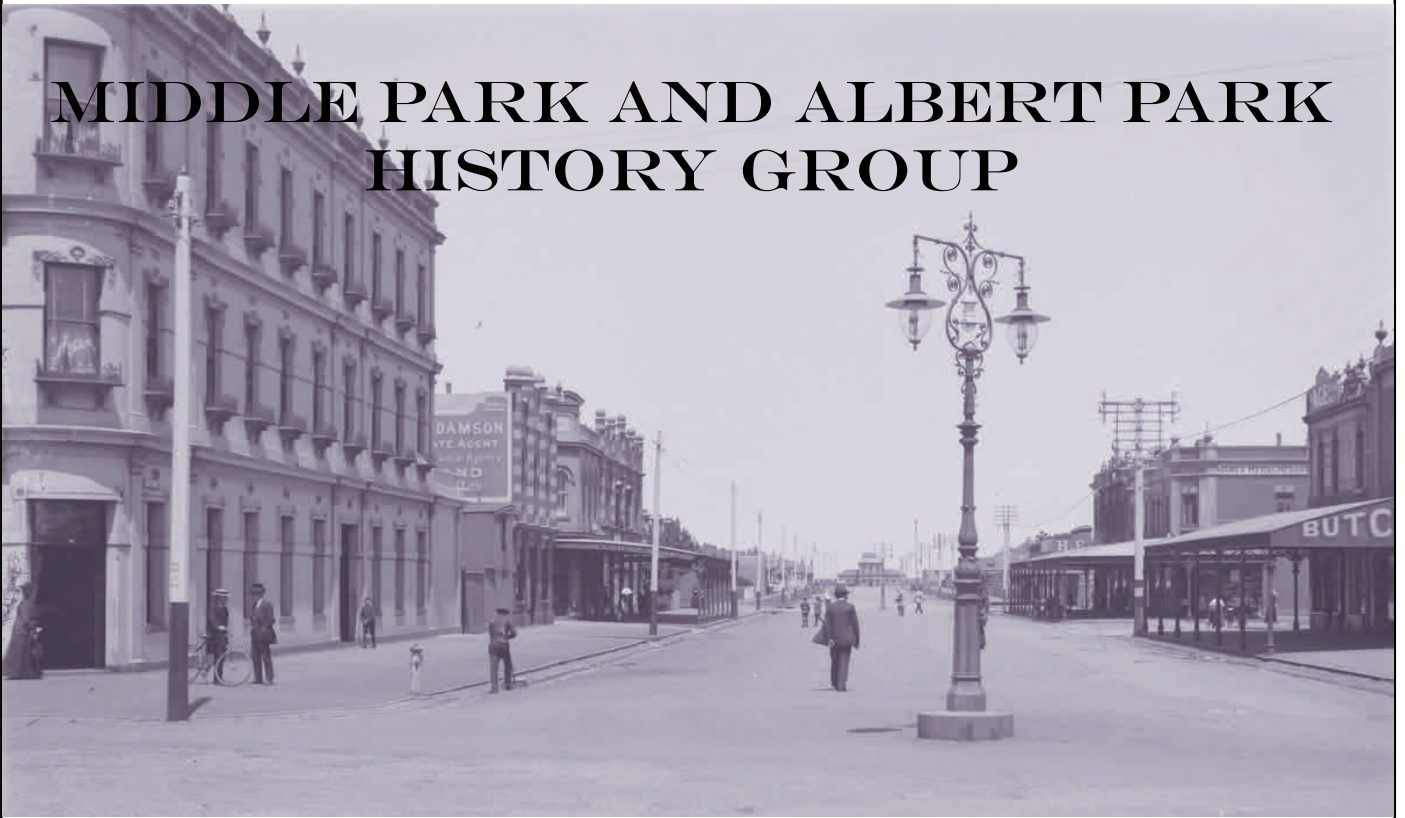


MIDDLE PARK AND ALBERT PARK HISTORY GROUP



Editorial

This issue of our newsletter contains, as usual, news from Sonya Cameron about what was happening locally 100 years ago and notice about our next meeting on 2 February 2026. Sonya's article about the beaches is very timely during this spell of hot weather. A postcard taken almost 100 years ago of Albert Park/Middle Park beach was very difficult to reproduce. Many of the buildings along Beaconsfield Parade are no longer there and the palm trees, planted in the 1970s, obscure others. President Eidelson has used his report to connect the 'Rats', ACDC,

bagpipes, Michael Gudinski and Albert Park. For the first time the newsletter contains a update from the Port Phillip Heritage Centre. Greek families settled in Albert Park and Middle Park after World War II, long before the suburbs became "fashionable". Here we celebrate Eugenia Mitrakas, a local who grew up in one of these families.

Gary Poore

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**The Middle Park and Albert Park History Group
Supported by The City of Port Phillip**



President's Report

What is the connection between 'Rats', AC/DC, bagpipes, Michael Gudinski and Albert Park?

The Rats of Tobruk in Albert Park honour the Australian soldiers who were besieged in Tobruk, Libya, in 1941. Their headquarters, Tobruk House, 44 Victoria Street, Albert Park is an incredible meeting place and museum.

Our Middle Park and Albert Park History Group has connections with the 'Rats'. We are members of the Association, held a meeting last November in Tobruk Hall and plan to have many more. Our member Lesleyanne Hawthorne is currently liaising with the 'Rats' regarding a future speaker on Lemnos. A significant community of Lemnian descent live in Albert Park and Middle Park. From 1915 to 1916, 50,000 ANZACs passed through the Greek island of Lemnos as the base for the Gallipoli Campaign. In 2015 a tribute statue to Lemnos was launched in Albert Park featuring a nurse, standing protectively over a soldier.

The long-standing Rats of Tobruk Memorial Pipes and Drums Band, founded in 1960, keeps the legacy

of the 'Rats' alive. The band's tartan represents the desert sands of North Africa, symbolising endurance and mateship. On 23 February 1976, three bagpipers from that the band – Les Kenfield, Kevin Conlon and Alan Butterworth – were riding down Swanston Street on the back of a flatbed truck playing 'It's A Long Way To The Top (If You Wanna Rock 'n' Roll)'. Molly Meldrum was making a music video for Countdown and the AC/DC band went on to sell 200 million records. Although Bon Scott on that truck appeared to play the pipes, he actually had learned briefly from the 'Rats' pipers for the shoot.

Fifty years later Les Kenfield and Kevin Conlon led 374 pipers to set a new world record for the largest ever bagpipe ensemble in the Great Melbourne Bagpipe Bash. Bagpipers of all ages and playing abilities gathered at Federation Square in November 2025, to pay homage to the 50th anniversary of AC/DC classic song and music video with the support of the City of Melbourne and ABC Radio.





Michael Gudinski, founder of Mushroom Records, helped manage AC/DC alongside Bill Evans before formally launching his label in 1972. Gudinski's early involvement played a key role in both his and the band's rise in the Australian music scene. Not everyone is aware that the headquarters of the Mushroom Group, Australia's largest independent music and entertainment company including touring, management, film, and music publishing, is based at 9 Dundas Lane, near the Albert Park shopping centre. Some of the over sixty performers on the Mushroom Label included ABBA, Christine Anu, Jimmy Barnes, Kate Ceberano, Jason Donovan, Renée Geyer, Paul Kelly, Kylie and Dannii Minogue, Madonna, Archie



Roach, Skyhooks, Split Enz and Yothu Yindi.

Meyer Eidelson

Port Phillip Heritage Centre Update

Thea Guiry Stewart and Nicole Hilder

Hello Middle Park and Albert Park history enthusiasts,

We have had a busy few months here at the Heritage Centre; here are some highlights and exciting upcoming events.

Our inaugural Local History Photography Competition: Your streets, Your stories, was a great success, with over 250 entries and many of them featuring your wonderful neighbourhoods. Visit our website to check out the judges' finalists – [Local History Photo Competition](#).



Late afternoon colour, 18 October 2025, Gail Greatorex

It has been so wonderful to create a collection that reflects so many different perspectives in Port Phillip.

Our Team Leader Nicole has been busy creating resources to make it easier to access our collection and heritage services. Our newly published guides are available to view in person at the Heritage Centre, or on our website – [heritage-centre-guides](https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/heritage-centre-guides).

To accompany these guides, we are also introducing a new workshop series called Scan and Save, which will run once a month, and will teach attendees how to use our Epson V850 Pro Scanner to digitise high quality photographs, negatives and slides. Book a space here for our first workshop on 12 February 2026.

And last but certainly not least, we celebrated one year of our Family History Club in October 2025. It has been a joy to meet with our members monthly and to listen to their projects, their family history stories, and all with a healthy serving of tea and biscuits of course.

We are looking forward to a jam packed 2026, with more workshops, programs and an exciting slew of events for the 2026 National Trust's Heritage



Louis Dugas, winner of the Under 18 inaugural Local History Photography Competition who happily let us know he would be spending his winnings on a new Lego set.

Festival running from April 18 to May 18. Keep an eye on our website for more updates and heritage happenings.

'til next time,

Localhistory@portphillip.vic.gov.au

03 9209 6795



Port Phillip Heritage Centre : from left to right: Thea Guiry-Stewart (staff), Peter Tonkin, Melanie Eagle and David Radcliffe

100 years ago – January 1926

The beaches of Middle Park and Albert Park

Sonya Cameron

At this time of the year, our newspapers report on the best beaches to visit in Melbourne, and our local beaches will often feature. Not only is there good public transport available, but there are many food outlets (including Jock's Ice Creams) to cater to the visitors. However, over the years, our beaches have

come into a fair amount of criticism for their lack of facilities, lack of cleanliness, etc. – but not in January 1926. Improvements had been made to the beach facilities and the scenes described in these two articles are full of compliments.

SOUTH MELBOURNE BEACHES FOR PICNICKERS.

South Melbourne, Albert Park and Middle Park beach is regarded by residents as the best open-sea bathing place around Port Phillip. Members of the progress association claim for this sweep of shore, with its background of handsome residences, and the Beaconsfield-parade, with its central embellishment of lawns and flower gardens, that it is the best suburban seaside prospect in Victoria, if not in Australia. According to Mr. R. Williams, chairman of the foreshore trust, the ten dressing shelters, fitted with fresh-water showers, will accommodate 2000 people. The shelters were erected by the municipal council, and no charge is made for admission to them. Passing down Collins-street, South Melbourne cable trams run right to South Melbourne beach. Electric trams, starting from Sturt-street (at Princes-bridge), pass within a stone throw of Albert Park railway station, and run only a block away from the seaside from Mills-street, Albert Park, to Fraser-street, Middle Park (the St. Kilda boundary). From there the electric trams proceed to St. Kilda beach. A short walk covers the distance from Middle Park railway station, along Armstrong-street, to the seashore. Picnic parties will be able to buy hot water for billy tea at Middle Park baths, and at the kiosks at Kerferd-road and Victoria-avenue. In the interests of public safety the council has fixed a speed limit of 12 miles an hour for motors on Beaconsfield-parade.

AROUND THE BEACHES.

South Melbourne.

Large crowds of people spent the day very enjoyably along the inner beaches. Folk of all ages came from the city and northern suburbs in thousands, by train, tram, motor vehicles and a sprinkling of horse-drawn conveyances. Although most of the family circles made locations on the sands their bases for festivities, the lawns along the centre of Beaconsfield-parade provided similar accommodation for many of the parties of visitors to South Melbourne, Albert Park and Middle Park beach.

The bright hues of bathing costumes worn by the fair sex gave touches of color to the inspiring spectacle of people in thousands sporting in the waves. The dressing accommodation provided by the council, in the shape of ten shelters, was fully availed of, no doubt to the delight of members of the progress association, who are keen about making the local beach the most popular public bathing place around Port Phillip. Experts of both sexes at diving were able to take the water in dashing style from stands constructed by swimming clubs, where there are good depths of water. Middle Park swimming club's platform is a substantial work, and, as well as spring boards at different heights, carries a chute down which members and visitors proficient to make the thrilling descent shot themselves into the sea with great rapidity, obtaining exciting amusement from the effort.



THE ROSE SERIES P. 2082
COPYRIGHT

BEACH, ALBERT PARK, VIC.

Beach, Albert Park, Vic., Rose Stereograph Co. (image courtesy State Library of Victoria) probably 1930s



Beach, Albert Park, Vic., 24 January 2026 (same view as above) photo: GP

Eugenia Mitrakas, OAM BA LLB

I have lived in Albert Park since 1958 and attended Albert Park Primary, Middle Park Central and MacRob. I think of this area as the best in the universe.

I have attached a copy of the relevant pages of my profile that may be of interest to our members. Happy to share my thoughts of the area with our group.

I live at 77 St Vincent Place and my legal and notarial practice is at the back in 62 Bevan Street , so I am a true local.

I worked in the boarding houses and the fish shops of my parents from the age of 10 until my late 20s. I think this hard work moulded me and I believe that Australia embraced me and made it a level playing field for me.

I did not suffer any discrimination in my schools or university other than minor incidents all kids have. I believe that I am who I am because of the vast opportunities that Australia opened for me . Hard work does pay dividends. I have given back to my school, my university, my legal profession, my Greek community and Greece. Greece gave me the journey but was then too poor to give me the opportunities that Australia gave me.

I have become as Australian Greek who is proud of her Greek heritage.

The following is an article published in *Neos Kosmos* on 25 July 1925. Manos Stavrianos, the



journalist who wrote the piece has agreed to republish an abbreviated version here.

Kind regards

Eugenia

Greek Australian lawyer Eugenia Mitrakas honoured in Athens for global Hellenic contribution

Eugenia Mitrakas has been awarded the highest distinction by the Centre for Ecumenical Hellenism (Melathron Oikoumenikos Hellenismos) in recognition of her lifelong contribution to the global Greek diaspora and the international esteem with which she represents Australia.

The award was presented during a major commemorative event marking the Centre's 40th anniversary, held last Monday, at the War Museum in central Athens.

The evening's theme, "Wherever There Are Greeks – From Tierra del Fuego to Saint Petersburg", highlighted the Centre's decades-long efforts to promote Greek history and culture around the world, with a particular emphasis on the memory of Famagusta and the support of schools in remote Greek regions.

Mitrakas received the award from renowned artist and honorary president of the Centre, Mimi Denissi, who praised her longstanding commitment to Hellenism abroad.



Eugenia Mitrakas, pictured between the founder of the Centre for Ecumenical Hellenism, Stavros Panousopoulos, and the Centre's Honorary President, Mimi Denissi, at the moment she received the evening's highest honorary award. Photo: Centre for Ecumenical Hellenism.

"This past Sunday, I received a copy of a newly published collector's edition book titled *Greeks*, edited by Manos Stavrianos," Mitrakas said.

"It is not for sale, but is being distributed to embassies and Greek organisations around the world. It profiles 20 prominent Greeks of the diaspora, only four of whom are women and I am the only one featured from Australia."

The event took place under the auspices of Archbishop Ieronymos II of Athens and All Greece, who attended the ceremony, underscoring the evening's national significance and symbolic weight.

The night honoured not only memory and diaspora, but also the strengthening of ties between Greece and its most distant communities. A particularly emotional moment was the reference to the still-occupied and largely abandoned city of Famagusta, described as an "open wound" in modern Hellenism. Journalist Nikos Vafeiadis hosted the evening, while traditional dances were performed by the Apollon Kerateas Cultural Association.

For four decades, the Centre for Ecumenical Hellenism has spearheaded private initiatives of national importance, aiming to preserve, document, and promote Greek history internationally. Since 1996, it has operated under the patronage of Greek Presidents, Archbishops, academic institutions, and local governments, reaching Greek communities in even the most remote corners of the globe through books, cultural missions, and educational programs.

Twelve distinguished figures of Hellenism from five continents were honoured for their cultural and intellectual contributions.

Proceeds from the evening will go toward supporting schools in Greece's border regions and raising international awareness about occupied Famagusta.

The event was organised by Centre founder Stavros Panousopoulos, editor of *Arsinoi* publications; honorary president Mimi Denissi; and Professor Athanasios Angelopoulos, the Centre's scientific supervisor.



A total of twelve distinguished figures of Hellenism from five continents were honoured by the Centre for Ecumenical Hellenism for their exceptional intellectual and cultural contributions. Photo: Centre for Ecumenical Hellenism.

MPAPHG Meetings Calendar 2026

O'Connor-Pilkington Room
(next to the Carmelite Library, 214 Richardson Street)

Monday 2 February : 7:30 pm

The Interwar Flats of Middle Park and Albert Park

David Helms

Meeting dates for 2026:

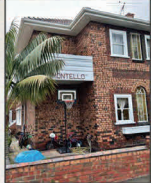
20 April 2026

13 July 2026

7 September 2026

7 November 2026 (AGM)

Speakers to be advised

MIDDLEPARKANDALBERTPARKHISTORY.ORG.AU	
MIDDLE PARK	ALBERT PARK
* Meeting *	
HISTORY	
INVITATION - MONDAY, 2ND FEBRUARY 2026	
THE INTERWAR FLATS OF MIDDLE PARK & ALBERT PARK	MIDDLE PARK ALBERT PARK HISTORY GROUP PRESENTS
	DATE, TIME & VENUE
	Date Monday, 2nd February 2026 Time 7:30pm Venue: Carmelite Hall @ Our Lady of Mt Carmel Church 214 Richardson Street Middle Park
	Presented by David Helms <i>Principal Heritage Advisor City of Port Phillip</i> Join us for a presentation from David about the diverse collection of historically and architecturally significant flats scattered throughout our two suburbs
	

Your MPAPHG committee

President:	Meyer Eidelson
Vice-President:	Vacant
Secretary:	Abramo Ierardo
Treasurer:	Sonya Cameron
Liaison Officer	Vacant TBA
Committee members:	Jenny Cass, Lesleyanne Hawthorne, Sue Joyner, Gary Poore, Nadia Wright