

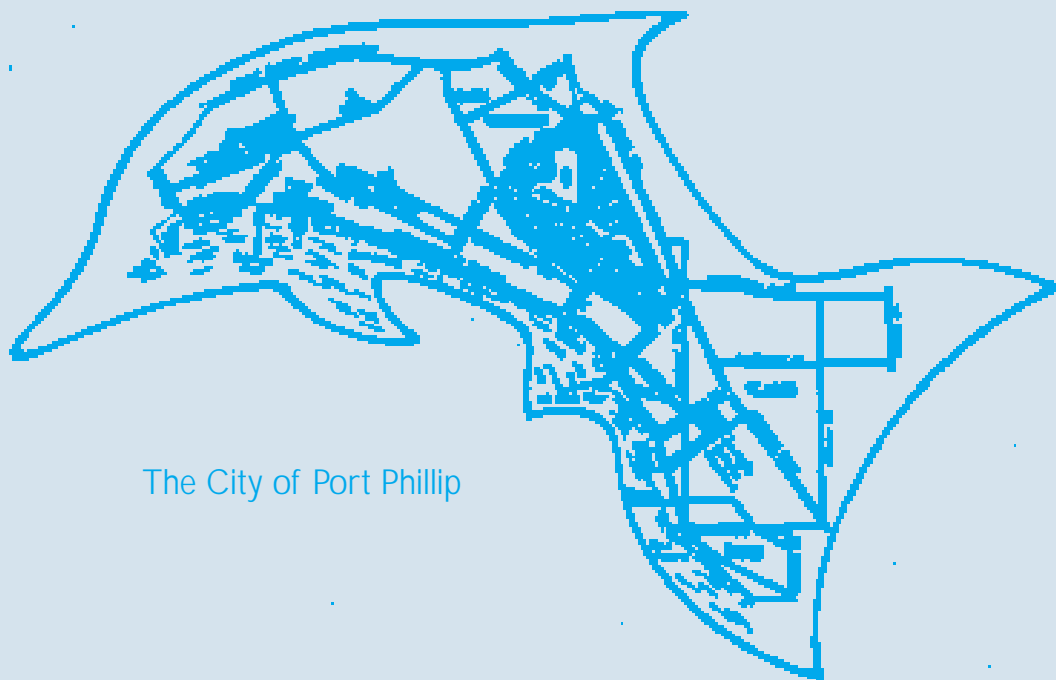
Walks in Port Phillip

A guide to the
cultural landscapes
of a City

Meyer Eidelson



In praise of Amanda Jane



The City of Port Phillip

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The Federation Pathways Project Port Phillip 2001

I loved writing this book because it is about my home, the City of Port Phillip. It was my parents' home, too. Now my children are growing up here. Life is a journey and the places we live in shape our paths. In turn we fashion new places which shape another generation.

On the centenary of Federation and the anniversary of the millennium, this book celebrates the landscape of the City of Port Phillip and those cultures, characters and creatures that have shaped and occupied it over time.

The City includes South Melbourne, Port Melbourne and St. Kilda, joined in a crescent of coastline embracing Hobsons Bay. This is the home of extraordinary history, parks, places and people. It is a mecca for visitors who come to enjoy the beaches, cafes, pubs, piers and promenades. As have past generations.

The book includes seven walking trails on different themes. Themes such as immigration, working people, the foreshore, the flora, waterways and ancestors bring alive the history and vibrancy of this marvellous place. The Aboriginal trail celebrates the cultural heritage of the Kulin nation that existed for millennia before Australia became a nation in 1901.

Short stories introduce you to individual characters with connections to these seven landscapes. They include people, a hill, a seven hundred-year-old tree and three penguins.

Five benches, made of timbers recycled from Station Pier and Victoria Dock, have been placed on the trails. These native timbers were hundreds of years old even before they were driven into the seabed a century ago.

This book was part of a community Federation project as diverse as the City. Schoolchildren walked the trails and passed judgement. Friends and relatives got lost for the cause. Local characters told me their stories. Bill Henshall hand-built huge and beautiful benches. Young people became trail guides for the public. Community groups contributed intimate knowledge of the parts of Port Phillip that they cherish and guard.

This book, like the City itself, is their creation.

Happy travelling along their pathways. May you also create your own.

Meyer Eidelson
January 2001

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This book could not have been written without the assistance of Zoe Hogg who created the notes and drawings for the Flora trail, and Pearl Donald, Kay Rowan and Geoff Austin whose contributions to the Cemetery trail were invaluable. Lastly many thanks to Mary Ellen Talmage, Eve and John Hawthorne, Gus Allen, Rosa and Vince Coluccio, and others too numerous to mention.

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The Federation Benches 2001

The Federation Pathways Project 2001 developed trails on historic and cultural themes in the City of Port Phillip. Benches made of native Australian timbers mark the five trails that connect to the foreshore. Look for the benches at the start of the Foreshore, Waterways, Aboriginal, Working People and Immigrant Trails.

Bill Henshall made these benches. He built them on his muddy work site by the Yarra River under Westgate Bridge. A shipping container housed his tools and provided the only shelter in a very wet year. The benches were built in the open air in the winter and spring of 2000. They range from ten to fifteen feet in length and are made from massive Australian timbers such as grey box, yellow box and redgum. Much of the timber was in the form of tree trunks that had been pier supports at Victoria Dock. The rest was salvaged from repairs at Station Pier.

Despite their size, the benches were built with few bolts. The parts are designed to slot into and support each other. The wood was milled and sanded to enhance the water-worn grain, and then oiled. The benches were transported and set into place in consultation with the many community groups who worked on the trails and who chose the bench locations.

In 2001 the design for these benches won the Traditional Furniture Prize and the Recycle Prize at the Australian Wood Design Exhibition.

The trees from which these Australian timbers were milled may have already been hundreds of years old before they were sunk into the bed of the Yarra River a century ago.

The benches provide resting-places for walkers, children, people experiencing frailty or disability and those who just want a vista of the magnificent landscapes we have inherited. They symbolise the unity of forest, ocean and humanity.

The following plaques were placed on the benches according to their respective trails.

Federation 2001 Working People's Trail

This bench, made from historic dock timbers, pays tribute to the industrial, port and other working families in the City of Port Phillip and their ethos of individual resilience and community spirit.

Federation 2001 Foreshore Trail

This bench, made from historic Australian timbers, celebrates the marvellous foreshore of the City of Port Phillip, as it curves around the coastline of Hobsons Bay from Elwood to Sandridge.

Federation 2001 Aboriginal Trail

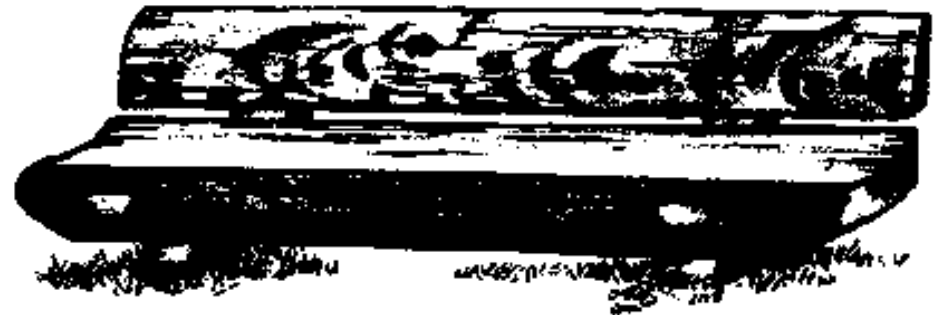
This bench, made from ancient trees, celebrates the rich indigenous history of Port Phillip where camping places, ceremonial sites and creation epics testify to the millennia of occupation.

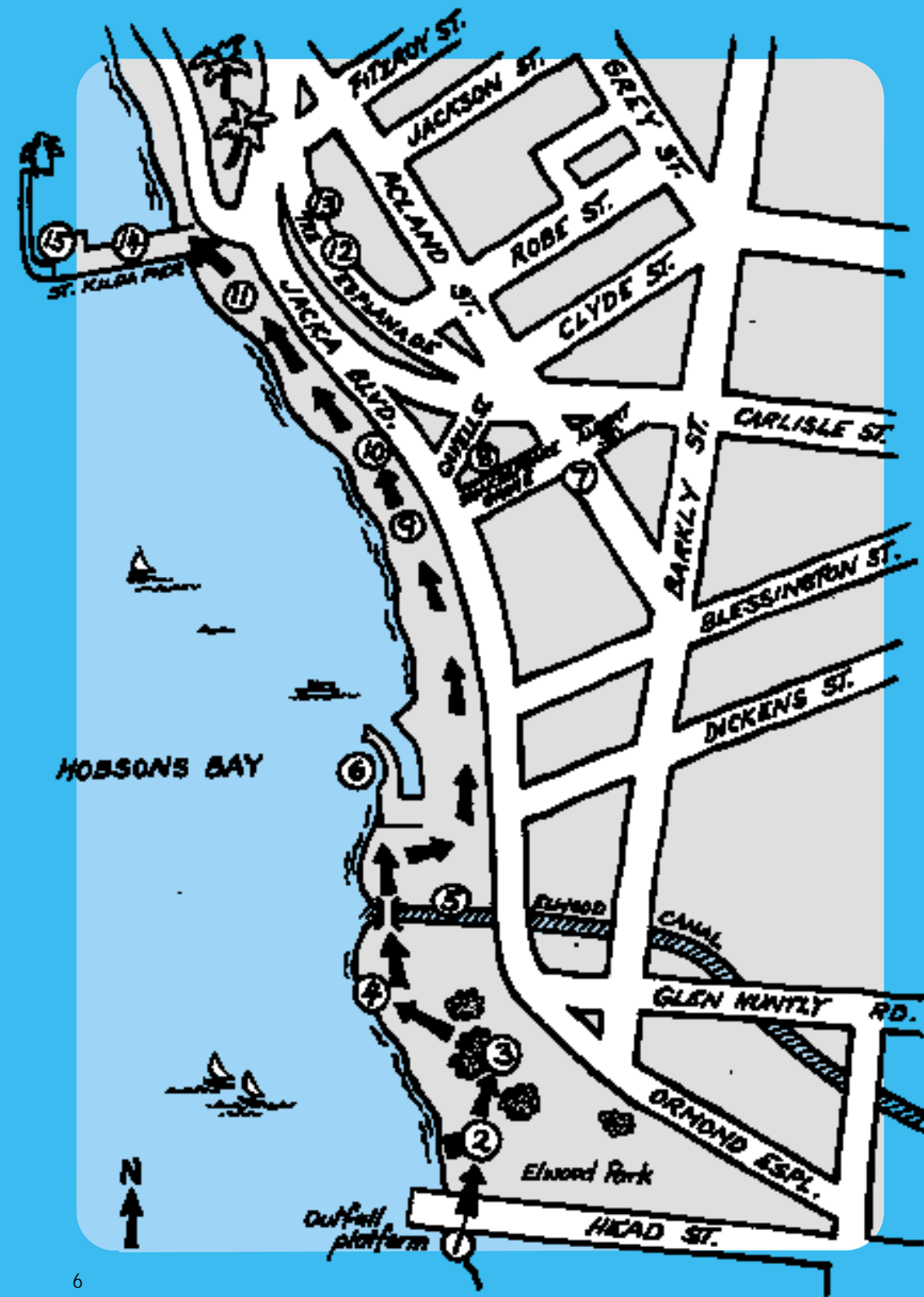
Federation 2001 Waterways Trail

This bench, made from historic river timbers, celebrates the waterways and wetlands of the City of Port Phillip that have shaped our patterns of settlement, wildlife habitats, parks and public works.

Federation 2001 Immigrants' Trail

This bench, made from Station Pier timbers, celebrates the contribution to the City of Port Phillip by the many settlers and immigrants who made landfall after courageous and difficult voyages.





This trail celebrates the foreshore of the City of Port Phillip as it curves around the coastline of Hobsons Bay from Elwood to Sandridge, delighting Melburnians with its views and recreational treasures. It provides the common link between the suburbs of Elwood, St. Kilda, Middle Park, Albert Park and Port Melbourne.

This stretch of foreshore is one of Australia's most popular city destinations, and has been so for over a century. It is to the coast that residents and visitors flock in their thousands on a fine day. Some come to swim and tan, others to fish, breathe in the sea air, roam the bike and walking paths or visit icons such as Luna Park, the Palais and Bay Street. The thriving pubs, cafés and cake shops also attract the sinners, the sociable and the seen.

This trail includes beaches, penguin and possum colonies, eating venues, historical places, piers and parks. It also links to four other trails that head inland from the coast:

- the Waterways Trail (Elwood),
- the Aboriginal Trail (St. Kilda),
- the Workers Trail (Albert Park) and
- the Immigrants Trail (Port Melbourne).

Trail Key

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1 Head Street | 9 Donovans |
| 2 Elwood Sailing Club | 10 Stoke House |
| 3 Elwood Urban Coastal Forest | 11 St. Kilda Sea Baths |
| 4 Point Ormond Hill | 12 St. Kilda Esplanade and Craft Market |
| 5 Elwood Canal | 13 Esplanade Hotel |
| 6 St. Kilda Marina | 14 St. Kilda Pier |
| 7 Acland Street | 15 St. Kilda Breakwater |
| 8 Luna Park | |

Foreshore Trail

Part One

Head Street (Elwood) to St. Kilda Pier

Start

Head Street
Melway 67 C5

Finish

St. Kilda Pier

Length

Four kilometres

Time

One hour

Refreshments

There are numerous cafés, kiosks and restaurants in historic buildings on the foreshore including The Beach House at Elwood car park and Donovans at St. Kilda.

Start on the beach at the **Head Street (1)** outfall platform where artist Tony Hutchinson has depicted the history of Hobsons Bay in coloured tiles. The platform is above a giant diversion drain that diverts stormwater from Elwood to prevent flooding. Head Street is the boundary between the City of Port Phillip and the City of Bayside.

Walk along Elwood Beach towards Point Ormond. This beach is possibly Melbourne's most popular, particularly with multicultural communities. Dolphins are occasionally sighted from the beach.

Elwood Beach House café, in the car park behind the **Elwood Life Saving Club**, is the former bowling club, and has a large playground attached. Further north is the **Anglers Club** and **Elwood Sailing Club (2)**. Divert into the bush behind the Sailing Club. An extensive **urban coastal forest (3)** has been created here with shady trails and nooks. The plants recreate the original landscape before settlement in 1835, and there are signs that explain their medicinal, food or tool use.

Many native birds, possums, insects and even foxes live in this bushland. Continue walking along the leafy trails to Point Ormond. **Point Ormond hill (4)** has a varied history. An Aboriginal midden site once looked out to sea from



here. In 1839 a quarantine station was established when a fever ship the *Glen Huntly* arrived. Those who died of typhus were buried in St. Kilda's first graveyard on the hill. A coal mine, abattoir, and rifle range all operated in the vicinity. A memorial plaque laid by descendants of the Glen Huntly survivors can be found 50 metres east of the hill, beside Ormond Reserve Road.

Moran Reserve, with playground, is a popular kite flying area.

Elwood Canal (5) is the site of the former Elster Creek that drained into the Elwood swamp near the foreshore. 'Elster' is German for magpie, reflecting the many birds seeking worms in the swampy flats. In 1835 the *Enterprize* crew dropped anchor here before proceeding to settle at Melbourne, on the Yarra near William Street.

The Waterways Trail heads inland from here (see page 18).

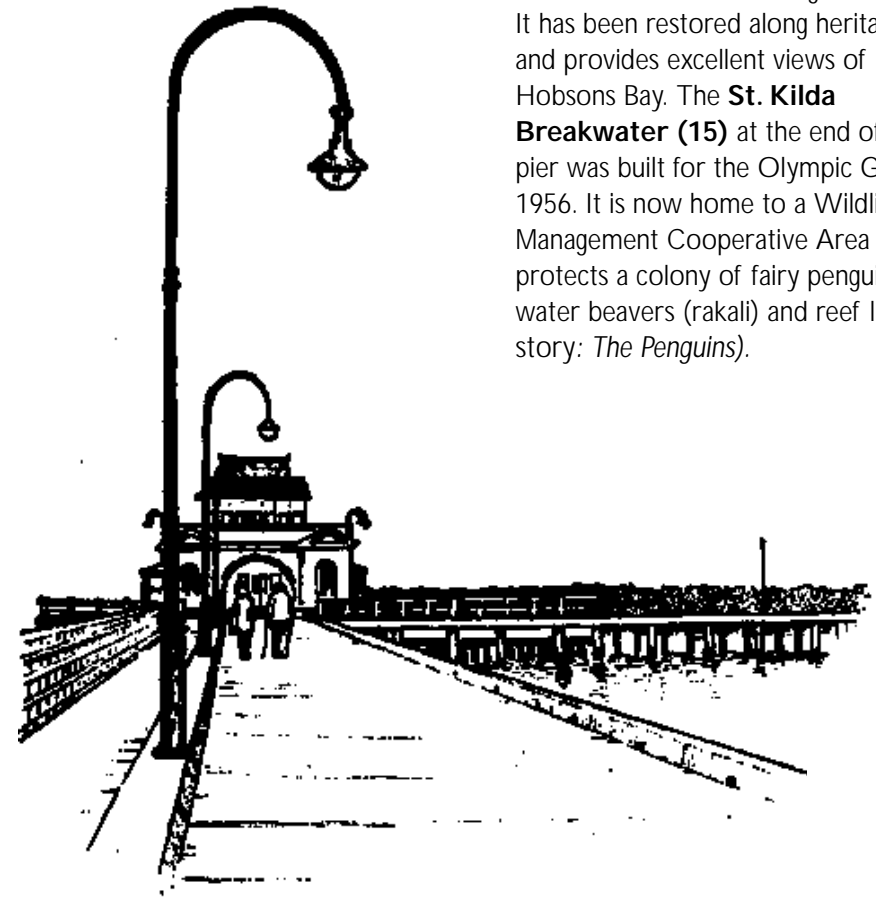
The **St. Kilda Marina (6)** involved the reclamation of 16 hectares of land to meet the growing demand of boating enthusiasts. Past the marina a lighthouse stands in an open area with good views of the bay.

Acland Street (7) is famous for its cake shops and cafes and was the favoured destination of post-war Jewish immigrants.

A former dressing and public bathing pavilion is now **Donovans (9)** restaurant. Opposite is **Luna Park (8)**, a heritage amusement park. The original 'moon' entry face was reconstructed in 1999. Next door is the **Palais**, largest

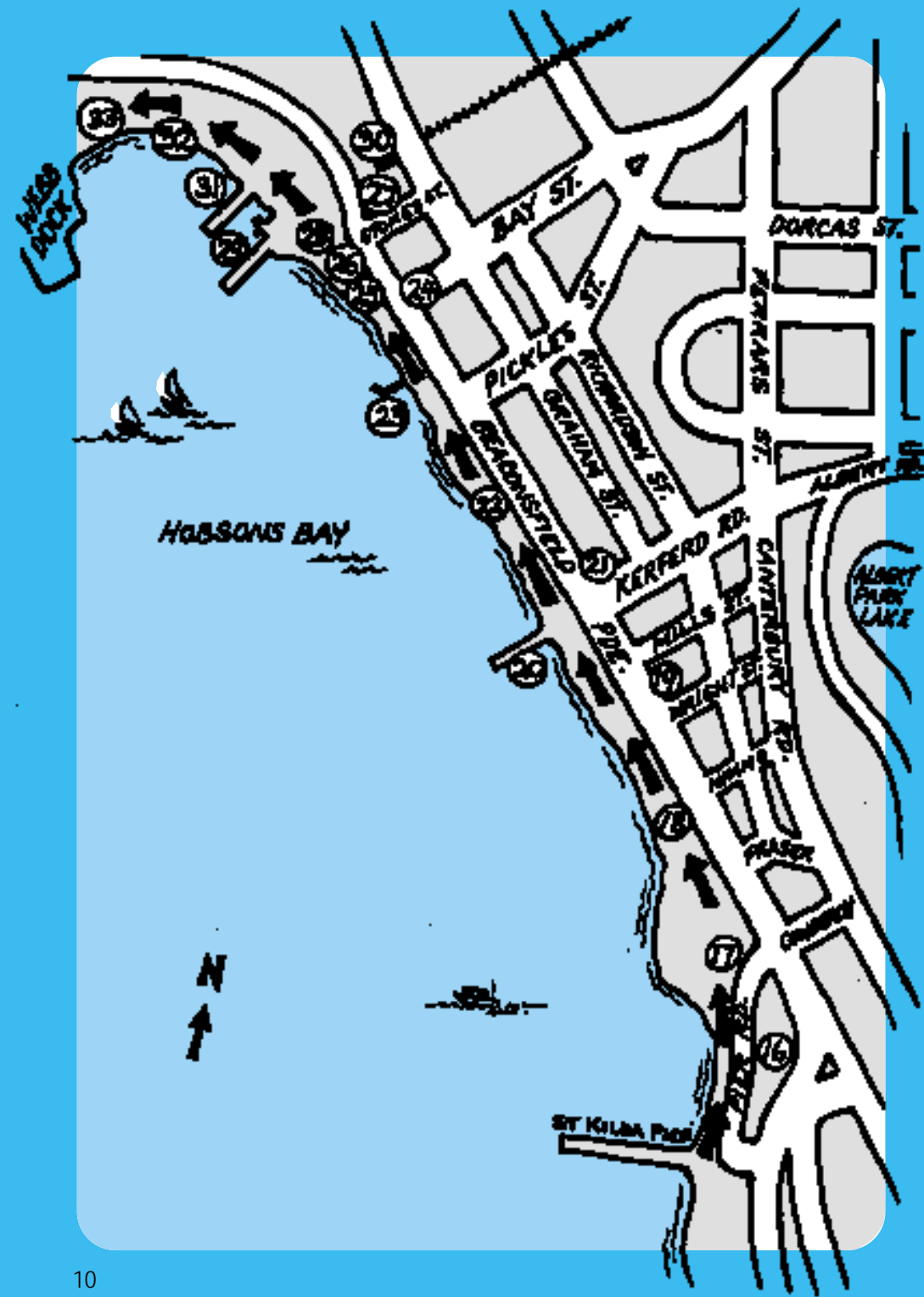
suburban picture palace in the world before a fire in 1926. The **Stoke House (10)** is a former turn-of-the-century teahouse.

Sea Baths (11) have existed on St. Kilda Beach since the 1850's. Although the redeveloped St. Kilda Sea Baths with its Moorish domes no longer has enclosures extending to the sea, it will continue to provide this historic role to the public.



Inland on the **Upper Esplanade (12)** is the popular Sunday handicrafts market. Opposite the market is the **Esplanade Hotel** at 11 Upper Esplanade **(13)**, an icon beloved of Melbourne's artistic and musical community.

St. Kilda Pier (14), built in 1853, is a popular destination for Melburnians. The Victorian kiosk and tearooms at the far end known as 'Kirby's Kiosk' was once used as a meteorological station. It has been restored along heritage lines and provides excellent views of Hobsons Bay. The **St. Kilda Breakwater (15)** at the end of the pier was built for the Olympic Games in 1956. It is now home to a Wildlife Management Cooperative Area that protects a colony of fairy penguins, water beavers (rakali) and reef life (see story: *The Penguins*).



Opposite St. Kilda Pier is the Royal Melbourne Yacht Club, which was instituted in 1876 and provides training for children learning to sail.

Follow Pier Road beside Catani Gardens (16). If you have time, divert into these elegant and shady gardens that were reclaimed from the sea early this century by Carlo Catani. They are home to a large colony of possums that emerge at night to consort with visitors.

At the corner of Pier Road and Beaconsfield Parade is the **West Beach Natural History Garden (17)**. Here volunteers have recreated the original saltmarsh landscape which also filters the Cowderoy drain and provides habitat for birds.

The Aboriginal Trail heads inland from here (see page 27).

Middle Park Lifesaving Club (18) has public change rooms and a kiosk.

Just before Mills Street on the other side of the road is the **Danish Club (19)**. This was the former Italianate mansion called Hughenden which in 1890 housed J.R. Buxton, founder of the real estate firm. Opposite Mills Street is Le Kiosk on the Beach, a foreshore café with the rare advantage of direct access to the beach.

Trail Key

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 16 Catani Gardens | 26 Women's Welcome Home Rotunda |
| 17 West Beach Natural History Garden | 27 Swallow and Ariell Steam Biscuit Manufactory buildings |
| 18 Middle Park Lifesaving Club | 28 Centenary Bridge pylon |
| 19 Danish Club | 29 Station Pier |
| 20 Kerferd Pier | 30 Port Melbourne Railway Station |
| 21 Victoria Hotel | 31 Princes Pier |
| 22 South Melbourne Lifesaving Club | 32 Sandridge Lifesaving Club |
| 23 Lagoon Pier | 33 Perc White Reserve |

Foreshore Trail

Part Two

St. Kilda Pier to Sandridge Beach

Start

St. Kilda Pier

Finish

Sandridge Beach

Length

Seven kilometres

Time

Two hours

Refreshments

There are numerous cafés, kiosks and restaurants in historic buildings on the foreshore, including Le Kiosk on the Beach at Middle Park, Victoria Hotel at Albert Park and The London opposite Station Pier.

Kerferd Road Pier (20), next to the Albert Park Yachting and Angling Club, was built between 1877-1879. Enjoy the marvellous view and chat to the fisher-people who come from all parts of Melbourne and, indeed, the globe. On the north corner of Kerferd Road is the magnificent **Victoria Hotel (21)**. If you have time, have a drink or coffee at the restaurant/bar and inspect the interior.

South Melbourne Lifesaving Club (22) with change facilities is opposite Withers Street. Nearby is the **Plum Garland memorial playground**, located on the beach itself.

Lagoon Pier (23) marks the entrance to a saltwater lagoon that once extended a mile inland. After the lagoon was filled in, local fishing families continued to shelter a boat fleet at Lagoon Pier and to operate a local fish market. Intensive housing development now occupies the site of this historic waterway.

[The Workers Trail heads inland from here \(see page 46\).](#)

Opposite the pier at 9 Beach Street is **Sandridge Bay Towers**, once the **Harper's starch factory**. Through the front gate one can see the giant smoke stack amongst the modern apartments.

Bay Street (24), opposite the **Port Melbourne Yacht Club**, was the route of Liardet's original mail run and contains many historic buildings of the original settlement. Its pubs and bistros attract a lively weekend crowd.

Beyond the yacht club and simple cenotaph is a **pioneer memorial (25)**

to the first permanent settler in Port Melbourne. Wilbraham Frederick Evelyn Liardet arrived with his wife and nine children in 1839 and established a range of small businesses including a ferry service, mail run and resort hotel. They built the hotel, roads, and a jetty and watchtower.

The **Rotunda (26)** was built in 1918 by the Women's Welcome Home Committee. Bands played here as ANZAC troops disembarked from nearby Station Pier. Over a third of Australia's troops departed from Port Melbourne's piers for the two world wars.

At the corner of Stokes Street and Rouse Street is the first building of the **Swallow and Ariell Steam Biscuit Manufactory (27)** founded in 1854 to bake ships' biscuits. At one time most Port Melbourne families had a member working for 'Swallows'. The smell of fresh biscuits is fondly remembered.

The magnificent **Centenary Bridge** with its simple art deco detailing was needlessly demolished in 1991. There remains only a single **pylon (28)** as a souvenir of its splendour.

Station Pier (29) was once a hive of commercial activity, crowded with ships delivering cargoes and passengers from all over the world. Many immigrants first set foot on Australian shores here.

The *Spirit of Tasmania* as well as many international cruise ships now dock here (see story and guide map: *The Pier*).

[The Immigration Trail starts from here. \(see page 58\).](#)

The restored **Port Melbourne Railway Station (30)** is opposite the pier at Beacon Cove. The first public railway line in Australia, it connected the port to the city in 1854 and closed in 1987.

The whole Port Melbourne foreshore has seen extraordinary development in recent years with thousands of new residents moving into high rise apartments and large residential estates such as Beacon Cove.

Between Station and Princes Piers note the bronze and steel interpretation panels, which indicate you are standing on the sightline of the 'leading light' beacons that guided ships up the channel to the piers.

Princes Pier (31) was completed in 1916 in time to send the troops off to the First World War. Originally known as New Railway Pier, it was renamed after the Prince of Wales visited in 1920.

Walk north to **Sandridge Lifesaving Club (32)** on **Sandridge Beach**. For many years after settlement this area was typified by the vast empty reaches of Fishermen's Bend with sandhills and swampland all the way to the Yarra River. The suburb opposite the beach is the Fishermen's Bend Estate portion of **Garden City**, constructed in the 1940's.

Sandridge Beach is one of Melbourne's less known beaches. At the back of the beach, just a few minutes walk north of the Lifesaving Club, is **Perc White Reserve (33)**. It retains original dunes and bushland typical of the area when it was named after the immense sand dunes. The beach and reserve end at Webb Dock, Australia's largest container port.





The Penguins

St. Kilda harbour is one of the most concentrated areas of humanity on the Australian coastline. Amazingly it is also an ecological hot spot for wildlife residents. Possums clamour in Catani Gardens. The Rakalis or water rats prosper in the harbour. Migrating water birds land at the West Beach saltmarsh. Young yellow-eyed mullet hide by the seawall. Seahorses and other marine life shelter on the harbour seabed. And a small colony of Fairy or Little Penguins thrive on the St. Kilda breakwater.

Since 1986 Earthcare St. Kilda, a group made up of local residents, has been caring for the City's wildlife including the St. Kilda penguin colony.

Between 1986 and 1999 over 700 St. Kilda penguins were recorded on the St. Kilda breakwater by the Earthcare research team. Although Port Phillip Bay is home to many thousands of penguins most are temporary visitors from Phillip Island. However the St. Kilda colony remain here to breed and moult in the rocks of the breakwater and forage on their endless fishing trips.

It has been a privilege for me to be a member of Earthcare since it was founded. I got to know many of the penguins well. Some were great characters. I remember Long John, who five months after he lost his foot managed to weigh more than before he lost it. Alfreda, who was treated at the Alfred Hospital at midnight to remove fishing line while the doctors ignored the human queue. Simone, who visited Kirbys Kiosk regularly and learned to climb the stairwell.

I thought that any book that included Port Phillip characters had to include the penguins. Here are three of their stories.

Guinness

For 13 years until 1999 the Earthcare research team visited the breakwater every fortnight in all kinds of weather. These unsung heroes weigh, sex and band any penguins that they find. The data gathered by this team of excrement-splattered bird commandos was successful in having the penguin habitat gazetted as a sanctuary area in 1992.

The research process is not necessarily dignified. The birds are weighed in a small sack. The sex of the birds is checked by inserting the beak into a small hole in a metal bar to check its width. Despite these intrusions the birds have prospered, particularly since the sanctuary area was fenced off. And of all the banded birds, Guinness stands beaks and flippers above the crowd. Guinness is a sort of penguin Iron Man. He holds the record of being the most recorded bird on the breakwater. In 1995 this reached 111 times. In fact he has been recorded so many time he was cheered and greeted as an old mate by the researchers. And when he gives the traditional penguin salute – a vicious penguin bite intended to draw blood – it seems halfhearted and just a matter of form.

Guinness is also a formidable Man of Eggs. For many seasons he and his mate have double-clutched i.e. produced double the traditional single batch of eggs per year. And Guinness doesn't even wait for Spring. Like the eager winner of an egg and spoon race he is quickly off the mark, sometimes sitting on eggs with his partner as early as June.

Guinness is not a particularly large bird. (A large penguin can weigh in at one and a half, even two kilograms). No, his achievements reflect the inner bird, what some see as a typical St. Kilda street-wise toughness.

Nobody knows how old Guinness is. He was first banded in about 1990. Penguins have been recorded up to 21 years of age, although seven years is thought to be an average length of life. In 1994 he disappeared for many months, as penguins are wont to do. Where did he go? It is a wild world out there in Bass Strait. A mystery.

When he turned up again I sat on the rocks and watched him for a while. Quietly, with awe and respect. The lights of Melbourne were brilliant behind him. An uncrowned king of St. Kilda Harbour.

Beau

Last time I saw Beau he was the biggest penguin I've ever seen in my life. The weight of an average penguin is probably about one thousand grams. Beau would have been at least twice that. That's a lot of fish down the gullet and I know for a fact that he didn't catch them all himself.

The story starts on Beaumaris beach in suburban Melbourne several years ago. A lone penguin was found on the shore in the daylight hours. Birds that turn up like this may be ill or distressed so he was dispatched to a wildlife shelter run from the home of Judy, a local resident. After a short course of devoted treatment he was sent down to the Phillip Island Reserve where he received a further two months of free board before returning to the sea.

The following year a penguin was recovered from Beaumaris beach with no obvious signs of distress. The bird was taken to the Zoo where the band number revealed his identity. It was Beau. Back home to Judy he went. Even at a wildlife shelter a penguin is a novelty. Beau was doted on by Judy with every care. Nothing but the best fish. Exercise in the sunny front garden every day. His own special pool. Followed by more fish. Penguins love fish. They can eat up to 20% of their own weight every day.

Beau prospered and grew plump. Whatever mystery illness had ailed him seemed a thing of the past.

Several weeks later Judy brought him to the St. Kilda breakwater for release. How she managed to carry him and his travel box up the pier I don't know. The good life had created a gigantus, a feathered frankenstein. Judy told me that Beau had lost all signs of shyness. He had her running to the fridge all day.

On the breakwater it was obvious that Judy was suffering terrific separation anxiety. That penguin had the psychological edge on that woman and he knew it. We left him in a (large) burrow that night. Would he swim away? I wondered. Life had never been so good.

Two days later number 1162 turned up on the beach at the end of North Road, Brighton. This time however the guesthouse took a firmer line and Beau was given the proverbial shove once more. But I have no doubt he will be back. No surprise to me at all if a mystery penguin turns up at Beaumaris beach again next year

Kamikaze

The Japanese City of Obu, the sister city of Port Phillip, has taken a strong interest in the St. Kilda penguins in the past few years. Obu citizens have rattled the donation tin to raise many thousands of dollars towards penguin protection and have visited on many occasions to check out the locals themselves. I fondly remember the bottle of Black Douglas they donated after one visit.

So it is not surprising that one of St. Kilda's finest bears a Japanese name. However this isn't meant as a tribute to our Asian benefactors. It is simply a tribute to his bloody-mindedness.

The research process is a tricky one. Capture of penguins for banding and weighing involves pursuit in the burrow system. Incredible calisthenics are performed as the study group upend themselves down all kinds of rocky orifices.

Invariably the penguins retreat deep into the vast labyrinth of tunnels in the breakwater, usually to sneer and snicker in comfort as the contorted body blocking out the moonlight is hit by a wave.

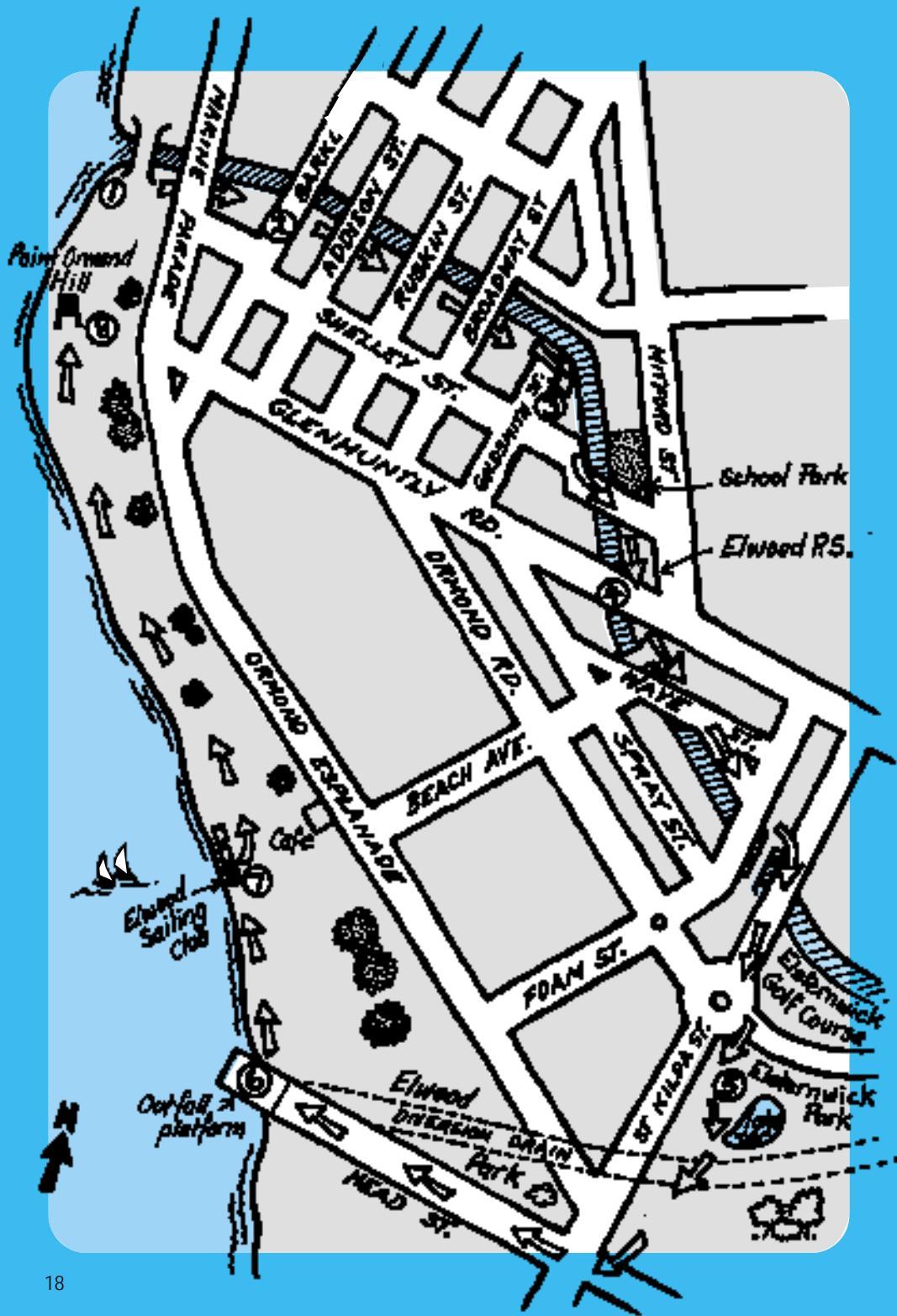
These are the rules of the game and they don't vary. At least they didn't until Kamikaze appeared on the scene. This is the only penguin we've ever encountered that turned the hunters into the hunted. A typical night in the life of Kamikaze:

As night falls, Kamikaze listens alertly from his burrow. He doesn't have long to wait. A familiar crunching sound signals the arrival of the prey – the unsuspecting footfall of boots on gravel. The sound stops abruptly. Kamikaze tenses himself expectantly, bending low to the ground. Suddenly the blinding beam of torchlight penetrates the burrow. With great self-discipline based on his extensive combat experience, Kamikaze holds back that critical second until a human hand rashly extends itself into the entrance.

CHARGE! Kamikaze races forward, and with zen-like timing, slashes his samurai beak across the most delicate part of the extended pinkies.

Aaaaaaaaaaargh! Bloody hell! That bloody Kamikaze again! The air is thick with curses that include his name.

Kamikaze settles down comfortably on his belly deep in the recesses of the burrow. He savours the slightly salty taste of blood and meditates on the sweetness of victory for his kind. ■



Water is a defining feature of the City of Port Phillip, which curves around the spectacular beaches of Hobsons Bay, including Elwood Beach. But the original landscape was also full of wetlands, such as the Elwood swamp drained to the sea by Elster Creek (now Elwood Canal). Large wetlands also existed in Port Melbourne, St. Kilda and Albert Park.

The history of Elwood reflects the ways in which water shapes our patterns of settlement, our parks and public works, our recreation, our wildlife and our heritage.

The canal is a unique seam of open space running through the urban fabric of the suburb. The dramatic transition from swamp to suburb continues today with works to reduce flooding and improve water purity. The local community uses the Elwood Canal Master Plan adopted by the Council in December 1998 to improve the canal's natural and cultural heritage.

This Waterways trail forms the shape of a gecko as it follows the Elwood canal and the coastline. The gecko has become a symbol of the plentiful wildlife, such as birds, fish and possums, along this green corridor.

This trail includes a canal, a former swamp, a lake, the beach, an urban forest, an Aboriginal campsite and a historic quarantine station site.

Trail Key

- 1 Elwood Canal footbridges
- 2 Barkly Street
- 3 Goldsmith Street
- 4 Glenhuntly Road
- 5 Elsternwick Lake
- 6 Head Street/Elwood beach
- 7 Elwood Sailing Club
- 8 Point Ormond Hill

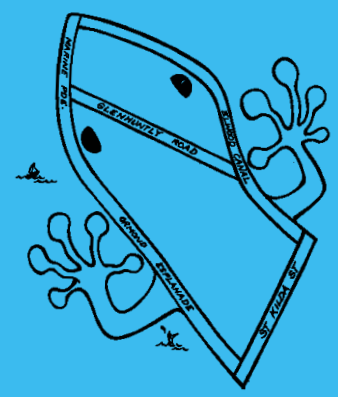
Waterways 'Gecko' Trail

Start
Point Ormond Reserve
Melway 67 A2

Finish
Point Ormond Reserve

Length
Five kilometres

Time
70-100 minutes



Refreshments

There is a kiosk on the Elwood beach foreshore. The Elwood Beach House, a café that has its own playground, is located at the entrance to the Elwood Beach car park. There are also cafes on Ormond Road.

Where the canal meets the sea

At Point Ormond Reserve start at one of the pedestrian footbridges (1) at the north end of the parkland (Moran Reserve) where the Elwood canal flows to the sea. In 1835 the crew of the *Enterprize* dropped anchor here at Elster Creek before proceeding to the settlement site on the Yarra. Elster Creek is now better known as the Elwood canal (Elster is German for magpie). John Fawkner later described the scene:

"The lovely knolls around the lagoons and on the flats or swamps and the flocks almost innumerable of teal, ducks, geese and swans and minor fowl filled them with joy."

Look down from the bridge into the water. Both here and further up the canal you can often see schools of juvenile yellow-eyed mullet and other fish such as galaxias, bream, black brigs, hardy head and pilchards that crowd the drain for protection.

The mouth of this canal was once 150 metres north opposite Meredith Street but was reconstructed at the turn of the century. This newer canal was designed for barges to carry goods for a warehouse area but the Lands Department decided to sell it for residential purposes.

Follow the canal away from the beach. Walking east, cross **Marine Parade** and continue to **Barkly Street (2)**.

The Channel: Barkly Street to Glenhuntly Road

From here to Glenhuntly Road you are now walking through the former



Elwood Swamp along a path and bicycle track. The Elster Creek once flowed into the sea through this natural flood plain that waxed and waned with the weather and was often impassable in the winter. Barnacles can still be found under the bridges here. This is because the tide affects the water level as far as Glenhuntly Road. In the past high tides have combined with heavy rain to cause floods. This tidal influence was much underestimated by the canal's original builders, to the residents' peril. Seaweed is sometimes washed into the drain and the resultant smell is not eau-de-cologne. The dredge *Elwood* drained the swamp in the 1890's. Parts of the reclaimed swamp were left below the level of extreme tides and houses were built on low-lying areas that should have been raised. Drains were also added over the years without thought of the consequences.

For a long time the swamp was a barrier to accessing the rest of St. Kilda, especially in winter. Elwood's early settlers were a rebellious lot, reluctant to pay rates and threatening to become

part of Brighton. They were unhappy about the roads, the abattoir, the night soil dumping. As one petitioner pleaded: *'Has human life no value at Elwood?'*

Mrs Huon was the daughter of Hon. John Dougharty, a member of Parliament 1880-1888. She grew up in the Gothic House on Elwood Esplanade. In Mrs Huon's day, Elwood was covered with wattle trees, and she remembered hundreds of magpies in the creek area. Her father, driving home in winter, often had the waters of the Elwood swamp wash over the floor of his buggy.

The Green Corridor

In recent years the canal has been planted with indigenous plants to create an important green corridor for the migration of birds. Signs explaining the food, tool and medicinal use of native plants follow the length of the canal trail.

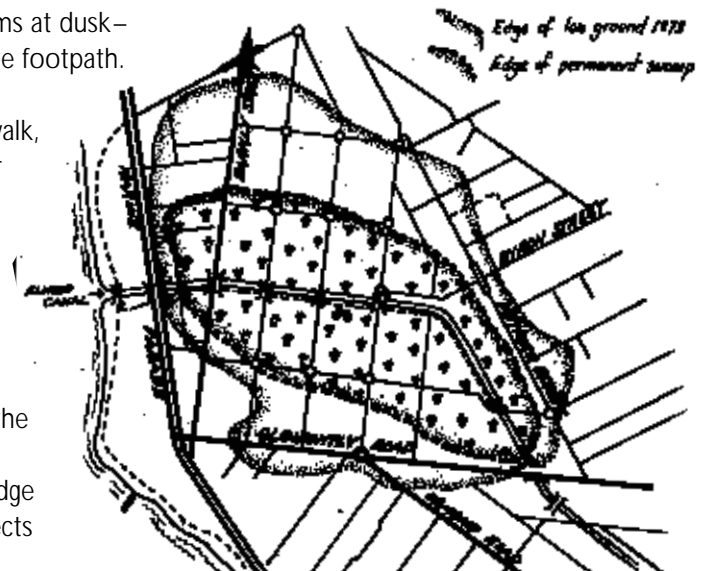
Shortly after Broadway Street are the 'Hi-rise' trees.

Birds crowd these Canary Island Palms at dusk—witness the guano on the footpath.

The noise at dusk is extraordinary. As you walk, glance up into the other trees. The canal is a popular location for birds' nests. Birds such as Thrushes, Wagtails and Mudlarks use mud from the canal in nest construction. Observe the Welcome Swallows swooping under the bridge arches and catching insects above the water.

At **Goldsmith Street (3)** the canal takes a dramatic 60-degree turn south, providing excellent views in both directions. Opposite Goldsmith Street look for the Byron Street drain that joins the canal. In 1891 this brick barrel drain was joined to the canal two feet below tide level. Sixteen stormwater drains still enter the canal between Marine Parade and Glenhuntly Road, draining an area of 40 square kilometres.

Continue walking to **Shelley Street** where Elwood Primary and Secondary School cluster around School Park (east side). Listen to the high pitched cries of the noisy miner birds. These native birds live communally, the males mating with many females and each nestling being fed by many fathers. Cross over Shelley Street and continue on the path on the opposite side of the canal. Look for the elster or magpie nests high in the gums before Glenhuntly Road.



Murphy's Paddock: Glenhuntly Road to St. Kilda Street

From **Glenhuntly Road (4)** to St. Kilda Street, the canal dramatically narrows to a bluestone channel with grassy banks. The area within the Ormond Road, Glenhuntly Road and St. Kilda Street triangle was once a swampy area known as Murphy's paddock. Murphy would now be astonished to see his soggy paddocks transformed to prized real estate. Robert Hoddle first surveyed the Elwood area in 1850. The name probably derives from the Quaker, Thomas Ellwood, a friend of the poet Milton. Lieutenant Governor La Trobe, a supporter of the Quakers, may well have named the new village.

This area includes the **Foam and Wave Street bluestone fords**, which often flood in wet weather. In recent years' musk lorikeets have arrived in summer to feed on the flowering gums. There are further plans to create a series of attractive ponds in this section. (Turn right at Wave Street if you want to take a short-cut back to Elwood Beach).

Proceed to St. Kilda Street. In 1871 the Brighton Council cut a canal to St. Kilda, dumping its waters. St. Kilda was then forced to complete the canal to the sea. Floods became a hazard shortly thereafter.

In 1989 residents were seen riding canoes and surfboards in Wave Street.



To the Lake and the Ocean

Turn right at **St. Kilda Street** and cross **Bent Avenue/Ormond Road**.

At least once every winter a dense fog rises along Bent Avenue – the rising ghost of the former Elwood Swamp. On your left (east) is **Elsternwick Park**. Divert into the park to visit **Elsternwick Lake (5)**. Here you may see typical wildfowl e.g. black ducks, swans, cormorants as reported by Fawkner's crew in 1835. The lake was created in 1998 to absorb any overflow of excess water during floods. In the past natural wetlands absorbed this overflow. Near the far end of the lake is a ten-metre metal grill where you can view the huge three-chambered channel that runs under Elsternwick Park to divert swamp floodwaters to the beach.

Cross to **Head Street** just past the service station and walk to **Elwood Beach. Elwood Park** on your right was once a bullock paddock. Where Head Street meets the beach, a concrete platform **(6)** extends out to sea. This is the outlet of the diversion drain seen under Elsternwick Park. In the floor of the promenade are ceramic tiles by artist Tony Hutchinson that illustrate the history of Hobsons Bay. The beaches on either side of the promenade are great places for beachcombing after storms.

An Urban Forest

Turn right and walk north along **Elwood Beach** towards **Point Ormond**. Dolphins are occasionally sighted from the beach. At the **Elwood Sailing Club (7)** divert into the

bushland at the back of the beach. Many native plants here have signs that explain their medicinal, food or tool use.

Continue walking along the leafy trails to Point Ormond. This urban coastal forest is the result of extensive plantings by the council and residents in recent years. Keep an eye out for the numerous bird species that live here such as Honeyeaters, Silver-eyes, Superb Blue Wrens and White-browed Scrub Wrens. Migratory birds travel through, such as Flame Robins (winter) and Grey Fantails (autumn and spring). There are fox dens and beehives in this area as well.

The native plants here are representative of the coastal flora of Port Phillip Bay. They include Tea-tree as well as Coastal Banksias, Wattles, Grey and Seaberry Saltbush, She-oaks, Seabox, Cushion Bush, Kangaroo Apple and Purple Coral Pea.

A Hill with a View

At Point Ormond Reserve climb **Point Ormond Hill (8)** to the white wooden tower at the top. Near here, in 1988, burned one of the bicentennial fires that encircled Australia (a plaque is set in the grassy ridge 20 metres to the south of the tower).

This is a fantastic place to watch the sunset and see the lights turn on around the bay.

From the hill walk directly east towards **Point Ormond Avenue**.



The gecko is a small and graceful lizard found at night in leaf litter or climbing walls seeking insects. Many species have adhesive pads like tree frogs on their toes. Lacking moveable eyelids, the geckoes lick their eyes clean with their tongues. Their tails may break easily to escape predators and they can grow more than one in replacement.

Soft bodied, big-eyed and running with a wriggling motion, they are often found in the canal area and throughout the City of Port Phillip.

Next to the road is a cairn with bronze plaque placed by descendants of passengers of the fever ship *Glen Huntly*, who were quarantined at Point Ormond in 1839.

Point Ormond was named after Captain Ormond, who also visited Port Phillip in 1839. His son Francis rose from the position of stable boy to become a wealthy landowner and benefactor. Ormond suburb and Ormond College also bear his name.



View of Elster Creek and Point Ormond Hill in 1878

The Hill

Point Ormond hill rises steeply from the coast at Point Ormond Reserve to overlook the City of Port Phillip.

The peaceful landmark has an extraordinary history. Once this rounded prominence was a long curving cliff called Little Red Bluff, before much of it was demolished for landfill for the Elwood swamp and other public works. Early paintings depict an idyllic green site with the charming Elster Creek (now the Elwood Canal) nearby.

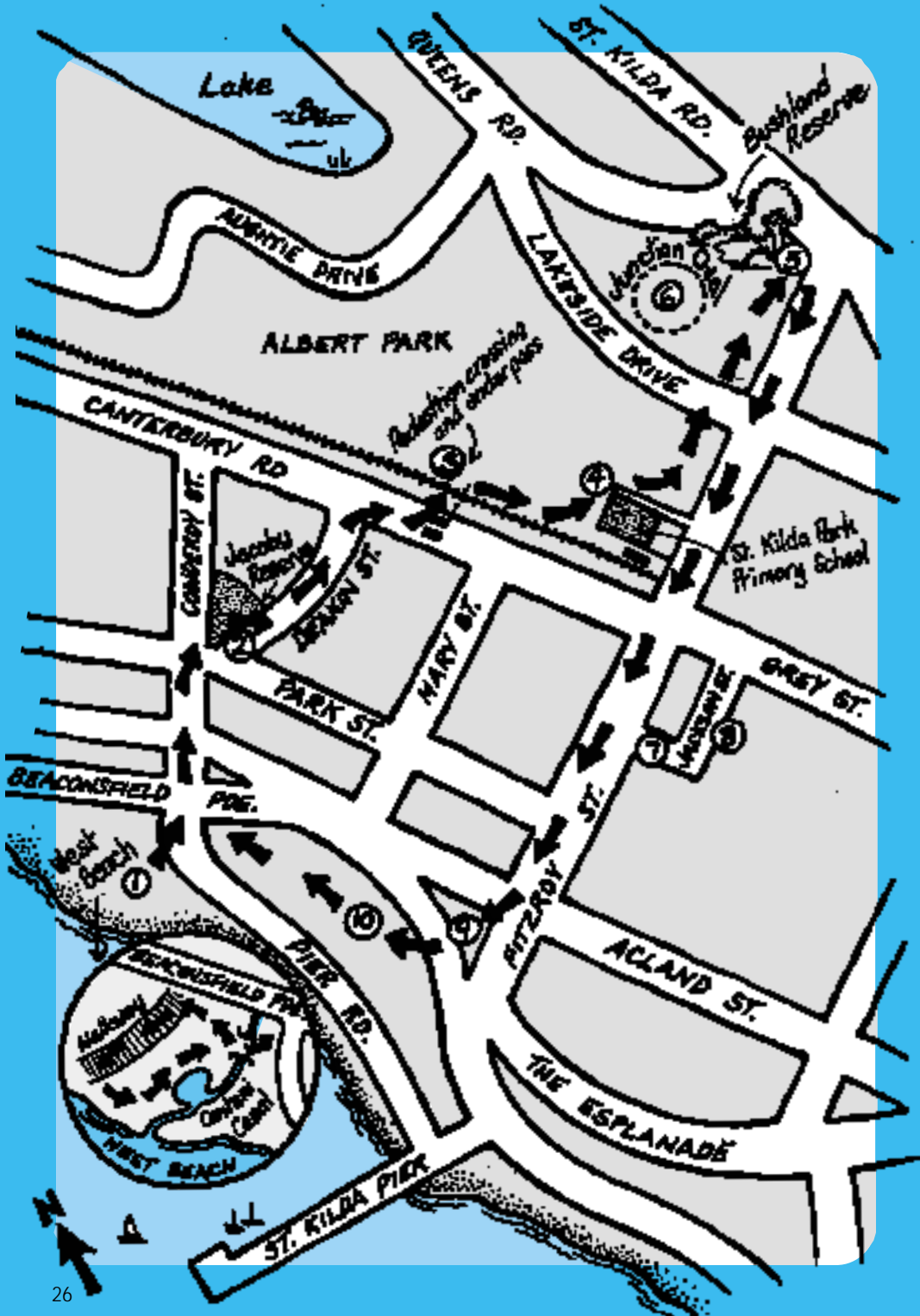
In 1974 an Aboriginal shell midden was recorded at Point Ormond, indicating it was once a campsite for the traditional owners. The hill would have provided an excellent strategic lookout for game and other clans. The reef at the foot of the hill would have provided shellfish and other foods. Aboriginal people had an oral tradition that included accurate accounts of the flooding of Hobsons Bay about 9000 years ago. Their traditional accounts included the sea breaking in at the Heads, hunting of wildlife on the plain that is now Hobsons Bay and the submerging of the Yarra River channel.

Point Ormond was once a graveyard. In 1840, five years after European settlement, a quarantine station was established here. The overcrowded *Glen Huntley* had docked in the bay flying the fever flag, terrifying the inhabitants of the new colony. A canvas town under guard was set up in bitterly cold weather. Of the original 157 emigrants who had boarded the barque in Argyleshire, ten died at sea. Three more were buried at the quarantine station in what became St. Kilda's first official graveyard. The graves of James Mathers, John Craig and George Armstrong remained on the bluff for fifty years before erosion forced them to be reburied in St. Kilda Cemetery in 1898. One hundred and fifty years later, in 1990, descendants of the *Glen Huntley* immigrants met at the Point. A bluestone cairn next to the nearby road celebrates this reunion.

In later years the site was used variously. At one time an abattoir was built nearby and blood drained into the Elwood swamp. Two women dug 184 feet for coal before abandoning a mine called Helena. One of the women was an animal liberationist who only allowed female animals on her farm, and as the other was a clairvoyant, a spirit called Pat inspired the mine.

The magnificent views of sunset and of Hobsons Bay have been utilised in recent years by the arts – scenes from *On the Beach* and *A Man of Flowers* were filmed at the Point.

The motifs of fire and water recur strongly on the hill. Aboriginal fires burned here for millennia before 1835. Log-fire beacons at Point Ormond were lit at the Separation celebrations in 1851 and also at the Bicentennial celebrations in 1988 that created a 'ring of fire' around Australia. In 1989 local residents claimed a UFO had landed at the point, creating a scorched circle. An amazing passage from stone-tool campsite to outerspace heliport in a mere 170 or so years. ■



This trail celebrates the traditional owners who for up to 60,000 years or more occupied the landscape we now call the City of Port Phillip.

Historical records of camping places, ceremonial sites, creation stories and burial places testify to this ancient occupation. The wetlands at Lagoon Oval (Port Melbourne), Elster Creek (Elwood canal) and Albert Park Lake provided a rich abundance of food. Corroborees were performed at Emerald Hill, now the site of the South Melbourne Town Hall. Point Ormond hill in Elwood was the site of an aboriginal midden and no doubt served as a strategic lookout. The City's oldest living entity – an ancient ceremonial red gum – overlooks what is now St. Kilda Junction. The St. Kilda area was recorded as Yuroe Yuroke or the 'grinding stone' area. Grinding stones were used to sharpen stone axes, an essential tool of all adult males.

The trail includes a wetland, billabong, traditional camping place, a ceremonial tree, a memorial garden and a possum colony.

Trail key

- 1 West Beach Natural History Park
- 2 Deakin Street
- 3 Albert Park
- 4 St. Kilda Park Primary School
- 5 Corroboree Tree
- 6 Junction Oval
- 7 Jackson Street
- 8 Wattle House
- 9 Cleve Gardens
- 10 Catani Gardens

Aboriginal Trail

Start and finish

West Beach
 Natural History Park,
 corner of Pier Road and
 Beaconsfield Parade,
 St. Kilda
 Melway 57 J8

Length

Four kilometres

Time

One to one and a half hours

Refreshments

There is a kiosk at West Beach. There are innumerable restaurants and cafés on Fitzroy Street.

As it was once was

Start the walk at the West Beach Natural History Park (1) on the corner of Pier Road and Beaconsfield Parade. The park is a re-creation of a saltmarsh landscape before European settlement. Cross the bridge over Cowderoy Canal and explore the paths. Note the sculpture boards and the wooden boardwalk (faded serpent) decorated by artists Cathy Adams and Ray Thomas respectively. Look for the **plant signs** that explain the food, tool and medicinal uses of native plants. For example, common 'pigface' has an edible berry, its juices are used as a painkiller for stings and it can be squeezed to provide water for drinking. Indigenous grasses were used to weave baskets, nets and ornaments.



Sit on one of the wooden benches. It's a fantastic place to see the sunset over Hobsons Bay. Aboriginal people recalled **Hobsons Bay** as a 'kangaroo ground' before the sea broke through the Heads at the end of the last Ice Age about 9,000 years ago. A Dreamtime story tells how *Bunjil*, the ancestral creator, placed rocks in the area now St. Kilda to stop the approach of the sea during the great flood.

Leave West Beach, cross over Beaconsfield Parade with the pedestrian lights and proceed up Cowderoy Street.

More than one Federation

Walk east along Cowderoy Street and turn right into Deakin Street (2) at shady Jacoby Reserve.

Alfred Deakin, a gifted journalist, barrister and politician was popularly regarded in 1901 as the prime mover and strategist of Australian Federation. He served three terms as Prime Minister and is buried in St. Kilda Cemetery (see map: *Cemetery Trail*, page 70).

Our 1901 Federation was not the first. Before settlement a confederacy of peoples called the Kulin or Kulin nation occupied a large area of Victoria including what we now call Melbourne. Each of the Kulin peoples identified with areas of land or clan estates that they regarded as their own since the time of creation.

In 1999 the City of Port Phillip developed a memorandum of understanding with Aboriginal community elders and representatives. This memorandum acknowledges the Bunurong or Boonerwung as traditional owners of the area now called the City of Port Phillip. It acknowledges the Wurundjeri Tribe Land Compensation and Cultural Heritage Council as traditional custodians with responsibilities in the City defined by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984. In recent years St. Kilda has also been a gathering place for Aboriginal people from all parts of Australia and the home of community organisations such as *Ngwala Willumbong* and *Galiamble*.

Turn right when you reach Canterbury Road and cross at the pedestrian lights near Mary Street. An **underpass** under the light rail line takes you into Albert Park.

Hunting and gathering by the lake

Albert Park (3) is Victoria's most visited park. It is 225 acres in area and includes Albert Park Lake. The lake, once a natural lagoon, is circled by five kilometres of walking track. Before settlement the park was an important *willam* or camping place for Aboriginal people. They were seen hunting and gathering and building bark shelters beside the lagoon which teemed with gunabi (ducks) and gunuwarra (swans). The lagoon also provided plants with roots from which starch was extracted to make damper. Wildlife such as tortoises, eels, frogs, fish, and freshwater shellfish would have been harvested. The rich environment meant four or five hours' foraging a day was probably sufficient to meet family needs.

Kids business

From the underpass, **St. Kilda Park Primary School is on the rise to your immediate right (4).** **Take the right hand paths that lead you up to and around the school buildings (towards Fitzroy Street).** Trail markers are also planned along the path to indicate the route. This heritage school was built 19 years before Federation at a cost of 5,000 pounds. In years 2000 and 2001 the children of



this school were involved in the development of this Aboriginal Trail including the planting of indigenous flora.

A living monument

Leave the school and follow walking paths in the park **parallel to Fitzroy Street** until you reach St. Kilda Junction. For safety, use the pedestrian lights at Lakeside Drive. **The St. Kilda corroboree or ngargee tree (5)** is a red gum eucalyptus beside the **kerb of Queens Road, 100 metres from its junction with Fitzroy Street.** This four to seven hundred-year-old gum is recorded as the site of Aboriginal ceremonies prior to European settlement in 1835 and later as a fringe camp by surviving Aboriginal people (see story: *The Tree*). It is a rare and living witness of the change from a hunter gatherer lifestyle to an urban society. The tree is listed on the Register of the National Estate. Note the

memorial plaque directly near the base of the tree.

Aboriginal dance ceremonies such as *ngargee* and *gaggip* celebrated important events and meetings and promoted unity between communities. Dances were also used to tell traditional stories. The men often decorated their bodies with designs in white clay and coloured ochre. The women chanted and drummed on skins stretched tightly between their legs, clapped their hands and beat sticks and boomerangs together to provide the rhythm of the dance.

Cockatoos, galahs and possums still meet at the tree. Black ducks frequent the **billabong**. In 2000 the stick nest of Waa the crow, one of the two moieties of the Kulin nation, could be seen in the upper branches.

Many people see the protection of this living monument as an important contribution to reconciliation (see story: *The Tree*). Local residents have created the billabong and bushland beside the tree to commemorate Aboriginal occupation and promote the health of this ancient gum.

Retrace your steps past Junction Oval towards St. Kilda Primary School and then walk down Fitzroy Street.

Marngrook

Note Junction Oval (6) on your right as you return towards the school. This historic oval was the home ground of the St. Kilda Football Club until the Saints moved to Moorabbin. James Wandin played at the ground for

St. Kilda in the 1950s, and believes he was the first Aboriginal player in the league (see story: *The Footballer*).

The club was founded in 1873. Both Aboriginal men and women played forms of football prior to settlement. In 1839 Assistant Protector William Thomas recorded an Aboriginal game called *marngrook* in which a rolled ball of possum skin bound tightly with kangaroo sinew was kicked high in the air by two teams:

'There is general excitement who shall catch it, the tall fellows stand the best chance, when the ball is caught it is kicked into the air with great force... they will play at this game for hours and fine exercise it is for adults and youths.'

Seizing the land

Continue down the north side of Fitzroy Street until it meets Jackson Street (7) on its south side. Samuel Jackson was a member of John Fawkner's syndicate. Aboriginal people had land ownership of Melbourne for up to 60,000 years or more before two rival Tasmanian syndicates led by Fawkner and Batman claimed ownership in 1835. Only fifteen years later, Samuel Jackson erected his prefabricated house **at 53 Jackson Street** called **Wattle House (8)**. To visit St. Kilda's oldest and most historic home proceed down Jackson Street and continue left toward Grey Street.

The settlers built many colonial mansions on former Aboriginal land in what is now called Fitzroy Street. Most now have shops in their former gardens



such as **Chronicles** bookstore at 91 Fitzroy Street. Glance in the open space next to Chronicles to glimpse a former manse.

A modern meeting place

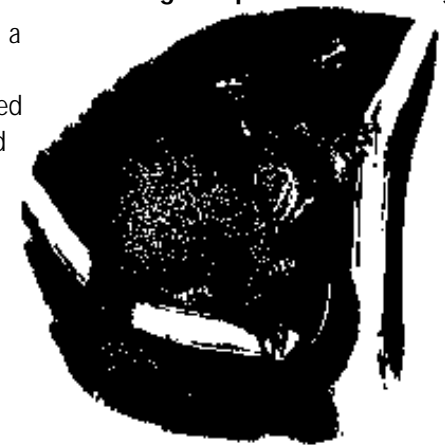
Cleve Gardens (9) is located on the triangular reserve at the corner of Fitzroy Street and Beaconsfield Parade. Aboriginal people, including visitors from interstate, have used this reserve as a meeting place for decades despite attempts to discourage their presence. Local by-laws were often used to restrict public meeting places in areas like Fitzroy. Residents remember Cleve Gardens as a gathering place for the 'parkies' and the designs painted on the ablution block: the Aboriginal flag, giant lizards and Uluru. Media attention was focused on the site in 1996, just prior to the Grand Prix, when the block was bulldozed. Since 1996, native plants, a cultural heritage marker and wave-shaped seating have been constructed in consultation with local people and Aboriginal community members. NAIDOC Week celebrations for local Koori people have also been held here. The site is included on Aboriginal Affairs Victoria's Historic Sites Register. Note the memorial to Robbie Hunter of the 'parkies'.

A home for marsupial Australians

Cross Beaconsfield Parade to the Catani Gardens (10) on the

foreshore. A night visit to the gardens is highly recommended to see the scores of tame *walert* which descend from the trees in search of food. *Walert* or brush-tail possums were an essential source of food and clothing for Aboriginal people. *Walert-gurn* or possum skin rugs were made of up to 80 skins that, despite their extraordinary lightness, were warm and waterproof. The skins were stretched and sewn finely together using sinew and needles made of pierced animal bones. The inner skin of the cloak was scored with shells to create striking designs and to make the skin supple. Today these beautiful marsupials are hand-fed and protected by local residents. Recommended foods are vegetables and fruit scraps.

Return to your starting point at West Beach by walking north along the paths in Catani gardens.





The Corroboree Tree: Lest We Forget

Expressions of reconciliation can take many forms. They grow out of communities themselves, shaped and inspired by people coming together at the community level to do something....

AUSTRALIAN RECONCILIATION CONVENTION 1999

The corroboree or *ngargee* tree at St. Kilda Junction, despite its ancient lineage, is simply a tree. These great red gums were common once. We cannot know exactly what significance such a tree had for Aboriginal people before settlement. However, as physical remains of Aboriginal culture are rare, it is not surprising that we revere those artifacts that remain.

That said, it is an incredibly tough tree, especially considering that Melbourne's greatest traffic intersection has developed around it. The trunk has been hit many times by cars and may be supported by less than half its root system because of compaction by the road. Yet, against all odds, it is in surprisingly good shape.

As a symbol this tree has had powerful if different meanings for so many people, depending on their own life experiences.

Even at the height of the White Australia Policy, St. Kilda

Council recognised its importance. The plaque they erected at the base of the tree in 1952 is still there:

'Aboriginals of early settlement days congregated and held their ceremonies under and in the vicinity of this tree'.

Jacob Miller, who moved to St. Kilda in the 1850's, often told his son Victor that he had seen the remnant Aboriginal population *'perform their dancing about the old tree'*. Victor Miller grew up and lived in his father's house where he was born in 1875, 300 metres from the tree. As a small child he played with his siblings around the tree. For almost a century he was its active guardian and intervened to save the tree from destruction on at least one occasion (*see story: The Guardian*).

A retired doctor laboured with many others in the 1980s to build a billabong and bush garden to commemorate and support the tree. He was a passionate campaigner who chained himself to trees to prevent their destruction. A young man who participated in the garden's creation has since died and a memorial stone can be found near the pond.

In 2000 Althea Bartholomew visited the tree. She remembered how her father saved the tree during the construction of the St. Kilda junction. He was an engineer who fought successfully to divert the junction inches from the base of the tree, incurring great trouble and expense to the government.

In 2000 James Wandin, President of the Wurundjeri Council and a direct descendant of the Wurundjeri head man William Barak, came to visit the tree. He recalled how he played football for the Saints at Junction Oval a few hundred metres away, the first Aboriginal player in the VFL.

Wildlife still gather at the tree. Black ducks flock regularly to the billabong nearby, cockatoos and galahs visit the upper branches. In 2000 Waa the crow was nesting in the tree. Waa is one of the two moieties of the Kulin nation. It was Waa who stole fire and was burnt black in the process. In the millennium year he has returned to raise young in the arms of an arboreal mother.

In 2000 technology meshed with the tree. A local soil bacteria cultured in America has the capacity to increase root systems by 700%. The corroboree tree was the first Australian tree to trial this treatment. Several tree specialists also examined the tree and its

details were logged onto palm computers. A hi-tech device pumped air into the ground, dramatically increasing soil aeration.

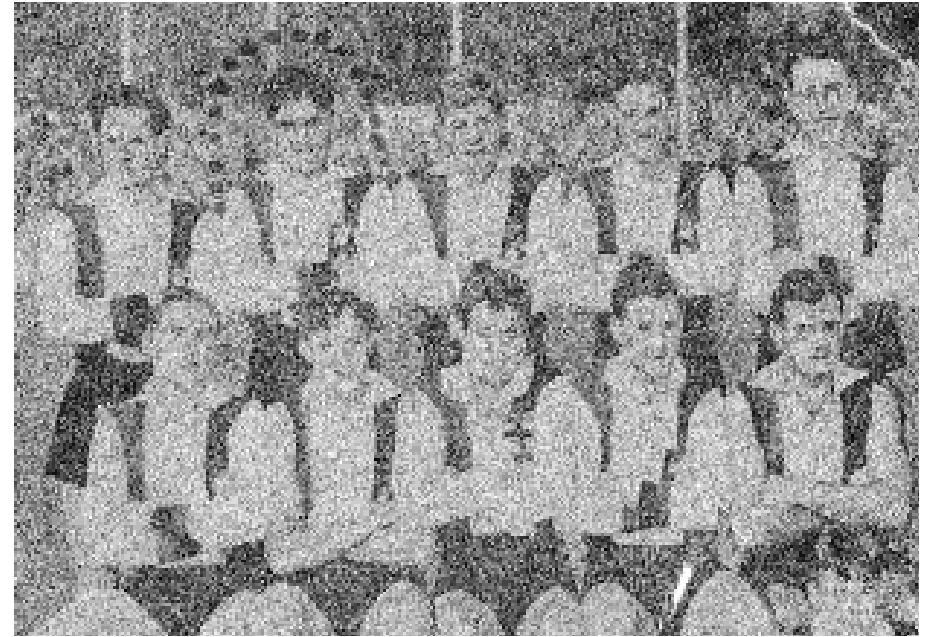
In 2000 Caroline Briggs, a Bunurong elder, visited to speak at a public launch of a Federation project at the tree, expressing the support of the Bunurong for the preservation of her people's cultural heritage.

In 2001 that Federation project is working to enhance the protection of this living monument. The project is also working with local school children to build a heritage trail.

Participants in the project have their own personal reasons for involvement. For some it is about memory. In the 19th century the Aboriginal clans were devastated by the loss of their physical and spiritual connection to their land. Since that time the tree has kept the memory of this people alive even when the culture of assimilation and denial was widespread. Those who act now and in the past to protect the tree affirm this memory and heritage.

Others believe that the Federation theme of coming together to celebrate the birth of the Australian nation is an opportunity to affirm the rights and cultural heritage of the original Australians, who had established a confederacy or nation known as the Kulin long before European settlement.

As an ancient meeting place, the tree is a powerful symbol of this desire and opportunity. ■



James Wandin and the Saints (second left, back row) circa 1952

The Footballer

First in the League

James Wandin (known to family and friends as Djuby) believes he was the last person to be born at Coranderrk Station at Healesville. He was born in the home of his grandmother Jemima Wandin, who he says was the last person to live at Coranderrk. She refused to leave when the mission was closed, and is now buried at Coranderrk Cemetery. James' family moved on to Healesville where he and his nine siblings were raised.

His father fought in France in 1914-1918. On returning he worked for the PMG until he retired. He was a keen footballer, as were his four sons. The girls also excelled at sport.

In 1949 when James was 15, he left school and played for the Healesville seconds. The team won the premiership and James the Best and Fairest. He moved on to the seniors who also won a premiership in 1951. He had been training at

Junction Oval with the Saints for some time, and in 1952 joined the team.

*I was the first Aboriginal person to play VFL
(now AFL) football.*

He wasn't keen on moving to Melbourne but his father insisted.

In those days when your father said jump, you jumped.

James enjoyed playing for St. Kilda at Junction Oval, St. Kilda for two years. He was paid six pounds a game, which was more than the average weekly wage.

I also got 15 bob a training night.

This was good money, especially as he got called up for National Service in 1952, which made employment difficult.

Although the Saints were near the bottom of the league, the fans were enthusiastic and loyal and the team treated him well. He played with Neil Roberts and Brian Gleason, both of whom won Brownlow medals. Harold Grey was also a brilliant player. He was coached by Cole Williamson and captained by Keith Drinan and Jim Ross.

*There was sledging of course, just like today, but you
just accepted it as part of the tactics of the game.
You gave as good as you got.*

Ironically St. Kilda's colours had been those of the Aboriginal flag. Unfortunately they were also German colours, so wartime sentiment changed them to today's red, white and black.

After two years James had enough of the city.

I got the call of the bush.

He returned to Healesville and took up a position of player coach in 1954 with the Healesville seniors.

*That year we won the premiership and I got Best and
Fairest.*

He coached until 1961. Like his father he joined the PMG until he retired after 37 years.

James is now President of the Wurundjeri Tribe Land Compensation and Heritage Council Incorporated. He has resumed the role of *ngurungaeta* or head man of the Wurundjeri people in the footsteps of his great grandfather William Barak. Barak was an outstanding and respected leader who fought for many decades to advance the cause of his people. In 1991 his striking pictures of Aboriginal ceremonies were exhibited at the National Gallery. He died at Coranderrk in 1903.

Recently James and his sister Doreen Garvey visited the Corroboree tree at St. Kilda Junction. They are both very keen to see improvements on the site.

*I never realised how close I was to an Aboriginal sacred
site when I played for St. Kilda at Junction Oval all
those years ago. ■*

'My father who settled in St. Kilda in the early 1850s had often told me that he had seen the remnant population of blacks perform their dancing about the old tree.'

I was delighted when I discovered this statement in an article written in May 1952 in *Wild Life*. It was attributed to a St. Kilda resident called Victor Miller. This record provides rare and direct evidence that the Corroboree tree was a ceremonial site. But who was Victor Miller?

I began looking for Victor. The article mentioned that he sought the assistance of the Field Naturalist Club in saving the tree from being cut down. I rang them and they sent me a letter that he had written in 1966. In it Victor wrote that he had been born in 1875 in his father house 300 metres from the tree and that he still owned that house. I rang Kay Rowan, the history librarian, who checked her records and discovered the house had been at 84 High Street opposite Charnwood Road, and that in 1864 Jacob Miller, a furniture dealer, local identity and St. Kilda Councillor, had owned it. By 1938 his son Victor was the owner.

I drove to the location. High Street is now St. Kilda Road. All the former houses and shops have been pulled down. But the location is 300 metres from the Corroboree tree.

In summary, when Victor was 91 years old he was still in possession of his father's house where he had been born, only a few minutes walk from the corroboree tree. He had played under the tree as a child. His father Jacob had settled in St. Kilda within 20 years of settlement and passed on to him stories about the tree and the Aboriginal inhabitants. Victor was a self-appointed guardian of the tree until he died in 1974 at 98 years of age. A century of care and love for a tree and the memory of a people.

I would have liked to have met Victor. His work needs carrying on. This year alone the tree has already been hit twice by cars. ■

Victor's letter of June 1966:

In The Age of 21st May 1966 there was published an article on the Corroboree tree at St. Kilda Junction reporting the saving of the tree from extinction for all time from the axe. I would like to mention that a few years ago the Park Trust of those days would have cut the tree down on account of the dropping of its branches, as they thought these might injure someone.

I knew the old tree as when a small boy I played under it with my sister and brothers. When I heard of the old tree going I brought the matter to the knowledge of the following – The Field Naturalists Club of Victoria, The Bird Observers Club, the Royal Historical Society, St. Kilda Council and Trustees of the Park to have the tree saved for all time. There was a brass plate fixed to the tree and it said – 'Under this Tree the aborigines held their Corroborees'.

My father had a business in the 1850's at St. Kilda Junction not far from the old tree and had dealings with the aborigines especially two: 'King Billy' and 'Queen Mary' as they were known to the people of St. Kilda. My father told me many times how the aborigines used to come to the kitchen door for 'tucker' and how they never went away empty handed. They would go to the park to eat the food. There used to be a (horse) cab rank there and the cabbie 'used to give Queen Mary' a few pence now and again to have a drink. One day she imbibed a little too much and 'King Billie' saw her and put her in the horse trough saying: 'Why not a good girl like I be'!

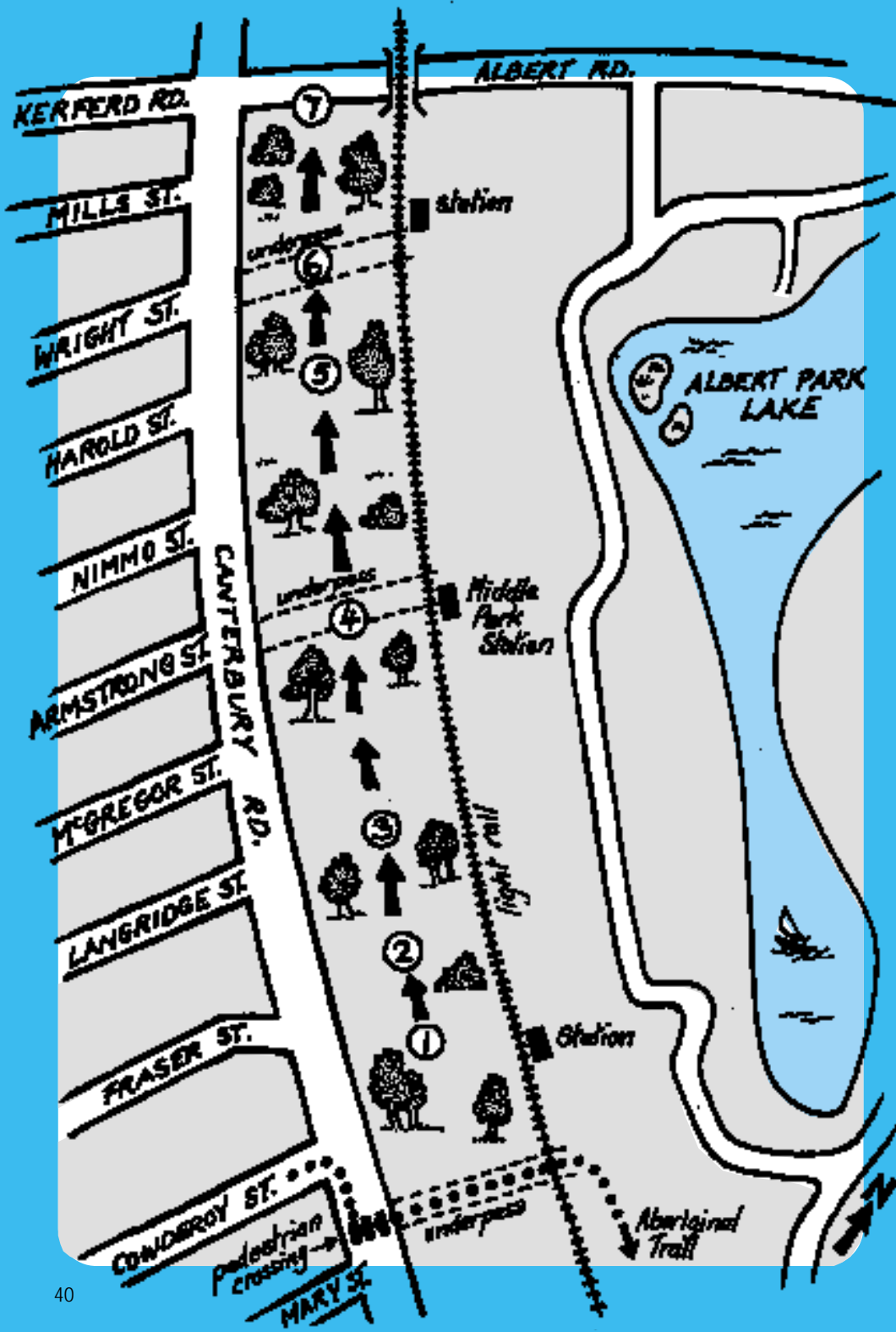
I was born in 1875, in a shop, not more than 300 yards from the old tree, and this shop is still in my possession, left by my father. I am still in good health, but sorry that I cannot come to the meetings at night. With best wishes to yourself and all members of the Field Naturalists, and any members of other societies.

*Yours sincerely,
V. H. Miller*

J. MILLER,
Glass, China, Ironmongery
and Furniture Warehouseman,
84-88 HIGH ST. ST. KILDA
Telephone 212, Windset.



Cabinet Maker, Upholsterer and French Polisher



This Trail celebrates the diversity of native plants in the City of Port Phillip. The past twenty years has seen the greening of the City as hundreds of thousands of Australian plants have been restored to parks, nature strips, gardens, roadways and the foreshore. Native animals and birds numbers have increased, drawn by the green corridors, and food and nesting sites that native plants provide. Over 100 species of birds have now been recorded. Native plants also provided essential food, tools and medicine to traditional Aboriginal owners and early settlers.

The passion for restoration and preservation by community members and environmental groups has been a major cause of this renaissance of indigenous landscapes. Witness the dramatic reforestation of places such as West Beach, Elwood Beach, Westgate Park, Sandridge Beach, Gasworks Park, St. Kilda Breakwater and the Canterbury Road Urban Forest.

This trail explores the extraordinary Canterbury Road Urban Forest. The trail follows the light rail line on land that once lay between two lagoons. Albert Park Lake is the remnant of one lagoon; the other has since disappeared. Albert Park Reserve nearby is still an important habitat for bird life (see story: The Bird Counter). This trail can also be easily linked to the Aboriginal trail via nearby Cowderoy Street (see page 26).

Trail Key

- 1 Fraser Street Swamp: Indigenous Port Phillip plants
- 2 Fraser Street: Box Iron Bark Forest
- 3 Langridge Street: Otways region
- 4 Middle Park Station: Mallee region
- 5 Harold Street: Cann River and Mallacoota region
- 6 Wright Street: Grampians region
- 7 Kerferd Road: trail finishes

Flora Trail

Start

Canterbury Road opposite Fraser Street, West St. Kilda Melway 57 J7

Finish

Kerferd Road, Albert Park

Length

Two kilometres

Time

Forty minutes

Refreshments

There is an attractive shopping centre at Armstrong Street that includes numerous cafés.

The Canterbury Road Urban Forest

Canterbury Road Forest is about twenty years old. The idea began with enthusiastic members of the South Melbourne Council who favoured the planting of indigenous trees. They saw what is now called the urban forest as a way of giving people the pleasure of seeing a wide variety of native trees and shrubs while helping them to recognise the shapes, the scents, the bark and the leaf colours. The urban planting has transformed a busy roadway into a nature experience and bird habitat. The trail runs alongside the light rail line and connects to Albert Park Reserve at several underpasses.

Many of the trees in the initial planting were drawn from several places in Australia, including West Australian eucalyptus, Tasmanian Blue gums and a select group of trees found in one place near the Victorian town of Buxton.

During the 1990's native vegetation was planted to reflect the diversity of trees and shrubs planted in some of Victoria's climate zones. Since the beginning of the year 2000, spaces within the urban forest have been filled with local indigenous plants.

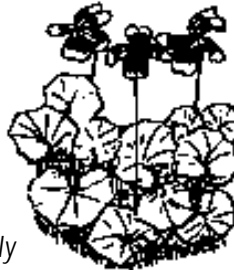
This easy walk which heads north from Fraser Street allows us to explore examples of Victoria's forest and wetland species. Content and the illustrations for this trail are derived from *The Canterbury Road Urban Forest* by Zoe Hogg.

A roadside wilderness

The walk starts opposite Fraser Street at the **South Melbourne Swamp (1)**, which has trees and plants found in the City of Port Phillip before settlement.

Plants:

Swamp Gum
Austral Indigo
Common Reed
Native Fuchsia
Black Anther Lily
Ivy-Leaf Violet

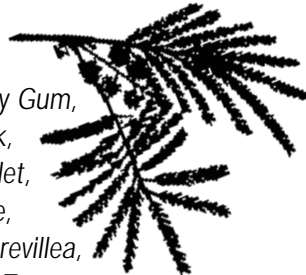


Ivy Leaf Violet

Fraser Street (2) to Langridge Street is the next section, planted with **Box Iron Bark Forest** and associated species.

Plants:

Mealy Bundy Gum,
Red Ironbark,
Swamp Mallet,
Silver Wattle,
Rosemary Grevillea,
Coastal Tea-Tree

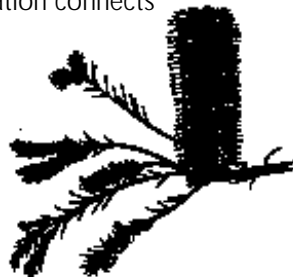


Silver Wattle

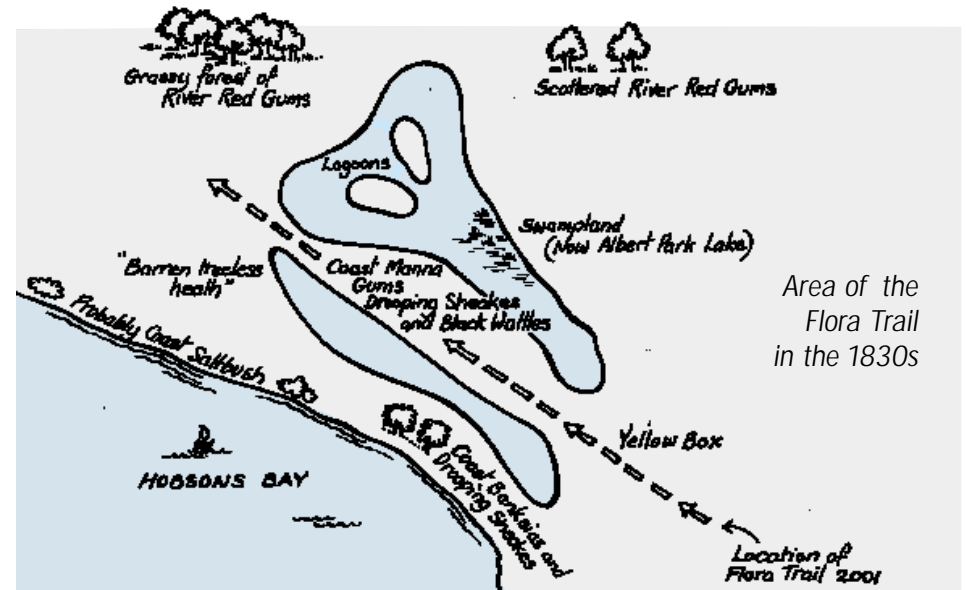
From **Langridge Street (3)** to Middle Park Station is the vegetation of the **Otways Region** of the forest country west of Apollo Bay. An underpass at Middle Park Station connects to Albert Park Reserve.

Plants:

Heath Banksia
Totem Poles
Coastal Sheoke
Tarbush
Berry Saltbush
White Sallow Wattle



Heath Banksia



Area of the Flora Trail in the 1830s

From **Middle Park Station (4) to Harold Street** is the vegetation of the **Mallee Region**, that semi-arid zone of north-western Victoria.

Plants:

Silver Gum
Desert Cassia
Red Bottle-Brush
Tasmanian Blue Gum
Ovens Wattle
Scrub Sheoke



Scrub Sheoke

Harold Street (5) to Wright Street represents the **Gippsland River Country** from Cann River through to Mallacoota on the eastern coast.

Plants:

West Aust. Flowering Gum
Eucalyptus ssp.
Bracelet Honey Myrtle
Showy Honey Myrtle
Golden Wattle
Swamp Wattle



Showy Honey Myrtle

From **Wright Street (6) to Kerferd Road** is the vegetation of the **Grampians Region** in Central Western Victoria. An underpass at Wright Street connects to Albert Park Reserve.

Plants:

Coastal Banksia
Silver Banksia
Old Man Banksia
Red River Gum
Prickly Moses
Wattle Rush Mat



River Red Gum

Kerferd Road (7) is the end of the trail. You can return along the trail or walk back through Albert Park Reserve. Alternatively catch the light rail back from the Albert Park or Wright Street station.



The Bird Counter

Mary Ellen Talmage counts birds. Perhaps you have seen her familiar figure in Albert Park, gazing skyward, binoculars in hand, where she has been counting birds for over twenty years. She has a peculiar passion for crows. In fact Mary Ellen is a world authority on crows. Or to be more precise – the *Little Raven*. Perhaps too modestly she points out that it is easy to be a world expert when no one else is studying this particular species. Her family and friends are aware of her happy obsession and add to it by supplying her with any book that includes crows. Not content with this, she is also writing a definitive book about them.

She arrived on these shores in 1957 from Long Island, New York where she had grown up with birds since childhood, seeing them as she walked to Long Island Sound through the woods back of their potato farm.

Several times a week she records the behaviour of the six or so Little Ravens in the park. Methuselah was her favourite. He fled when the Grand Prix arrived in 1993. She has been a member of the Save Albert Park vigil ever since. She had observed Methuselah and his mate for thirteen years as they raised young in one gigantic nest, possibly a world record in this kind of observation. These days she is studying pairs such as Sam and Samantha.

Mary Ellen also watches other birds. As the resident bird counter in Albert Park she is a well-known authority on those that travel by wing and branch. She was a consultant to the parks management and a licensed bird bander, working mainly on Flame Robins. She is now a consultant to Save Albert Park.

Since she began her census of the Albert Park bird life in 1979, over 129 species have been recorded, from Honey-eaters and Red-Capped Robins to Sea Eagles, Kingfishers and Peregrine Falcons. At least fifty were seasonal residents on route to other breeding grounds or food supplies, and thirty-three were actually using the park as a breeding ground.

I am seeking the essence of the crow from Mary. I want to know about *waa*, a social totem or moitie of the Kulin nation. I want to know what is its true nature and why it is venerated by so many cultures around the world. It was *waa*, too clever by half, who brought fire to the Kulin by theft, but burnt himself black in the process. Mary was especially excited to tell me that last year a raven pair fledged three young from a nest in the Corroboree Tree in the park. Mary Ellen herself gives me the clue. Her vivacity, the intensity of her glance, her rapid movements, her wit. She is a little bit crow herself, I think.

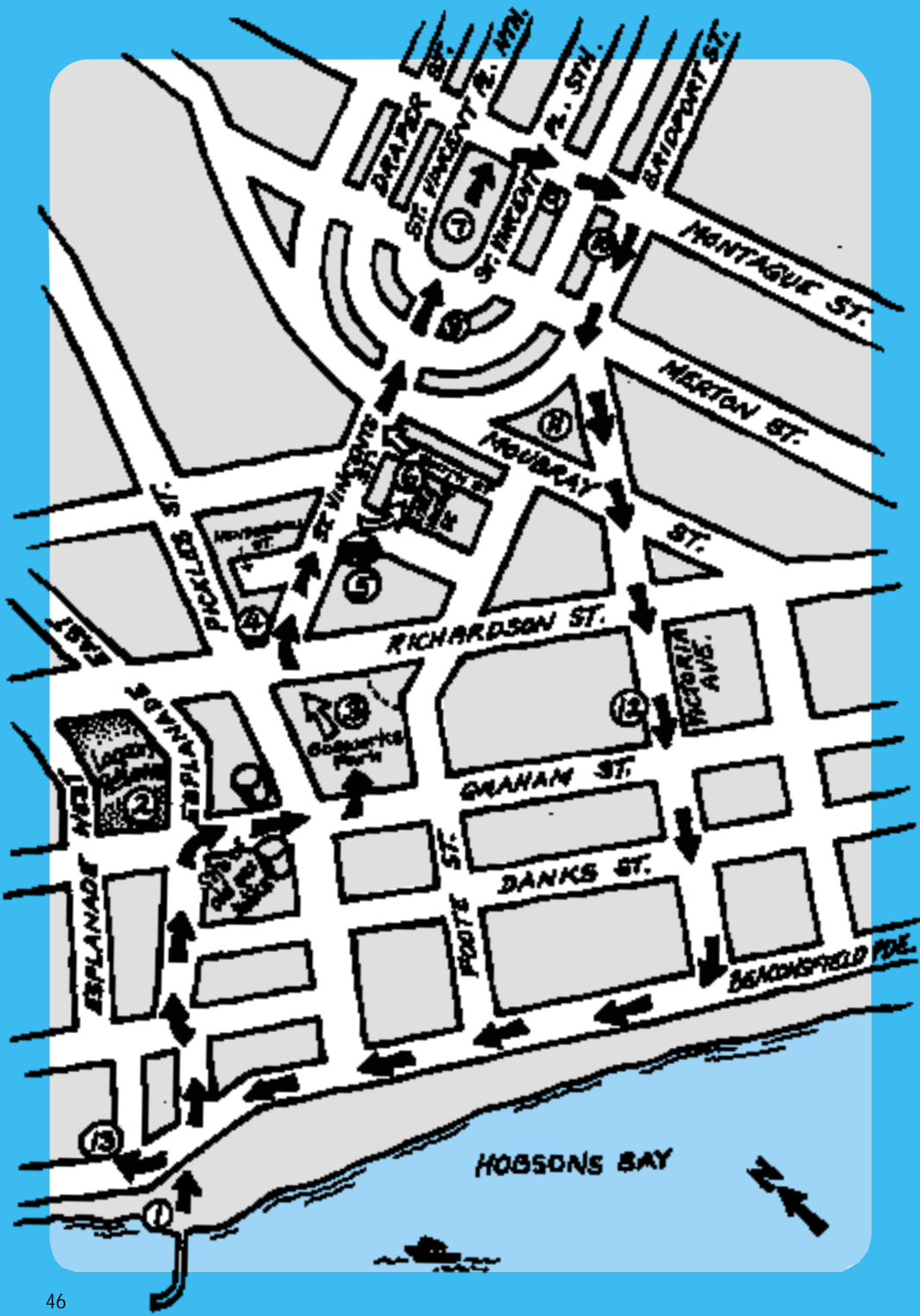
Mary Ellen understands how crows think. She adores their humour, their pique, their cunning, their jealousies and their extraordinary intelligence. Not surprisingly she knows an amazing amount about the Little Raven. From Mary Ellen I learn that ravens have several nests. Sam and Samantha have three: a courting nest, a pseudo nest and a rearing nest. Ravens are winter nesters. The female does the sitting, the male the feeding. Sam feeds the young and Samantha for at least ten days after they hatch. She believes they transport water by soaking bread and carrying it to their young, an extraordinary observation.

Mary Ellen is a behaviourist. After university as an occupational therapist she studied the behaviour of humans with brain injury. Now she studies Raven behaviour: courtship, nest building play, moulting. Her main interest is the weird, the ‘sidelines’ that people and creatures have. She sees a world of tremendous interaction amongst the birds, changing with the seasons and conditions. She is aware of a dimension hidden from most of us. The Grand Prix and the removal of large trees and native plants caused a kind of holocaust in the park. Mary Ellen was one of the few informed witnesses.

She reveres and respects the birds and this attitude is the key to her success. She teaches this to others if she trusts them so that they can work with the birds as well. She has to balance the danger of revealing avian secrets with the need to recruit other guardians.

Mary Ellen has hope for the children. They need to be free like the birds to experience and discover. She believes that too many parks have been sanitised to provide programmed experiences.

I feel I could talk with Mary Ellen for hours. It’s as good as watching the birds. ■



This Federation Trail pays tribute to working people in the City of Port Phillip. The city once contained large industrial sites, particularly in Port Melbourne and South Melbourne. It even sustained a fishing fleet in earlier days. Generations of working people were raised in 'Port' and 'South', creating a strong ethos of individual resilience, independence and community spirit. This trail takes us through former working places such as a fishing lagoon, a former gasworks factory site, working class cottages, a coffee palace, the local school in the 1880's and the estates of the wealthier classes.

Working People's Trail

Start
Lagoon Pier, Port Melbourne
Melway 57 B5

Finish
Lagoon Pier,
Port Melbourne

Length
Four kilometres

Time
Two hours

Trail Key

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1 Lagoon Pier | 7 St. Vincent Gardens |
| 2 Lagoon Reserve | 8 Eglinton Villas |
| 3 Gasworks Park gatehouse | 9 The Elms |
| 4 Former Albert Park Infant School, Henderson Street | 10 The Biltmore |
| 5 57 St. Vincent Street | 11 Albert Park Primary School |
| 6 Little Vincent Street | 12 Victoria Avenue |
| | 13 Sandridge Bay Towers |

Refreshments

Bridport Street and Victoria Avenue are home to many pavement cafés and shops.

Where a lagoon flowed to the sea

In 1803 Charles Grimes, the first European surveyor of Port Phillip, wrote in his log: *'came to a salt lagoon about a mile long and a quarter of a mile wide...'*

Our walk starts at Lagoon Pier (1) opposite Beach Road, Port Melbourne. The jetty was once twice as wide as it is today and stood at the outlet of a lagoon that originally had stretched inland for over a mile. In the 1830's the lagoon covered 22 acres and reached almost to the bay. It was later opened to the bay and dredged to create a boat harbour, but was filled in the 1920's.

Josephine Liardet McDonald whose family was the first to settle in Sandridge remembered walking to the lagoon to play and to catch water birds and fish. However by 1875 settlement had heavily polluted the lagoon with sewerage and other waste. A local paper described it as:

'a mess of putrid matter...the stench of which completely taking away the breath of all who happened to be near.'

After the lagoon disappeared, Port's fishing families continued to shelter a boat fleet beside Lagoon Pier and to operate a local fish market.

From Lagoon Pier cross Beaconsfield Parade. Leave the Beach Road at Esplanade East and walk down to Lagoon Reserve at Graham Street.

Along the shores

Esplanade East and Esplanade West follow the former shores of the lagoon. Heading inland from Beaconsfield Parade, note the intensity of recent apartments and housing developments built upon the former lagoon. It is very hard now to imagine this the shoreline of a picturesque waterway rich in bird life. Since the 1980's the former working community of Port Melbourne has become a magnet for thousands of new residents. However as an old Port Melbourne resident reminds us:

'The lagoon itself is still there. It's under the road. The wharves and all are still there. All the piles and everything is still under the road. There'd be old boats and everything...old boats that were laying on the beach, that just got covered up by sand over the years.'

Lagoon Reserve (2) was created on the lagoon after this portion of the lagoon was filled in the 1890's. The view over the park gives you a feeling for the open space that was once a body of water with houses on the banks and an occasional fishermen's pub. Ducks once swam where magpies now hunt for worms. In recent years the park has been landscaped with indigenous plants. Some nearby houses have suffered subsidence from the landfill. Lady Forsters, the first free kindergarten in Melbourne, still operates on the far side of the reserve.



The former Gasworks, now Gasworks Park

The end of the world

Turn right at Graham Street and walk to Pickles Street. In the 1870's Graham Street joined a footbridge that once extended across the Lagoon. There were also footbridges at Rouse and Bridge Streets. Note the new housing developments which recently replaced the two immense gas tanks that once stood here, on the blocks on either side of Graham Street. In 1875 an Aboriginal skeleton was discovered during excavations to build these gas tanks, indicating the lagoon was probably a hunting ground for Aboriginal people.

Port Melbourne's oldest residents remember the day in 1920 when one of the gas tanks exploded. Many local families thought the world had ended. Bolts showered down on the beach and the explosion was heard from Rosebud to Hurstbridge.

*"I was eight years old when it happened, jugs were rattling on the shelves."
"People were out in the street praying on their knees, thought it was the end of the world."
"I was 12 or 14, playing alleys with me mates on the corner...there was a big rumble, a great big fireball, heat scorched us; ran home to mother, scared out of our wits, to see if she was all right."*

Cross over Pickles Street and turn into the gatehouse of the Gasworks Park and Arts Complex (second entrance on the left).

The Demons of Pluto

The park is the former site of the South Melbourne Gasworks which began supplying town gas in 1873. It operated 24 hours per day and employed several hundred men. Coal was hauled from the

Town Pier at the end of Bay Street, Port Melbourne, by horse drawn tram. The Gasworks, the biggest employer in the area, operated until 1957. In 1985 the industrial buildings were converted to a theatre, children's book gallery and artists' studios. The park has also been attractively landscaped with native plants.

Entry to the Gasworks Park (3) from Graham Street is through the former gatehouse. Just past the entrance note the weighbridge, the pay window (now looking into Books Illustrated) and the iron bollards to protect the buildings from coal trucks.

The Gasworks has recorded many oral histories of older workers including participation in Victoria's first sit-in strike in 1937. Several hundred men worked on the site including engine drivers, firemen, stokers, electricians, fitters and conveyor men. Conditions of work were extreme and often dangerous. Coal was baked in ovens or retorts at a temperature of 700 degrees Celsius, giving off gas and leaving coke. In 1886 a local newspaper described the retort house as:

'a huge smoke begrimed chamber where, among heaps of glowing coke and as yet unburned coal, stood the workmen looking like the demons of Pluto.'

A 30-minute audio tour is available which enables you to relive the day to day experiences of workers at the former site as you tour the facility (9209 6207).

Walk through the park to Richardson Street on the opposite side. Cross the road to St. Vincent Street.

Coal dust and cottages

St. Vincent Street takes us uphill from the Gasworks site to St. Vincent Gardens. A hundred years ago it was only a short walk from this working class village to an upper class estate around the gardens. Ironically the tiny Victorian cottages which once housed many Gasworkers and large families are now prized real estate.

It wasn't always so. The wives of Gasworkers recall the constant coal dust that covered their washing and homes. Desperate parents took children with whooping cough to inhale ammonia fumes at the plant. During the depression, children dug under Gasworks fences to steal coal. Gasworks coal trucks sometimes 'accidentally' swerved in the street to lose part of their load.

Number 12 Henderson Street is the former cottage of Roy Fisher, the last Gasworks general manager. He recalls saving the lives of workers overcome by fumes and patching holes high in the giant gas tank with a mechanical drill. Opposite his house at the far end of Henderson Street is the former infant school of **Albert Park Primary School (4)**, now a music facility. The yard of the school is now a housing estate (52-72 St. Vincent Street).

Once small shops existed on most street corners to supply workers and families. In 1943 John Hawthorne was a

delivery boy in a family grocery store at **57 St. Vincent Street (5)**. He was just 16 and worked 52 hours per week for 10/6 (see story: *The Grocers*). John picked up coke from the Gasworks and delivered it to the coal scuttles in the back of people's houses. He collected orders from homes, packed the groceries and then delivered them. **Number 55** was then a butcher shop.



57 St. Vincent Street in 1943

Turn right at Durham Street and then left up Little Vincent Street (6) where in the early hours of the morning the night soil man with horse and cart removed pans from 'dunnys' located in back yards. Many of these old

'sentry boxes' can be seen in yards backing onto the lane. Sewage pipes were not connected to this area until the turn of the century. The brick dunny at the rear of 35 St. Vincent Street is one of the rare remaining few with a bricked-in trap at the base where pans were once removed.

Turn left at Smith Street to return to St. Vincent Street.

Continue up St. Vincent Street. Note the ROBUR sign on your right on the rear wall of a former shop just before you reach the Moubray Street corner.

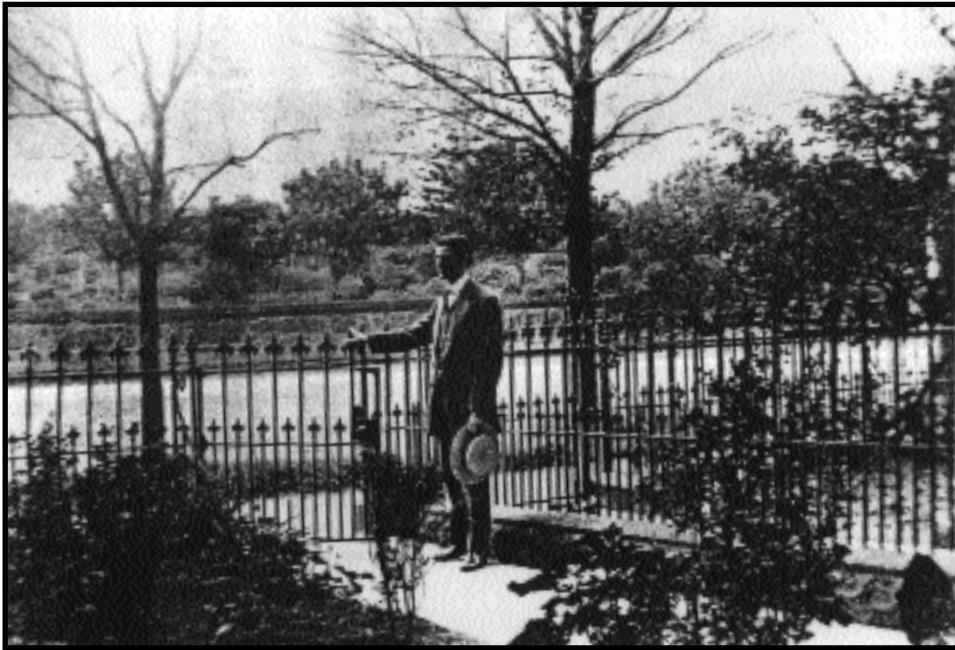
The planting of lemon gums on the nature strip has created a wildlife corridor – musk lorikeets often feed here.

Wealth but not without worry

In St. Vincent Place are located the magnificent **public gardens (7)** which were once the western end of the Albert Park swamp (now Albert Park Lake). Note the deep blue-stone gutters to carry away rainwater that fed the swamp. An ornate cast iron fence once surrounded this park, to which overlooking residents had their

own keys. This fence was melted down to assist the Second World War effort. Note the square fence stumps in the scoria rock wall around the park.

The gardens, laid out in the style of an English estate, are surrounded by some



St. Vincent Gardens around 1914

of the finest Victorian terraces in Australia. In the 19th century the working and upper classes often lived in close proximity. **Note Eglinton Villas on the corner of St. Vincent Street at 99 St. Vincent Place (8).** In 1880 the owner John Webster protested to the Council about the *'horrible stench'* arising from the night carts and *'the ear-piercing shrieks of those wretched steam whistles.'*

Take a stroll through the gardens along the park tracks and turn right when you reach Montague Street. Note 'The Elms', (9) an elegant terrace with its own tower at **53 St. Vincent Place on the Montague Street corner.** This was the home of T.B. Guest, the biscuit manufacturer. Even the wealthy were

prey to the terrors of typhoid and other diseases resulting from the appalling sanitation facilities. In 1884 Mr. Guest wrote in distress after two of his sons died at the Elms: *'It seems hard enough to lose infants but when they get to 14 and 16 it seems far worse. Out of our eight boys we have only three.'*

Continue down Montague Street to the Albert Park shopping centre at Bridport Street.

Coffee palaces, chemists and cappuccinos

Bridport Street has a marvellous outdoor streetscape, its 'café society' showing the strong influence of European immigration since the 1950's. It also has many heritage shops. See the interior of **Cravens**, a local pharmacy

since 1880, **on the corner of Montague street and Bridport Street.** Note the historic **Biltmore (10)** nearby at **152 Bridport Street**, one of Melbourne's last remaining historic coffee palaces. Now an apartment block, the Biltmore has served many purposes including the former Albert Park cinema. **Walk west down Bridport Street to Victoria Avenue.** Enjoy a coffee at a pavement table and note the facades of the buildings above the shops.

Schools, pubs and diggers

Cross Victoria Avenue. Bridport Street once continued through what is now reclaimed as the schoolyard of **Albert Park Primary School (11)**, a heritage building constructed in 1873. Together with the nearby infant school (described earlier), the school once held 1200 students. Many Gasworkers' children would have attended this school. Since the 1950's many Greek families have moved in to the area and have sent their children here. Frank Beaurepaire (1891-1956), sporting champion, philanthropist and industrialist, was once a small boy in shorts at this school. As were Corporal Boxall and Lance Corporal Moore, both killed in the Boer War 1899-1902. Just past the school at **44 Victoria Avenue** is **Tobruk House**, home of the Rats of Tobruk Association.

Victoria Avenue (12) is aptly named for the Victorian-era terraces and shops that line this street. **At Page Street** can be found the 1888 **Eagle**

Hotel where generations of workers slaked their thirst. Note the upper facades of the shops between Page and Danks Streets on the left-hand side. The terraces opposite have classic cast iron fences, slate roofs, ironwork lace and scrollwork. The terraces **between Richardson and Graham Streets** include polychromatic (two-tone) brickwork. **After Graham Street** note the hi-rise buildings that typically housed migrants and working people during the population boom after Second World War.

Back to Lagoon Pier

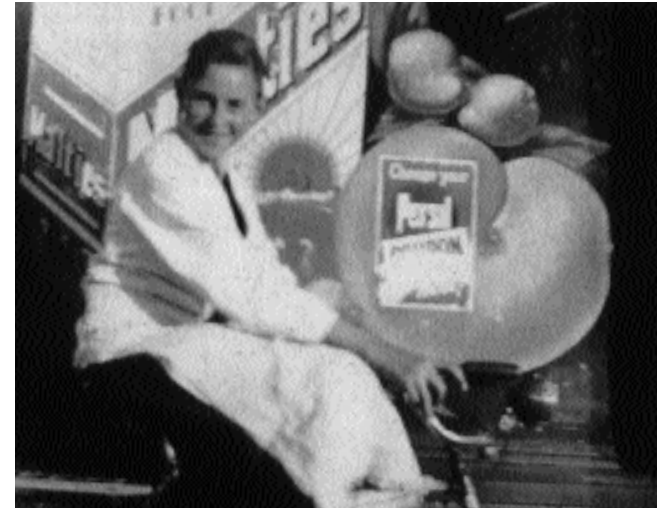
At Beaconsfield Parade turn right. It is a five to ten-minute walk along the foreshore to your starting point at Lagoon Pier. Glance into the front entrance of **9 Beach Street** just past Esplanade West to see the giant smoke stack of the Harper's 'Starch Factory', now Sandridge Bay Towers **(13).**



Honeymooners 1950



.. Same doorstep 50 years later, golden
.. wedding anniversary



John Hawthorne age 16, 1941

The Grocers

I met John and Eve Hawthorne on a Senior Citizens Week walking tour of Albert Park. They suggested we (all 23 of us) take a look at their former house and grocery store at 57 St. Vincent Street (corner Durham Street). It is now a private home. The young couple who owns it generously invited us in. John said he wanted to carry his wife over the threshold just as he did half a century ago. I took a photo with their camera as John stood on the porch attempting to lift his wife, both of them roaring with laughter.

In 1943 John Hawthorne was a delivery boy in this store. He was just 16 and worked 52 hours per week for 10/6. He rode his bicycle daily from Prahran. John left to join the Air Force but he returned in 1950 to buy the same store with his young bride Eve, 18. Nearby were a number of other family businesses. There was a dairy two doors up.

On the next corner at 55 St. Vincent's Street there was a

butcher. Opposite were two mixed businesses and another two around the corner at 18 and 22 Durham.

The dad would go to work and the mum would sell a few groceries for pin money. Supermarkets ended all that.

A block further up on the Nelson/Moubray Street corner was a wine and spirits shop run by Fred Twentyman. Opposite was a shop run by Mr. Edwards and a cake shop (where the ROBUR sign is now) at 2 Moubray Street.

Eve says (jokingly I think) that she married John because the house had a genuine tin bath. It was six foot long, its bottom had recently been repaired after rusting out and both of them could fit in it. As a delivery boy John picked up coke from the Gasworks and delivered it to the coalscuttles in the back of people houses. He collected orders from homes, packed the groceries and delivered them.

Try and get service like that today.

And the householders wanted it cheap.

Some people would spend threepence on a fare to the

market to save a penny.

People did washing on the same days.

We all knew the routine.

It was when the huge chimney at the gasworks was not spouting soot.

Everybody knew everybody. People were more concerned about each other's welfare than now. The war had just started and the depression was recent. If you had a fridge you were wealthy, cars were seen only occasionally. There was a completely different social attitude. When women walked down the street with bags, kids would automatically run to help carry them home. People were more honest. You didn't lock your doors. While you were away the iceman would deliver the ice and collect the money from the top of the ice chest. We'd leave the front window open so the milk could be delivered to a billy on the table. The milk man would collect the money from the table and close the window. The nightsoil man would walk into open backyards in the early hours and change dunny pans.

The infant school was opposite. The former schoolyard is now filled with new two-story terraces (52-72 Vincent Street). The streets would regularly flood in the winter as far up as Durham Street. The locals like John and the teachers carried school children across the flooded road at home time. Small wooden bridges enabled them to cross the big bluestone gutters next to the pavement. Sticks or wire would be placed in holes drilled on either side of the wooden bridges to mark their location under the floodwater.

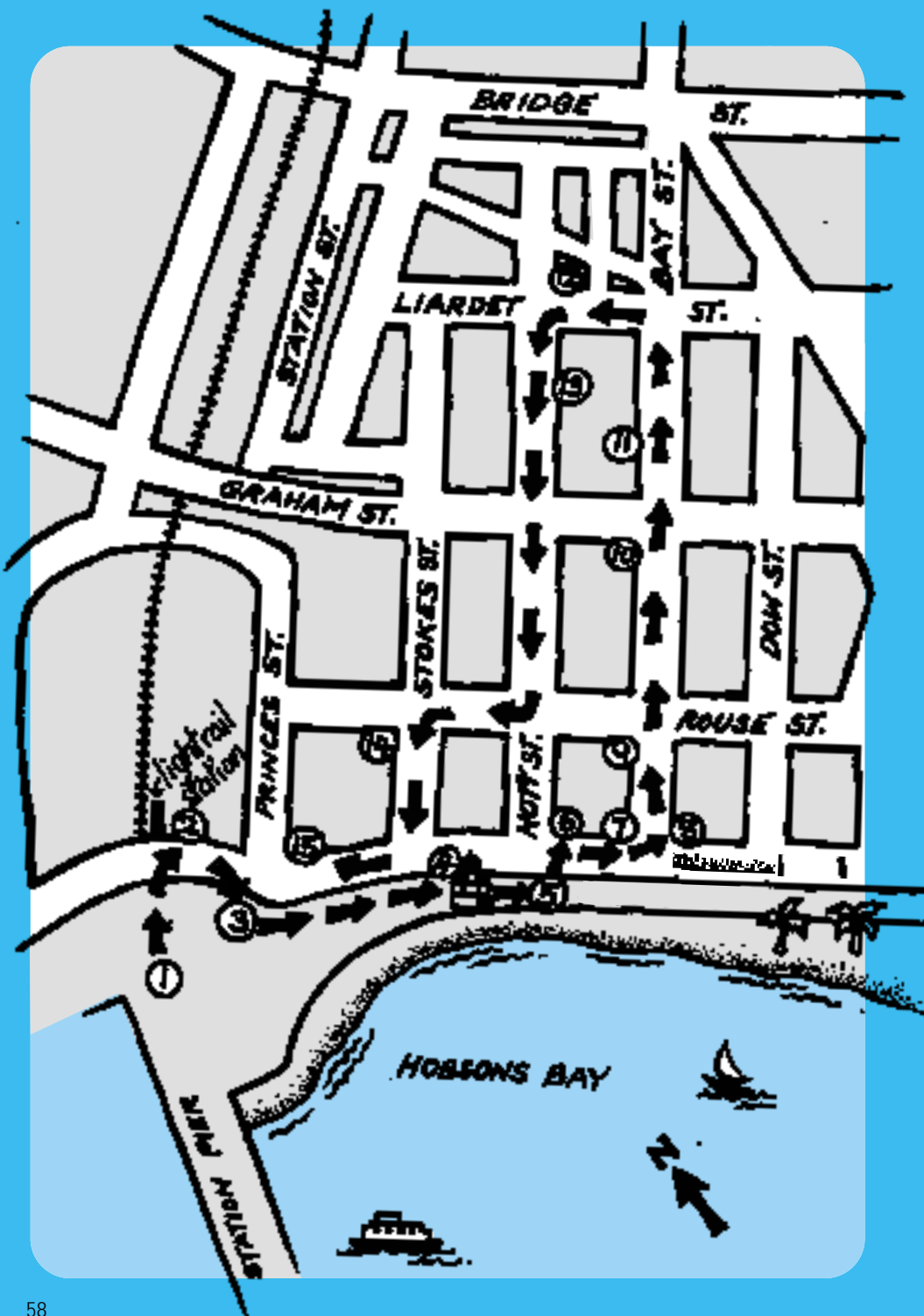
Many Gasworkers lived in cottages on Richardson Street. They were black with dirt at the end of the day. Steam whistles indicated the time of day. The smell of gas was ever present. Women would take their children to the Gasworks to inhale ammonia, as it was commonly believed this helped children with diseases such as whooping cough.

John remembers getting cross with mothers who put children with wet nappies on his white pine counter after

he'd scrubbed it at the end of the day.

To make ends meet Eve worked as a lingerie cutter in Flinders Lane. One day she noticed an ad for a footman and housemaid at Government House. They applied successfully for the jobs. Over 30 years they served Governors, dignitaries such as Prime Ministers and visiting royalty including eleven crowned heads of state. This was a dramatic change from serving gas workers. Eve used to make up the Queen's bed. I can't tell you more because they're sworn to secrecy. This was only one of many jobs that have include tailoring and teaching.

You turned your hand to anything to survive.■



This Trail celebrates the contribution to the City of Port Phillip by immigrants and settlers. For many of these new arrivals, Station Pier was their first landfall in Australia after a long and hazardous journey by sea. This shipping trade has left its historic imprint on Port Melbourne, which retains many public buildings from settler days.

Tasmanians were the first to arrive in 1835, keen to open up the country to expand the wool trade. Other pioneering settlers followed, particularly English, Scottish and Irish, travelling in wind-powered ships on extraordinary journeys round the Cape of Good Hope and through the Rip.

The Gold Rush in 1851 brought a huge influx of eager immigrants from all over the world.

Postwar migration saw hundreds of thousands of immigrants, many from Southern and Eastern Europe, first setting foot on Australian shores at Station Pier, seeking refuge from persecution, war and economic hardship. Later arrivals from Asian, African and many other countries have added to the diverse multicultural community that enlivens the City of Port Phillip today.

Trail Key

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 Station Pier | 9 Molly Blooms |
| 2 Port Melbourne Railway Station | 10 Law and order complex |
| 3 Centenary Bridge pylon | 11 Market reserve shops |
| 4 The Rotunda | 12 Liardet Community Centre |
| 5 Liardet Memorial | 13 Nott Street terraces |
| 6 Seamen's Institute | 14 Swallow and Ariell biscuit factory |
| 7 Site of the original Pier Hotel | 15 The former London Hotel |
| 8 Morley's Coal Depot | |

Immigrants Trail

Start

Station Pier
Melway 57 A3

Finish

Station Pier

Length

Four kilometres

Time

70-90 minutes

Refreshments

There are numerous cafés, pubs and bistros at Station Pier and in Beach and Bay Streets.

A memorial to immigration

The walk starts at the foot of **Station Pier (1)** opposite the former **Port Melbourne Railway Station**. (Note the Federation bench on the foreshore is east of the car park.)

At the pier entrance is **Destination**, a sculpture commemorating immigration. It bears the names and dates of ships which have arrived over the past 160 or so years. The pier, first built in 1854 as Railway Pier, is the 'passenger gateway' to Melbourne and was the arrival point for hundreds and thousands of hopeful migrants after the Second World War. Countless arrivals who passed down the gangplanks and through customs recall this structure as their first memory of Australia (see story: *The Arrivals*).

Station Pier is still a working pier. Cruise liners often dock here and the *Spirit of Tasmania* ferries passengers to and from Australia's island state. Today's shipping schedules however are a faint echo of the frenetic activity of the past when ocean travel was common. Gone are the enthusiastic crowds that came to throw streamers at the glamorous liners or board the paddle steamers for picnic cruises down the Bay to Sorrento and Queenscliff.

If you have time, take a walk along the pier to the far end. You are now exploring the largest wooden structure in the Southern Hemisphere. There is access via stairways to both the domestic and international shipping terminals. The first terminal, for passengers embarking to Tasmania, is a

former customs shed where crowds of immigrants with their families were assessed on arrival (see story and guide map: *The Pier*).

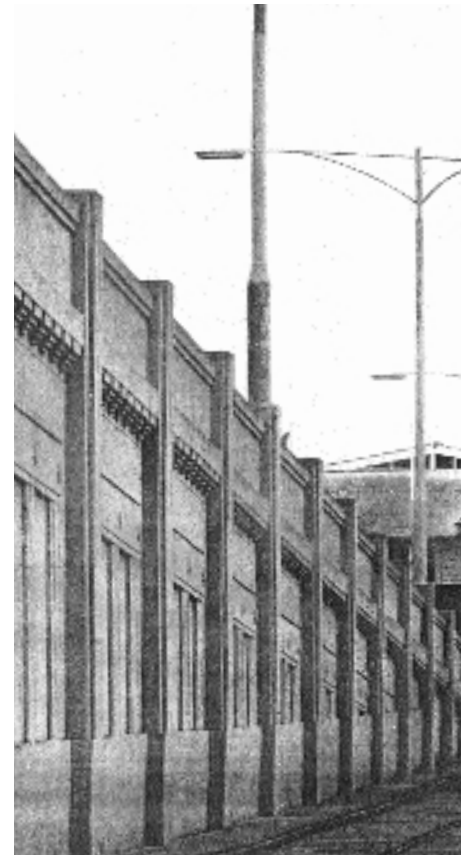
From workers' suburb to penthouses

Leave the pier and cross Beach Road to the historic **Port Melbourne Railway Station (2)**. Now restored, it houses a modern medical centre and is a station for the light rail tram.

Before the 1990's this area around the piers was a vast industrial site. It is now radically transformed into the new suburb of Beacon Cove – one of Melbourne's fastest growing residential areas. Stand on the former railway platform and appreciate the interaction of the old and the new. This railway line was the first in Victoria and was built to connect the port to the city in 1854. At one time the port and railways created employment for most of the men in Port Melbourne and many of Port's factories were built nearby for easy access to the piers.

A Pioneers' memorial destroyed

Return to the beach promenade and walk south along Beach Street. The magnificent **Centenary Bridge** with its simple art deco detailing was needlessly demolished here in 1991. Only a lone art deco **pylon (3)** remains as a souvenir of its splendour. This bridge, built during the depression by 'susso' or depression labour, celebrated 100 years of settlement. The art deco motifs of Centenary Bridge echoed those of the



Centenary Bridge

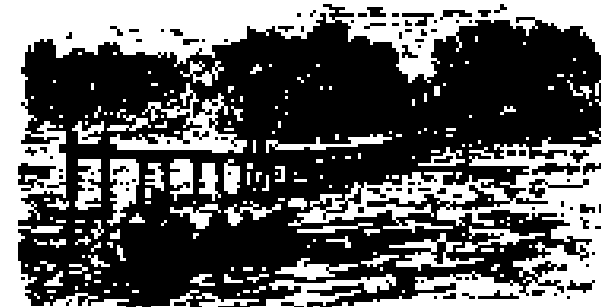
new and glamorous ocean liners and were intended by the Harbor Trust to create a fitting gateway to the State. The destruction of the bridge was part of a grand design by government and developers to create a luxury housing enclave that never eventuated. The Port Melbourne foreshore has been the subject of fierce debate as the local community struggles to preserve heritage in the face of intensive development.

Lest we forget

The Women's Welcome Home Committee built the picturesque **Rotunda** in 1918 (4). Large crowds gathered at the Port Melbourne piers to see troop ships of young soldiers depart for both world wars. For families of the many that never returned, the view from the piers was often their last memory of their sons and brothers. Stand in the rotunda and imagine the music of brass bands performing here as surviving ANZAC troops disembarked at Station Pier; home at last after one of the bloodiest conflicts in history.

An overactive immigrant

A small memorial to Port Melbourne's first permanent settler **Wilbraham Frederick Evelyn Liardet, 1779-1878 (5)** is located on the foreshore opposite Nott Street. Liardet arrived with his wife Caroline and nine children in 1839 and erected a tent on the beach opposite what is now Bay Street. They had the extraordinary energy typical of many new immigrants. Within a year they had built a hut, a jetty, a watch tower and a rough road with a daily mail run to



Melbourne, dug a well, established a ferry service to Williamstown, and established the Pier Hotel.

Liardet later painted early scenes of Melbourne that are now national treasures. His small tea tree jetty was the forerunner of busy Town Pier at the end of Bay Street (1849-1950s). The **Port Melbourne Yacht Club** is now built on the site. Wilbraham had a gift for hitting every recession and wealth eluded him.

At the corner of Nott and Beach Streets is the original **Seamen's Institute (6)**, once a refuge for the crews of ships that brought immigrants from all over the world. During the last war it was a hive of activity as it housed refugees from south-east Asia fleeing from the Japanese invasion.

The World War One Memorial Fountain is evidence of the historic importance of this area in Australia's war effort. Over a third of Australia's troops departed from Port Melbourne's piers for the two world wars. The RSL held ANZAC services on this spot for nearly 80 years.

The old settlement

Turning left down Bay Street takes us past many public and private buildings of the original 'Sandridge Borough' settlement.

The building on the corner of Bay and Beach Streets **(7)** is the **Pier Hotel** that replaced the timber original built by first settler Wilbraham F. E. Liardet in 1840. The latter was described as a magnificent house – 'Brighton on the Beach' – and was an instant success in the young colony as a fashionable resort.

Opposite is **Morley's Coal Depot (8)** that stored coal for fuelling the ships in port and the Gasworks nearby (see **Working People Trail**). The National Trust has classified this rugged 1872 bluestone building, named after the first Sandridge Mayor, William Morley.

Next to it is the **Elephant and Wheelbarrow**, originally the Royal Mail Hotel. It is one of the few surviving pubs that once clustered around the Town Pier at the bottom of Bay Street. In 1876 there were an incredible 48 hotels in the Borough. The pubs evoke the port town where sailors and workers slaked their thirst, where unions were essential, where common hardship formed an ethos of community support and mateship, and where allegiance to the Port Melbourne Football Club was supreme.

Walk down Bay Street to the corner of Rouse Street. Here is **Molly Bloom's (9)**, once the Exchange Hotel. If you have time, explore the interior and its old photographs. It is a centre of Irish culture where Guinness is on tap and the street has to be closed to accommodate the overflow during the annual St. Patrick's day hooley. Large numbers of early immigrants were from Ireland, seeking refuge from poverty and conflict. For example, 191 orphan Irish girls arrived in Hobsons Bay on the *Lady Kennaway* in 1838.

On the other side of the road is the original **Sandridge Post Office and Mail Exchange**, now home to Circus Oz, who rehearse in the adjacent **1912 Naval Drill Hall**. Built in 1860, the Mail Exchange was one of the colony's busiest in an era when all mail arrived by ship after long sea voyages. In fact Bay Street had its beginning in the track that the Liardets built to deliver the mail to the city.

At the corner of Bay and Graham Streets is the historic **law and order complex (10)**. It comprises the **police station** with its tiny but grim bluestone **lock up** in the rear, and the 1860 **Court House**, now Gill's Nursery. Smell the flowers and look up at the amazing roof inside.

Cross Graham Street. Most shops here date from the 1880's. Note the **Market Shops from 191 to 219 Bay Street (11)**, built on the Borough Council's market reserve in the 1880s.

At Liardet Street, turn left to the Liardet Community Centre (12) named after Port Melbourne's community-minded founder. The building was originally the Temperance Hall in the days of intense campaigning against the evils of drink. It is opposite the former fire station, currently the local library. The Liardet Community Centre is the meeting place of Greek and Italian seniors groups, the Greek Community of Port Melbourne and many other community groups. The City of Port Phillip has a high proportion of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (see story: *The Arrivals*).

A roof over their heads

Turn left at Nott Street and proceed to Rouse Street. Note the Victorian workers' cottages **(13)** on the left at **Queens Terrace (144-132)** and **Jubilee Terrace (130-118)**.

Immigration tripled the population of Melbourne after the goldrush and it was not uncommon for large families to occupy such tiny homes in the late 1800's. In more recent times, walk-up and high rise public housing, such as that opposite the cottages, has often provided accommodation for new arrivals to this country.

The smell of biscuits

Turn right at Rouse Street and walk to Stokes Street. On the corner is the oldest part of the **Swallow and Ariell Steam Biscuit Manufactory (14)**, founded in 1854 to make ships biscuits. At one time most Port

Melbourne families had a member working for 'Swallows'. Few older residents would not recall the smell of fresh biscuits, once considered an essential characteristic of Port Melbourne.

Swallows Juniors was an iconic TV show for most baby boomers.

The complex, which occupied almost the whole block, is now converted to residential apartments. The factory never missed a single day in biscuit production for 137 years until it closed in 1991, earning a listing in the Guinness Book of Records. On the adjacent corner is the '**counting house**' which housed the offices of 'Swallows'. On the opposite corner is **St. Joseph's hall and church**.

Turn left and walk down Stokes Street past the decorative entrance of 'Swallows' with its facade and emblem.

At Beach Street turn right and return to Station Pier, the starting point of the walk. On route perhaps relax with a coffee or snack at **The London (15)** just before you reach the railway station. The London Hotel, built in 1861, is now a popular café and bistro.



Anna Maria with her son Nick in 1961 at Station Pier

The Arrivals

Vince Coluccio will never forget the day he landed at Station Pier in 1955 after a long voyage from Italy on the *Australia*.

My relatives forgot to collect me.

The eighteen-year-old arrived alone at 7am unable to speak a word of English. After twelve hours waiting, a kind stranger organised a taxi to his relatives in Yarraville. On his first day at work he got lost on the way home to his cousin. He knocked on a stranger's door at midnight to find he was next door to his cousin's house.

Rosa Coluccio was fourteen when she arrived at Station Pier on 24 February 1953 on the Sydney. She had been very seasick on the 24-day voyage from Italy.

I remember the lights on the wharf, the pier crowded with ships and people. I was so happy to be on land. Many people were hugging, kissing and crying. Station Pier was a very busy place in those days.

Rosa was very excited about meeting her father who had already arrived, and seeing the city so different from her small town of Caulonia. They were allowed into the town without customs, which they completed the following day in what is now the Tasmanian ferry terminal. After a night in the Pier Hotel on Bay Street they went straight to Mildura to pick grapes.

Rosa first met her father when she was nine when he returned from Africa where he was a prisoner of war for nine years. After attempting to find employment in Spain and Belgium he went to Australia. Four years later he sent for his wife Anna and the children: Rosa, her brother and sister.

My father finally found a free country where all people are equal.

A friend introduced Rosa and Vince. They married in 1960 and moved to Port Melbourne where they have lived ever since in a house that they built for 8000 pounds. He was 24 and she was 22. Many other Italian as well as Greek families also moved to Port Melbourne. They have three children, the last born in 1972. Rosa worked for 17 years in a clothing factory in Bay Street.

I hardly spoke any English at all but it was more than the newer arrivals so I became the interpreter for the manager with all the workers. I ended up speaking Greek as well as English.

Vince and Rosa have both returned to Italy for visits. They would never wish to live there permanently. Vincent says that social inequality and class discrimination still exists in Europe.

If someone standing in a queue has status they serve them first. That just doesn't happen in Australia.

In Italy Vince lived with his aunt as his mother died when he was four. He has never forgotten how at school the children of the wealthy ate their food in front of him and other hungry children. In Australia Vince worked up to three jobs at a time for

20 years in places such as the Australian Bottle Works, a Yarraville flour mill, the Brooklyn immigration hostel, restaurants, a fish and chip shop.

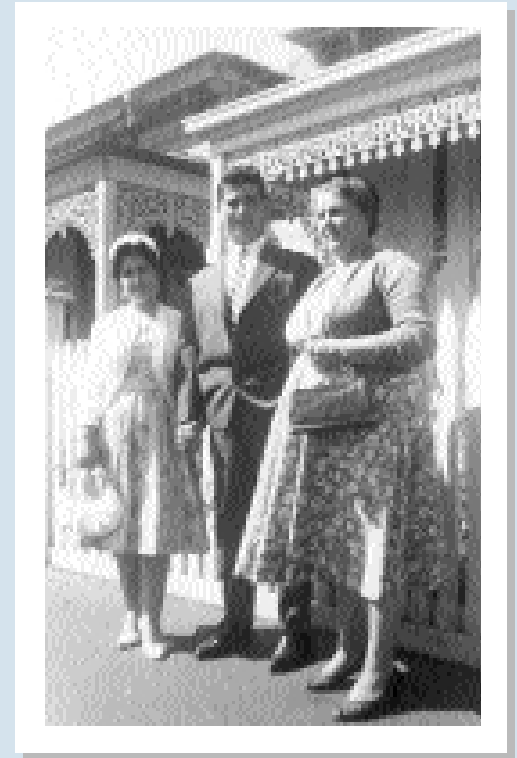
I never saw my children during the week except when they were asleep. I was too busy working days and evenings. Others went to the pub and played the TAB. But I was determined that my children would never go hungry as I had.

Sometimes I was abused: 'Bloody wog, how many jobs have you got?' This hurt me deeply because I was working for the future of my children, not for myself.

Rosa cared for both her parents in her home before they died. She is now the President of the Italian Seniors Group, which meets regularly at the Liardet Community Centre. Rosa is also famous for her cake-making class at the Centre. Vince works regularly in Port Melbourne's community garden but health problems have limited what he can do.

Both believe that immigration has helped Australia and take pride in their achievements. They have built a home and successfully raised a family in Port Melbourne, a place that they love. They have great compassion for people like the Kosovo refugees and other immigrants who have been forced to leave by the Government.

Migrants helped make this country a success. Melbourne is a totally different place from 1955. Migrants improved the food, the fashions and the economy. This will be a great country one day, greater than America if migrants are allowed to help build it. ■



Vince, Rosa and her mother Anna in 1959

Station Pier

Take twenty minutes to explore this extraordinary and historic structure.

Start from *Destinations* (1), the sculpture celebrating the maiden voyage of some of the great passenger and commercial ships that travelled to and from the pier. Walk up the pier to the far (south) end of the car park (where the sign 'Welcome to Historic Station Pier' stands). This area was originally the low water mark of the tide.

You are now standing at the centre of the greatest historic transport hub in Australia. From 1854 Australia's first steam railway ran from Flinders Street Station to Sandridge (Port Melbourne) and onto what was then Railway Pier. It carried gold diggers to and from as many as eight ships moored at the pier.

Railway Pier ran out to sea at an angle to the current pier, and was built over four sunken ships. Divers report that 150-year-old pilings still remain below the water on the east side. The pier was replaced by Station Pier, which opened in 1931 with the capacity to carry four huge passenger ships to meet the increased trade in international liners. It took five years to build the structure because pilings had to be driven through thirty feet of mud. The first liner to call was the *Otranto* in 1931.

Port Melbourne has other historic transport connections. Look toward Westgate Bridge and you may glimpse the red roofs of Fishermen's Bend Estate (Garden City) built on Melbourne's first licensed aerodrome. To the northwest,

beyond the apartment towers of Beacon Cove, is the site of the factory where the first Holden car was produced. Few people then imagined that in the future aircraft and cars would become the dominant forms of transport.

Ahead is the **gatehouse** (2) with the quarters above that once housed the Harbormaster. Steel security gates are reminders of bitter waterfront strikes that occurred before the Great Depression.

To your right is the restored **western wing pier** (3), one of two once existing at Station Pier. In 2000 the historic old kiosk was still here. It was the waiting room for the daily passengers who travelled on one of three paddle steamers to Sorrento and Queenscliff from this and the opposite wing (now demolished).

Note the white **beacon** (4) like a small lighthouse that stands offshore on the right (west) side. The beacon is one of a pair, the other of which is inland. Ships would line up on the beacons to navigate the channel to Station Pier.

Continue walking up the pier. The first building is now the ***Spirit of Tasmania* terminal** (5), the other the international shipping terminal.

At the **international terminal** (6) notice the derelict baggage conveyors. Built in the 1950's, they were the first of their kind in Australia. In 1962 the *Canberra* became the first ship to be unloaded without conveyors.

International shipping reached its peak in 1966. In that year 167 passenger ships arrived, each carrying up to 1000 passengers (equivalent to the passenger load of two jumbo jets) and departing

with possibly the same number. Through the customs shed here entered over a million migrants to begin a new life in Australia.

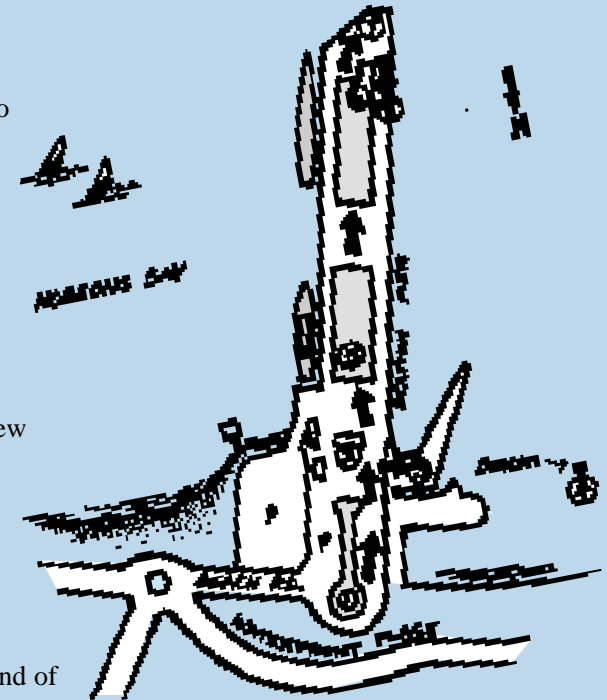
Trains once ran from the city allowing passengers to directly unload their bags onto the pier. In the 1930's a special and luxurious blue Boat Train ran directly from Flinders Street.

Proceed to the end of the pier (7) and take in the marvellous view of the bay and coastline. If you feel tired it is because you have just walked the seven hundred metre length of the largest wooden structure in the Southern Hemisphere.

It could have been worse – the end of the pier has been hit so many times by ships it is actually shorter than its original length. Also there were once plans to continue the pier all the way to Williamstown. Even now Station Pier currently runs one third of that distance.

Notice the line of white beacons in the bay that mark the channel or sea-road along which ships travel from Port Phillip Heads to the mouth of the Yarra.

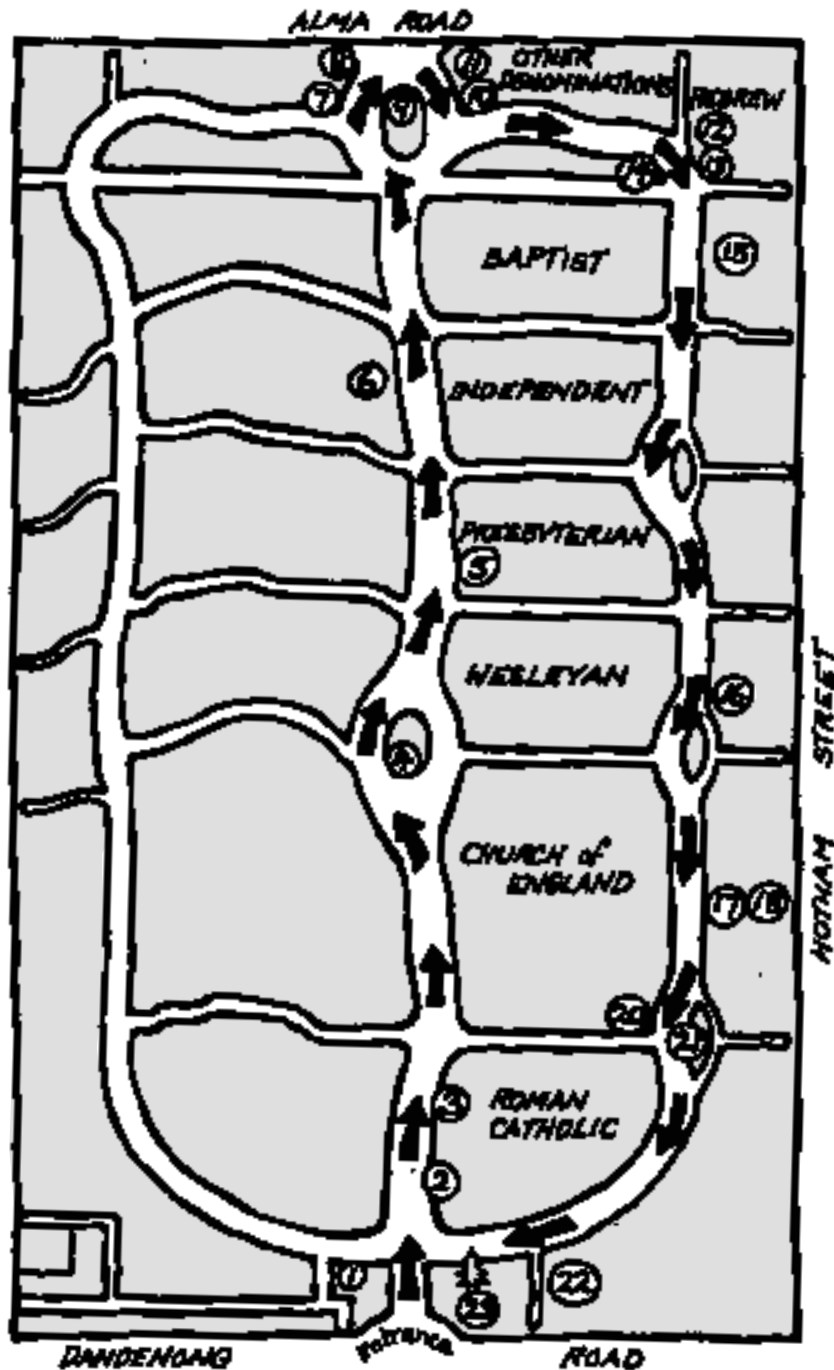
Return along the west edge of the pier (8). Navy patrol boats such as the *Warrnambool* often moor here. You may spy old graffiti in white paint on the timber decking on your right, such as '*Strathnaver*' or '*Ranchi*'. It was a tradition to paint the name of the ship onto the pier on its last voyage. The *Strathnaver* was the first passenger ship in the world to be part air-conditioned. Its last voyage was in 1962 after 30



years

of service. The *Ranchi*, which was a familiar sight at Station Pier, was one of many overseas passenger ships that were pressed into service to transport hundreds of thousands of troops during World War 2.

As you return to shore, continue the **Immigration Trail** which includes the Swallows & Ariell biscuit factory in Beach Street. In 1854 it began biscuit production (originally steamed ships' biscuits) and continued for an amazing 137 years. The smell of biscuits was an essential characteristic of Port Melbourne. Homesick troops returning to Melbourne after years abroad could smell biscuits at sea long before they reached shore. That smell told them and generations of other arrivals that they



This trail celebrates the memory and lives of past generations of residents of the City of Port Phillip, particularly in St. Kilda. The St. Kilda General Cemetery contains an extraordinary range of important historic graves and memorials and is listed on the Register of the National Estate. In recent years members of the community have become increasingly aware of this fascinating cultural resource. It is of particular importance to Federation as it includes the grave of Alfred Deakin, the acknowledged leader of the Federation cause in the colony as well as Prime Minister on three occasions. George Turner, the Federal Treasurer in the first Commonwealth Government is also buried there, as are many local identities such as Albert Jacka. The details on monuments and memorials provide a wealth of insight to the life and times of our predecessors. The Trail explores only a sample of the amazing range of graves in this cemetery.

Cemetery Trail

Start

Entrance to St. Kilda General Cemetery,
Dandenong Road
St. Kilda
Melway 58 G8

Length

800 metres

Time

45 minutes

Wet, sandy and snake infested

The St. Kilda General Cemetery is one of the oldest suburban cemeteries in Melbourne. It was laid out by Robert Hoddle the Surveyor General of the colony of Victoria in 1851 and officially opened in June 1855.

In early years it had a reputation for being very wet as well as sandy and snake infested. Drainage was always a problem and remained so for many years. Most of the memorials and more affluent graves are situated on the drier western side of the cemetery near Hotham Street.

By 1860 St. Kilda had become the

preferred suburb of the rich, and there were three attempts by local landowners to have the cemetery closed because of fear it would reduce land values. Concerns about the future of the cemetery continue today. The cemetery has no income for maintenance yet is situated on a prime piece of residential land. However, interest in the cemetery as an historical resource and as a community resource may in time secure its future.

Trouble with space

In 1882 Charles Truelove was appointed Secretary and Manager, and in the short-term cemetery finances

prospered. In 1900 the sale of grave lots was discontinued as the 20,000 available lots had been exhausted. Truelove, in pursuit of keeping the cemetery solvent, continued to sell graves without permission and sometimes sold them two and three times over. There were complaints about trafficking in suspended rights of burial, improper disposal of grave lots, the sale of graves in unsanitary areas and mismanagement of the cemetery in general. Truelove was dismissed in 1905 and a board of inquiry convened.

Variations to the discontinuance order were made in 1923, 1928, 1935 and 1983. These occurred as grave lots became available by resuming space from flowerbeds, pathways, and the abolition of buildings such as the summerhouse, fountain and maintenance buildings. A lawn cemetery was built on the site of the lodge demolished in 1969.

The Springvale Necropolis is now the Trustee and employs a caretaker and a gardener to manage the cemetery on a daily basis.

Estimates of people now buried in the cemetery are as high as 51,000. There are still between 12 and 20 people buried in the cemetery per year by families who have held burial rights for many years.

Death in Port Phillip

The advent of Federation in 1901 coincided with major public health advances. For example it was in 1901 that the City of Port Phillip first commenced connection to the sewer system.

A survey of 1,824 persons from the Presbyterian section of the cemetery as to the cause of deaths indicates that the average age of death of males and females between 1852 and 1875 was approximately 23 years and 15 years respectively. Women dying in childbirth probably account for some of this high mortality rate. By 1900 this had increased to 31 and 27 years respectively probably due to a greater understanding of asepsis and other medical advances.

The main cause of death between 1871 and 1890 was disease of the lungs due to the great number of men in the mining industry. Diarrhoea and accidents were the next primary causes. Infants were susceptible to diarrhoea caused by poor hygiene, housing and improper feeding. Typhoid, diphtheria and measles were also killers. People died from diseases that today can be easily controlled or cured such as chicken pox, diabetes, whooping cough, dysentery, hydatids and malaria. Drowning was the major cause of death by accident.

Approximately 29% of those surveyed in the Presbyterian section of St. Kilda Cemetery died before they were 21 years of age up to 1900. From 1900 to 1960 this proportion decreased to 5% of

deaths before the age of 21. Strict municipal health regulations, connection to the sewer system, baby health centres and compulsory vaccination saved countless lives.

Only 11% of persons before 1900 in the survey were over 70 years of age. However by 1960 this had reached 48%.

Cemetery Trail

The trail starts at the entrance gates on Dandenong Road. The cemetery is open 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. on most days. The cemetery has been filled beyond its original capacity and while many of the graves included below are easy to locate, others are more difficult. Not to worry. Getting lost and meeting unexpected forebears is all part of the experience.

1 Robb

The monument is located on the left just inside the front gate. This beautiful sculpture commemorates two related women who died young. Irene Lillian Robb died in 1931. Her sister in law Doleen Maude La Barte was shot and killed in 1920 by her husband Major La Barte, a veteran of World War One, while under the influence of shell shock and alcohol. The murder created great public attention at the time. As many as 11 family members are buried in the La Barte gravesite.

2 Klemm

Three striking metal crosses mark the grave of Frederick Klemm, vigneron and wine and spirit merchant, his wife Marion and her parents. Cast-iron monuments

such as these are relatively rare in 19th century cemeteries. The grave is the fifth burial site past a wooden shelter.

3 Kelly

25 metres further on is Captain Kelly born 1851 in Prahran. Soldier and fireman, he lived just long enough to know that a reform he had persistently advocated - the Fire Brigade Board - was formed. His grave is famous for the metalwork shaped into firehoses and hydrants. The Melbourne and Metropolitan Fire Brigade renovated the grave in February 1991 as part of their centennial celebration.

4 Bennett

In the most prominent position in the cemetery is the grave and memorial of Lieutenant James Bennett, the mechanic for Ross and Keith Smith on their epic air race from England to Australia in 1919. He also accompanied Ross on the first Egypt to India flight. During World War One he served in the Australian Flying Corps. Bennett died in a plane crash: *'passed to a higher life'*.

5 Jacka

70 metres further on is the grave of Albert Jacka, considered Australia's greatest front line soldier. He was 22 when he won the Victoria Cross at Gallipoli, the first V.C. awarded to the Australian Infantry Force in World War One. On service in France he won the Military Cross and Bar. Severely wounded and badly gassed he was invalided home. He was elected to the St. Kilda Council and as Mayor in 1930 devoted his energies to assisting the

unemployed. *'A gallant soldier and involved citizen'*.

6 Sargood

Senator, the Hon. Lt. Col. Sir Frederick Sargood K.C.M.G.V.D. Territorial JP was Victoria's first Minister of Defence. In the mid 1860s he bought the land for his home and over the next 35 years created the gardens and buildings of the now famous Ripponlea.

7 and 8 Felton & Grimwade

Buried in adjoining graves are long time friends and business partners Felton and Grimwade, wholesale druggists. Their firm Melbourne Glass Bottle Works eventually became Australian Consolidated Industries. Felton, a bachelor, settled at the Esplanade Hotel in St. Kilda. On his death half of his considerable estate was bequeathed to the National Gallery of Victoria to set up the Felton Bequest.

9 Danglow

On the outbreak of W.W.1 Rabbi Danglow served in France as the chaplain to the A.I.F. In World War Two, he was appointed senior Jewish chaplain to the Australian Army. Danglow later took an active interest in youth work.

10 Turner

Sir George Turner was Mayor of St. Kilda and M.L.A. for St. Kilda. He was Solicitor General, Treasurer and twice Premier of Victoria. In the first Commonwealth Government he held the position of Treasurer.

11 Panton

A beautiful Celtic carving, to a design provided by his daughter, adorns the grave of Joseph Panton. This delightful grave is set back from the path just behind Turner but can be accessed from the rear walkway. At the age of 21, Lieutenant-Governor La Trobe sent him to Kangaroo Valley as Assistant Gold Commissioner. Later as police magistrate he mapped the Yarra Valley and named Mt Donna Buang. Panton Hills is named after him.

12 Phillips

An elegant and simple black granite slab is a memorial to the three entrepreneurial Phillips brothers from Seattle. Harold, Leon and Herрман were the managers of Luna Park. They built the famous Palais de Danse and the Palais Theatre in St. Kilda.

13 Von Mueller

Highly regarded government botanist and Director of the Melbourne Botanical Gardens, Baron Sir Ferdinand Von Mueller explored much of Australia collecting botanical specimens. He constructed the herbarium to which he contributed his own collection. He was bitterly disappointed when William Guilfoyle replaced him as Director. Mueller was a well known public figure, sometimes lampooned for his long woollen scarves (many of his family members died from TB) and his passion for collecting honours. Mueller had great respect for cemeteries and contributed both garden design and plants for the Melbourne General Cemetery in Carlton.

14 Glen Huntley Pioneers Memorial

This gravesite with its striking marble scroll is opposite Meullers grave. In 1840 the barque Glen Huntley arrived in Port Phillip flying the yellow flag indicating typhoid fever on board. La Trobe immediately set up a quarantine camp at Point Ormond. Three people who died there were buried on the bluff but when the sea encroached on their burial place, they were reburied at St. Kilda Cemetery in a large public ceremony. In 1990 the descendants of the Glen Huntley passengers met to commemorate 150 years since their ancestors' arrival.

15 Deakin

This very modest memorial is dedicated to Alfred Deakin, Prime Minister of Australia successively in 1903, 1905, and 1909. Deakin was chairman of the Federation League and the acknowledged leader of the federation cause in the colony. He was Attorney General in Barton's first federal ministry before he became Prime Minister. The grave is set back from the main path. Just past Mueller's grave take the brick walkway left. Turn right up the next walkway for 15 metres. It is on the left side in the shape of an open book.

16 Chambers

A broken headstone flat on the ground next to a low tree stump beside the path commemorates, amongst others, the 14-year-old boy Edwin Chambers. He perished in the wreck of the *'Admella'* 6th August 1859 near Mt Gambier on passage from Adelaide to Melbourne. It was a week before lifeboats reached the

vessel. People on shore watched in horror as crew and passengers were gradually swept from the wreck.

17 and 18 Bailliere & Mandeville

Both these gentleman were husbands of the same woman. Ferdinand Bailliere arrived in 1860 to represent his family's book business. He was appointed Publisher in Ordinary to the Victorian Government. He published post office directories known to the public as 'bailleries'. He was killed aged 43 at Windsor in 1881 in one of Melbourne's worst railway disasters.

Captain Mandeville served in the Royal Navy from the age of 14. In 1878 he took command of the Victorian Naval Forces. In 1881 he married the widow of Ferdinand Bailliere. *'He did his duty'*.

19 Doveton

Margaret Doveton's grave is unmarked. She was the daughter of Lieutenant Doveton of the 51st Regiment Queens Own, the first goldfields commissioner in Victoria who played a leading role in the conflict at Eureka stockade. Lieutenant Doveton is also buried in an unmarked grave but in the Catholic section of the cemetery.

20 Templeton

Janet Templeton's headstone is simple sandstone set back from the path directly opposite George Allan (below). She was an early pioneer who chartered a ship to bring her family and their flocks of Saxon sheep to Australia arriving in 1831. Janet took up a large run in the Goulburn district but later moved to Seven Creeks, Euroa.

21 Allan

Meeting with only moderate success in the goldfields, George Leavis Allan returned to Melbourne to capitalise on his musical experiences. He and his son George were partners in the firm Allan and Co. operating the largest musical warehouse in Australia. Allans is still a famous store in Bourke Street.

22 Presentation Sisters

Mother Paul (Katherine Mulquin) with six other sisters from Ireland in 1873 set up the first Presentation Convent in Dandenong Road, Windsor. The school soon achieved a considerable reputation for excellence. Several country and city convents and many parish primary schools were founded with Windsor personnel and resources. The grave is a large lot set back from the path and covered with quartz chips. There is another large Presentation gravesite beside it.

23 Allen

Shortly after the Presentation grave is the green expanse of the lawn cemetery. The first tree on the lawn is a large pine. This marks the site of the cemetery lodge before it was demolished to create the lawn cemetery in 1969.

The last caretakers, Lorna and Arthur Allen, were buried in the lawn cemetery on the site of their former home. Walk ten paces from the pine tree towards the gates to locate their plaque. This tree is a former Xmas tree of the Allen family that was left outside and accidentally took root. Their son Gus recalls many memories of growing up in the cemetery (see story: *The Cemetery Dweller*).



St. Kilda Cemetery entrance and gatehouse c1860s

Gus Allen had the kind of childhood others would die for.

I was astonished when I first heard of a boy who grew up in St. Kilda Cemetery. When I was growing up in Caulfield I walked past the cemetery several times a week never suspecting there was a family living within the walls. The place terrified me at night. It recently took me several months to track Gus down and ask him if he was ever spooked.

Never. My mother always said that the people inside the walls couldn't hurt you. It was those outside you had to worry about.

Actually, according to Gus it was rather idyllic. His parents owned the service station nearby on the corner of Hotham and Dandenong Streets. They rented the cemetery lodge because it was a few minutes away and moderately cheap (for obvious reasons). His father also loved the fact that he was forbidden to mow the lawn or tend the garden. Those jobs belonged to the cemetery staff of 10-15 people.

The Cemetery Dweller

The whole place was like living in a beautiful garden. Spring was fantastic. There were tall shady trees, some of them oaks and some of them fruit trees such as pears and apples. Boxing Day – my birthday – was an occasion to collect apricots. The wasteland you see today has been created to save on maintenance.

What about ghosts? I ask hopefully.

My mother always said there was a ghost in the lodge she called Charlie. I never noticed him. Anyway he was quite harmless.

The family moved into the lodge in about 1941 when Gus was four or five and he lived there till he left home in 1966. I was surprised to find out that other people lived in the cemetery. Obe Pedersen the curator lived in the Cemetery's office building. When Gus was 16, a couple – Hilda and Harry – rented part of the office building with their 16 year old daughter Barbara.

My ears prick up. Two kids in the cemetery. Did you get on?

You could say that. We were childhood sweethearts.

In later years we were married for a while.

Gus lives up to my expectations of a cemetery dweller. He has loads of stories:

My father always told me that the cemetery got its start last century when a local Aboriginal person was killed by horse-drawn wool dray on the corner of Hotham and Dandenong. He was buried on that corner. Who knows if its true. The horse trough that was supposedly built over his grave was still there in the 1950's.

One day I went to the servo after school and was very excited when Dad told me a pig had fallen off a truck and had run into the cemetery. I went looking for it on my bike. It was huge. The police didn't know what to do with it. My father did. He called his mate George Campbell who happened to be a butcher. We ate pork for many meals.

We had a cocky for ten years that lived in the laundry out the back. He would climb the trellis to the top of the fence and follow funeral processions cheering up the mourners with 'hello, luv' and 'hello dear'.

Obe the curator was a gentle soul. One day he came to see my father: 'Arthur, I'm in terrible trouble.' A rat had fallen into a freshly dug grave. It couldn't get out and a funeral was due. Obe wasn't capable of killing anything. My father said no problem. He went of with his .22. The mourners never knew there had once been another body in that grave. One night my father had a tiff with my mother as married couples do and went for a walk to cool off. Mum sent me to look for him because he'd had a few drinks. I found him asleep by the workmen's shed in a wooden wheelbarrow and wheeled him home.

It was a very sociable place. My father was a JP and people including police would call at all hours for affidavits and bail papers etc. Family friends gathered on Sundays and of course we were also friends with Obe and the staff. We built a very good bar in the huge lounge of the lodge. I was a member of the army reserve (CMF) in Chapel Street and the bar was a gathering point after practice. They thought it was a great laugh.

Denominations were very strong then. There were strict rules about who got buried where and everything was done according to your religion. Very serious business.

There were some big funerals. I remember a brigadier was being buried. Two busloads of soldiers marched up and down in rehearsal for a day and a half. Very entertaining.

The lodge was eventually pulled down and replaced by a lawn cemetery.

My parents loved the place so much they are buried in the lawn cemetery on the site of their former bedroom. The pine tree nearby is a Xmas tree my father brought home one year and then left outside the lodge in a wooden tub. Eventually it took root and grew. That was more than half a century ago.

Amazing. I am envious of Gus. Our family only lived in a Californian bungalow. I am even wondering if there are any vacant lodges out there. ■

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All maps and illustrations are by Sharyn Madder

Location of the Federation Trail Starting Points

were finally home. ■

1 **Foreshore Trail**

Head Street at Elwood foreshore,
Elwood
(Melway 67 C5)

2 **Waterways (Gecko) Trail**

Elwood Canal at Marine Parade,
Elwood
(Melway 67 A2)

3 **Aboriginal Trail**

Cnr Pier Road and Beaconsfield Parade,
St. Kilda
(Melway 57 J8)

4 **Flora Trail**

Cnr Canterbury Road and Fraser Street,
Middle Park
(Melway 57 J7)

5 **Working People's Trail**

Beach Road at Lagoon Pier,
Port Melbourne
(Melway 57 B5)

6 **Immigrants Trail**

Waterfront Place at Station Pier,
Port Melbourne
(Melway 57 A3)

7 **Cemetery Trail**

Dandenong Road and Hotham Street,
East St. Kilda
(Melway 57 A3)

- ★ Five Federation benches (with dedication plaques) are located near the start of all trails beginning on the Port Phillip foreshore. Look for them near the start of the **Foreshore** trail, the **Waterways** trail, the **Aboriginal** trail, the **Working People's** trail and the **Immigrants** trail.