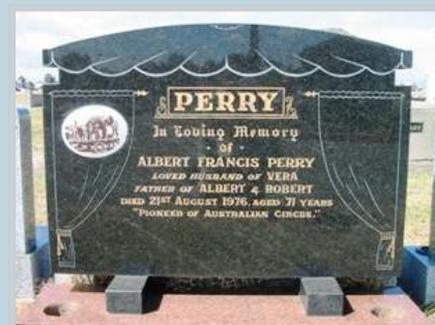
To mark History Week 2008, the Friends will be undertaking a tour of the Cheltenham Memorial Park on Sunday 19 October 2008 at 2:00pm. Featured on the tour is Albert (Alby) Perry (1904-76), one of six members of the Perry circus family interred at the Cheltenham Memorial Park. During its heyday of the 1930s, the original Perry Brothers was one of the biggest travelling circuses in Australia. Albert's son Robert recalled an interview Alby did with Brisbane's *The Sunday Mail* and quoted in his book "Sawdust and Headaches" (2008);

"And you can believe the old story that an elephant never forgets. I know of one bloke who burned an elephant on the end of his trunk with a cigarette. Years later when they met again the elephant—a peaceable old girl—swiped him with her trunk. No, they don't forget. Treat them with kindness and they'll do

anything for you." (p158)

Come along and hear the full riveting story of Albert Perry on this informative tour of the Cheltenham Memorial Park (Wangara Road). Cost is \$10.00 (\$5.00 members) and includes a tour pamphlet and refreshments (weather permitting). **Bookings are essential** and can be made on-

line at www.focrc.org/tours.htm or by ringing Vivienne on (03) 5420 7671.



above:
Grave of Albert Perry, "pioneer of Australian Circus" at the Cheltenham Memorial Park