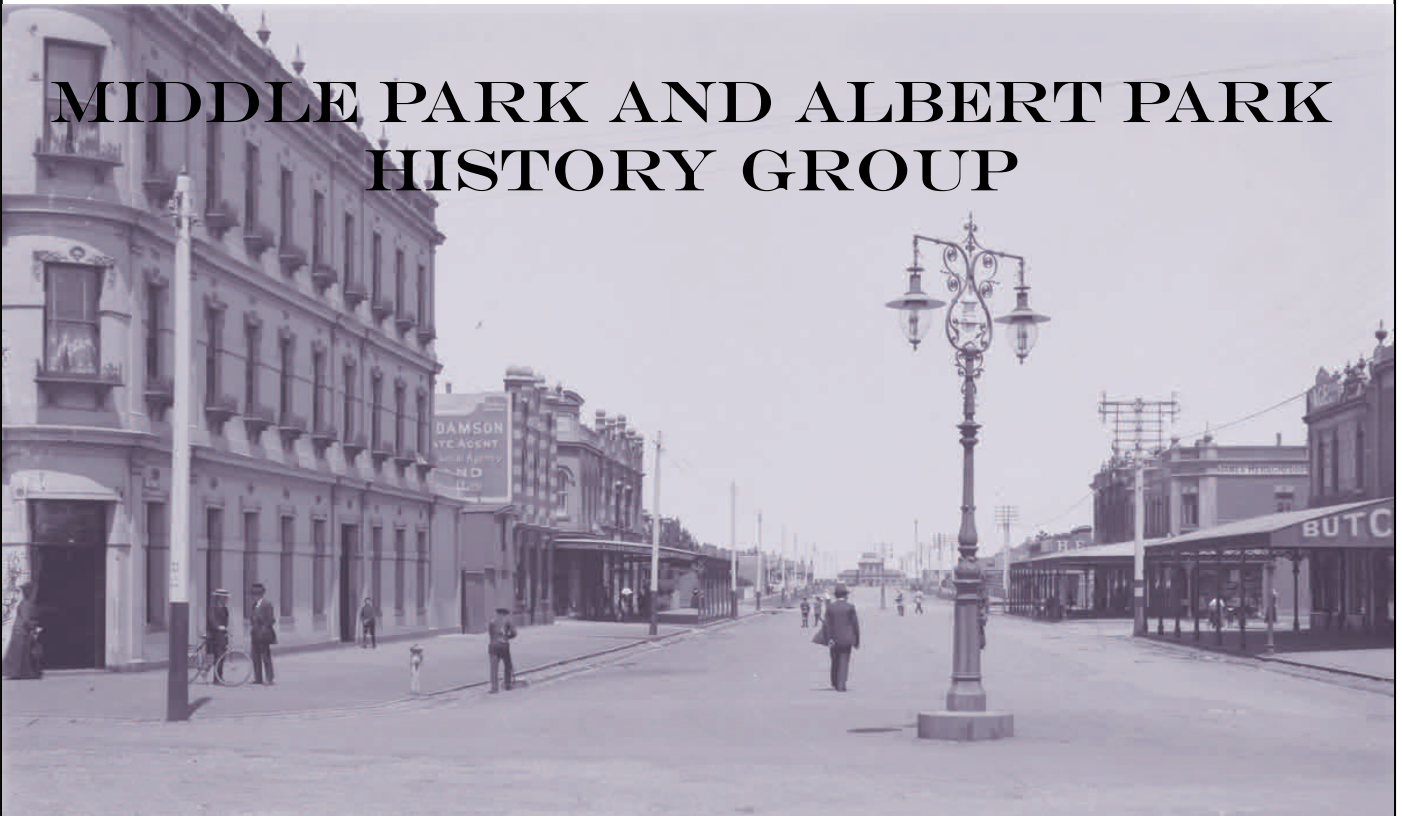


MIDDLE PARK AND ALBERT PARK HISTORY GROUP



Editorial

This newsletter has fewer pages than many in the past. Simply put, I am running out of material. I call on members to write something of historical or current interest. For older residents this could be a local event, buildings or recollections. Even newcomers to the area can research history using the pictures and newspapers on-line at the State Library of Victoria or using Trove. In this issue as usual Sonya Cameron writes on what newspapers were reporting on local behaviour. — nothing's new.

I can report that our first book on Albert Park has almost sold out and that the second will go to print very soon. Get your copies at the Avenue Bookshop.

Our meeting on Monday 5 February will be addressed by Peter Taylor who will speak on the history of Albert Park Yachting & Angling Club.

Gary Poore

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



President's Report

Greetings fellow members

I hope the summer and new year are treating you well.

One thing which unites Middle Park and Albert Park is their possession of the rare labyrinth of narrow dunny lanes which still weave through the fabric of workers cottages in both suburbs. I doubt this network exists to the same extent elsewhere in Australia. I have spent many years exploring these Lilliputian pathways where the night soil men of the past emptied the pans from thunderboxes to protect the public from diseases such as colonial fever or typhoid. Travelling the maze one gains some interesting mostly welcome insights into the rear end of our townships.

The dunny guys may have been social pariahs to some but they saved innumerable lives especially of children before the city was sewered from 1897.

The public gardens also benefitted - smell the roses at Blessington Gardens for instance, a former night soil depot.

On one occasion Kenny in overalls aka Shane Jacobson accompanied us on a dunny run through the backside of Albert Park with his filmmaker brother Clayton. He was professionally appreciative of the 19th century dunny landscape.

I recently read and can recommend Shane's autobiography: 'The Long Road To Overnight Success'. It is a great growing-up in Melbourne story.

Of course over the years many residents have incorporated the lanes into their properties via adverse possession. More recently though the council has been resuming them back into public hands realising the enormous financial value of each square foot of land in what was once considered slum housing.

Looking forward to catching up with you at our meetings in 2024.

Meyer Eidelson



100 years ago – November 1923

Sonya Cameron

Reading about events one hundred years ago gives an insight into how society has moved on in some instances, but in others, nothing has changed. These two newspaper articles from November 1923 are an example. In the first article, which is particularly relevant as it refers to the Albert Park Yachting and Angling Club which will give a talk to the MPAPHG meeting in February. The Club formed a Beach Vigilance Committee, to enforce the strict dress codes on the beach (our previous newsletter gave examples of the types of bathing costumes that were approved). One hundred years later, society's attitudes have changed, and minimal bathing costumes are the norm, not the exception.



Photo not taken in Middle Park

BEACH MORALS

Vigilance Committees Suggested


The Albert Park Yachting and Angling Club, resenting the insinuations made against the behavior of bathers, determined to patrol the beaches and assist the council officials to enforce the regulations. At their request badges were cast by the council, and representatives of the club formed a committee.

"They reported enough cases of irregular behavior," declared Mr E. C. Crockford, the Town Clerk of South Melbourne, "but when we endeavored to enforce the penalty, by bringing the offenders to court, there was not one member of the vigilance committee

who would give evidence in the witness box. Thus it became a useless farce, and collapsed."

At the present time the council's two officers patrol the beach on the look-out for breaches of the by-laws, and satisfaction is expressed at the manner in which they perform their duties. Showing forethought, the council has appointed a lady official to deal with the young woman in a daring costume.

The conduct of bathers, however, is spoken of approvingly in the reports tendered to the council, and though something may develop from the forthcoming deputation, it is considered unlikely that the council will risk delegating authority.



Beach Vigilance Button.

However, the second article confirms that nothing has changed. Newspapers today report on crimes that are being committed by teenagers, and we shake our heads and wonder what is happening to today's youth. Yet one hundred years ago, two teenagers appeared before the courts on a very enterprising misdemeanour. In this case involving two Albert Park boys the magistrate believed that the parents were just as guilty as the offenders!

Mystery photo

The picture below was taken some time ago. The questions are:

1. Where was the photo taken?
2. What has become of London House?
3. Where is the drinking fountain (not the two gentlemen leaning against it) now?

YOUTHFUL CRIMINALS.

"Parents Equally Guilty."

At the South Melbourne Court yesterday, before Mr. Smith, P.M., and Messrs. Scott, Craine, Russell, Cogan, Baragwanath, Ferguson, and Jones, J.P.'s, Lindsay Williams, aged 17 years, baker, Danks street, Albert Park, and James Flannagan, aged 17 years, presser, Ashwood street, Middle Park, were charged with having stolen a quantity of cigarettes and £3 in money from the Carmelite Hall, Middle Park.

The evidence showed that while wandering about the streets at midnight with three younger boys, the accused agreed to assist them in breaking into the hall. The cigarettes and money were taken, and later a quantity of beer was purchased, and "two up" was played with the money.

Mr. Smith said that the number of similar charges against youths was becoming appallingly great. "The trouble," he said, "was caused by the lax control exercised by parents, who are equally guilty with the offenders, and should be punished for their neglect. If more care were exercised by parents there would not be nearly so many of these cases."

Each of the accused was fined £5.

Argus (Melbourne), 1 November 1923, p. 16



Middle Park and the Denmark Connection

While the Tasmanians are proud of their connection to the new Danish queen, Middle Park once had a long connection to Denmark when the Danish Club was the owner of Hughenden on Beaconsfield Parade from 1938 to 2008. The history of the Danish Club can be read in the second book published by the MPHG, *Middle Park : from Swamp to Suburb*, but below is an extract when Mary married Frederick in 2004. Their first child was born in 2005.

“Danish royal wedding fever hit Melbourne on Friday night as Danes and Australians, young and old, converged on the Dannebrog, the 115-year-old Danish Club in Middle Park, to watch Australia’s Mary Donaldson marry Danish Crown Prince Frederik. Fuelled by glasses of champagne and glogg (Danish mulled wine), and a large array of Danish fare including kranse kage (a traditional Danish cake), herring and Danish rye bread, the venue took on a

festive feel as the crowd celebrated the union. Enthusiastic patrons cheered the arrival of Crown Prince Frederik, but the loudest applause of the evening was saved for the arrival of Mary (*The Age*, 16 May 2004). Following the Royal Wedding event, what better than to celebrate the arrival of the next heir to the Danish throne with a day of festivities. On Sunday 23rd October 2005, a horde of Viking warriors would sail a longboat onto Middle Park beach, light a bonfire at sunset and shoot flaming arrows into Port Phillip Bay. The bonfire will echo a chain of bonfires that will start from Copenhagen and span several thousand kilometres of Danish coastline to herald the new heir to the throne (*The Age*, 17 October 2005). Huge banners were hung from the front of the building proclaiming ‘Welcome to our future Royal Heir’ and ‘Congratulations to Frederik and Mary’. The baby was unnamed, because according to Danish tradition the names are revealed only at the baby’s christening.”



Welcoming the royal heir at the Danish Club, 2004

MPAPHG General Meeting

At Middle Park Primary School (enter from Richardson Street)

5 February 2024, 7.30 pm (AGM)

Peter Taylor

History of the Albert Park Yachting & Angling Club (APYAC)

"A ramble through the history of this iconic club. Many pictures and stories to share. Your questions will be welcome."



Your MPAPHG committee

President:	Meyer Eidelson
Vice-President:	Vacant
Secretary:	Vacant
Treasurer:	Sonya Cameron
Liaison Officer	Diana Phoenix
Committee members:	Leslyanne Hawthorne, Abramo Ierardo, Gary Poore, Nadia Wright