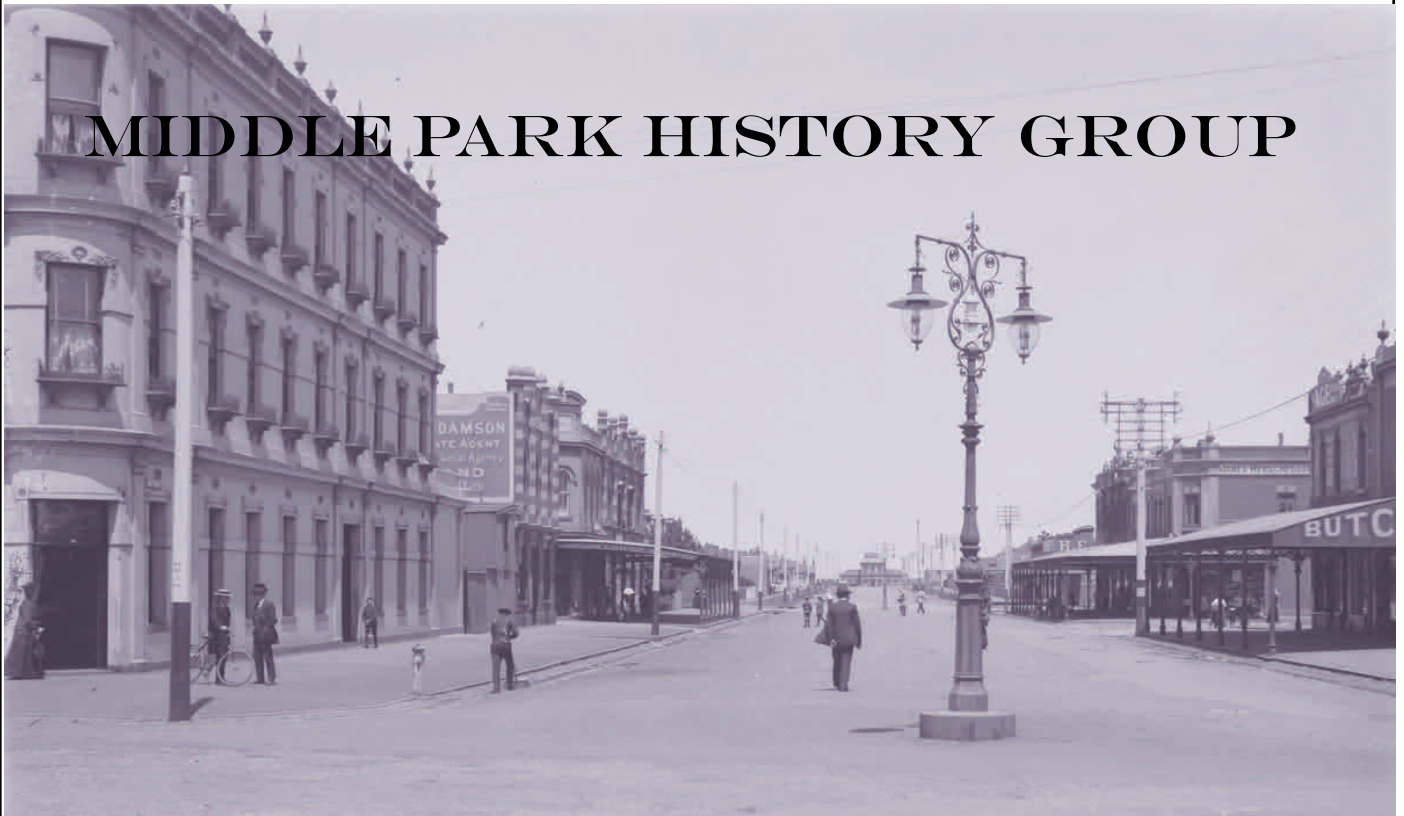


# MIDDLE PARK HISTORY GROUP



## Editorial

The MPHG celebrates its tenth anniversary this year. At least it's the tenth anniversary of the newsletter initiated and edited for its first few years by John Stirling. As Meyer Eidelson says in his president's report at the end of this issue, the group may have begun earlier.

Sonya Cameron usually lets us know what was happening 100 years ago in Middle Park. This time the topic is instead ten years ago. Our webmaster recount how our excellent website has evolved.

This 40th newsletter continues contributions by Vincent Kane, a former resident of Middle Park,

stories told over the back fence and a life history of SP bookies in Middle Park. Have you seen the mystery object, or another like it?

MPHG hopes to return to meeting in person regularly in 2022. The committee is always on the lookout for speakers with interesting topics to discuss.

We have not been able to distribute printed copies of the last five issues of the newsletter to libraries and individuals. Perhaps after the printing of this one the backlog can be dealt with.

*Gary Poore*

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



## 10 years ago : Urban Forest Under Threat!

*Sonya Cameron*

Residents will be familiar with the strip of greenery between Canterbury Road and the number 96 light rail track. This “urban forest” was not always this way. In four packed years between 1974 and 1978, Brian Carter challenged the status quo and transformed South Melbourne streets and landscapes. When he joined South Melbourne Council as Gardens and Reserves administrator in 1974, St Vincent Gardens was locked at night. The stone wall surrounding the gardens was topped with barbed wire. It was a time when, in his words “It was still all oak trees, lions and tigers”. Australian plants were not used in urban areas or appreciated. There was a view that Victorian terraces and Australian trees didn’t go together. Carter produced probably the first complete street planting guide for a local government for all the streets and lanes in South Melbourne. Every street, its size and topographical and vegetated status was recorded and a new planting theme proposed.

The most ambitious project of all was the



**BRIAN CARTER**

Canterbury Road urban forest between Kerferd Road and Fraser St in Middle Park. Dr John French, then at CSIRO, was also talking about the urban forest. The first MPHG President, John Stirling, who was a Councillor at the time, was a strong advocate of the project.

A planting plan was prepared in the winter and spring of 1975. Bill Molyneux and Sue Forrester from Austraflo assisted with providing and selecting plants. Four hundred species were introduced representing different regions of Australia. This was a trial of using native plants in urban projects. It needed to work. Local school children planted the first 3,000 plants. Birds appeared again returning to this new renegotiated oasis. Today Earthcare St Kilda and an army of volunteers works with the City of Port Phillip to maintain the Canterbury Road urban forest.

Anyone is able to appreciate the walk along the path in the urban forest for real or take the video tour at the MPHG website <https://middleparkhistoryg.com/mphg/video> Click on the photo that shows how drab the area was in 1974.

But ten years ago, in the same year as the Middle Park History Group was formed the forest was threatened as these two newspaper articles explain.

**Clearing query may put parkland under threat : urban bushland in Middle Park may be cleared to make way for a residential housing development.**

*Melbourne Weekly Port Phillip*, reporter Amber Wilson, 15June 2011

Sources told MW that VicTrack, which owns the 0.97-hectare parcel of land along Canterbury Road next to the No. 96 tram line, has made

preliminary requests for advice about the suitability of re-zoning the land. Community groups planted native trees and shrubs on the land in the 1970s and 1980s and it is maintained by several organisations, including Earthcare St Kilda. A letter from a senior statutory planner from the Department of Sustainability and Environment to the Port Phillip Council said VicTrack had made a pre-planning application requesting advice about the possibility of removing native vegetation if the land was re-zoned from Public Use Zone and Public Park and Recreational Zone to Residential.

VicTrack spokesman Jason Murray denied the agency had plans to re-zone or develop railway land along Canterbury Road. Mr Murray was unable to confirm or deny whether preliminary discussions had been held. In its letter, the DSE said developing the land would result in native vegetation loss, and a loss of the urban ecology. The department also noted that Parks Victoria did not support re-zoning the land.

Albert Park MLA Martin Foley said he planned to bring the matter to Parliament this week. "For more than 30 years, that land has been a very significant part of the public open space in what is a very built-up, dense area of Melbourne," he said. "The community will be outraged if this land grab goes ahead."

Port Phillip mayor Rachel Powning said the council would not support plans to re-zone the area as the land was a significant native vegetation and habitat corridor. Andrew McCutcheon from Earthcare St Kilda said the

urban bushland was used as a corridor for migrating native birds, and was home to important native vegetation and wildflowers. In an official statement to MW, DSE spokeswoman Brigid Ennis said the department had consulted with the council on the matter, and was waiting on a formal application "that will be considered on its merits when it is submitted".

### **"Mini botanical garden" safe from housing development**

*Port Phillip Leader*, reporter Natalie White, 14 September 2011

Urban forest in Middle Park will be saved after Port Phillip Council rejected an idea to use it for residential development. The Canterbury Rd Urban Forest, between the Albert Park light rail and Canterbury Rd, will not be built on because of its "vegetation and habitat values". VicTrack, owner of the state's railway land, suggested a discussion about rezoning the land and developing it for housing. But Mayor Rachel Powning said the council had refused, "informed by an ecological report and views from Parks Victoria and the Department of Sustainability and Environment". Earthcare St Kilda president Kim Cowie said it was "very important" to preserve the area, which was a "mini botanical gardens" "It [represents] indigenous species from all over the state."

Source: <https://www.portplaces.com/pioneer-of-the-urban-forest/>



## Lois's story

### *Meyer Eidelson (as told over the fence)*

*When we moved into Wright Street in 1996 there was an elderly resident called Maisie in a nearby cottage who was much loved by the neighbours in the block. The previous owners of my house regarded her as an adopted grandmother to their young daughter. After Maisie died, she passed her house on to Lois, her best friend. Now Lois in her eighties, can be found regularly chatting over the same fence to passing residents and dogs just as Maisie used to do. Every street needs a Lois or a Maisie who links neighbours together, swaps gossip and who is a living Wikipedia on street happenings and people's movements. And the shared concern for older residents often draws neighbours together. I caught up with Lois recently, as we frequently do over the palings, and she shared some memories with me:*

I had a wonderful childhood, a triple-fronted house near the Moonee Ponds creek with a big yard and plenty of space. Lots of rellies shared the house with us: nan, mum and uncles, although one was away at the war. I had so much love and attention as a child.

My uncle B was not actually a rellie. He was a lodger who lived with us for 25 years. Most people had a lodger to make ends meet. Nan made him a lovely hot breakfast each morning before he went to work. I wouldn't see him till next day because he had lunch at his office and dinner at his club. It was common for a single man to belong to a men's club. He was perhaps sixty when he announced one day out of the blue that he was marrying his secretary. Well, you could have knocked me over with a feather! They had a baby a year later and he was over the moon. I think she was probably less than thirty years old because women often did not have children in later life as they believed children could get Down Syndrome.

My mother had married a Catholic and told me that the priest said she had to marry behind the altar because she refused to convert. I mean that literally - she had to go to a little room behind the altar so that no-one in the congregation could actually see her! She never forgave the church often saying to me: "They banished me to the backblocks!"

I adored my aunt who was very beautiful and glamorous, a naughty girl - a bit like me! She was a nurse at the army repatriation hospital. How all the men must have swooned when she entered wearing her little nurse's veil. During the war she had a very charming Yank boyfriend called Buddy who brought us all gifts of stuff you couldn't obtain like stockings and chocolate. Nan who ruled the kitchen would prepare a joint roast or a "fowl" each Sunday when "The Yank" came to visit. Every Thursday she would commence discussing the meal with us - what will it be, fowl or roast? We all loved Buddy. I was given a dog when I was one year old and named him Buddy. I had him till I was seventeen!

My aunt's next boyfriend was a fireman from Eastern Hill station, six foot and very handsome, a lovely man. She divorced him - she was a bit like me I'm afraid. She then took up with The Beast. None liked him except her. He was a warder at Pentridge. Nan said he was a cruel person to do that job. He took her far way to Albury where he worked for the Roads Board. In those days trucks in Victoria could only cross to NSW after midnight so he would hide in the bush with his truck before midnight to catch illegal drivers. Only a horrible nasty person would do that.

The Beast beat my aunt badly. In the past domestic violence was a shameful curse not to be spoken about publicly. It was well hidden and

you never went outside with bruises. We all put in some money for a hire car to rescue her while he was at work and we smuggled her down to Melbourne where the aunts and other rellies looked after her. I saw her face - it was bruised and awful.

My first husband was a Beast too. Not the second husband though! It is so much better today when women can call it out. There is even a wonderful service that will care for abused women's pets till they their owner gets back on their feet. That's a great relief to those women to know their pets are cared for until they can resume a normal life.

The beautiful cottage where I reside at Wright Street was owned by my best friend Maisie until she was into her nineties. Maisie was a wonderful person and the neighbours in the block looked after her, especially Angela. She had an arrangement with Angela to put a crushed beer can in her window each morning so the neighbours would know that she was OK. One day she forgot and went out without telling anyone. The police were called and had to break through the metal security door. Maisie got a scolding from Angela for that.

Before Middle Park I rented a property in Williamstown. Maisie asked Angela to arrange in Maisie's will for me to live in her Wright Street cottage after her death. When I am deceased, this property will be donated to animal protection societies. Maisie and I shared a great love of wildlife and we both have a horror of cruelty.

Maisie always fed the birds especially her tame seagull and I continue the same tradition. Every day birds show up: magpies, currawongs, mynas, pigeons. I know them individually. It is odd how some flocks of birds choose a particular tree to roost in. I had neighbour once who cut

down a huge wattle tree. I didn't protest that day because it blocked a lot of light. But then hundreds of birds came home that evening and found their tree had vanished! Oh they were so distraught, fluttering in the sky. Where would they go? All the other trees had birds of their own. It was dreadful, I was so upset.

I have several small dogs that are my life. We are inseparable. The vet bills keep me poor, but I don't resent it. When I first stayed here with Maisie, there was an old codger who lived across the road who came over to warn me that he would set the council onto me if the dogs yapped. Maisie told him: "*Piss off to your own side of the road and don't come back. As for the council I know a quite a few things that you've been doing that they would like to know about.*" He scurried off like the rat he was and never came back. I asked Maisie what stuff she knew? She said "*Nothing but that bastard doesn't know it!*"

Maisie may have been ninety but she was smart as a whip. We were on the number 1 tram coming home. I said to her: Don't punch your ticket Maisie, I know there are no inspectors on this line because they always stick out like dog-balls to me. And wouldn't you know it? This undercover woman jumps up and demands to see her ticket. Maisie didn't miss a beat. She whipped her ticket out and said "*Luv d'ya mind punching me ticket for me? Its 'ard for an old lady like meself to walk all the way to the machine.*" The woman was so flustered she did as she was told. Maisie said thanks luv and went straight on talking to me as if the goon didn't exist.

We laughed about that a lot. Maisie often remarked to me: "*You're not much good on the dog-balls are you?*"

## Bookies and punters

*Suzanne Connell*

Before I was born, my parents, Renata (Ru) and Maureen Peel-Walker moved to Middle Park. In the 1930s. My father was a draughtsman and my mother was a stay-at-home wife, which was common for the women of that era. My father used to enjoy mixing with the Middle Park locals at the hotel on the corner of Armstrong Street and Canterbury Road, Middle Park. He also enjoyed racehorses and race meetings which Mum and Dad attended regularly. During that time Dad saw the opportunity to take on the "SP Bookie" business (explained below) which was not unusual in the day, as there were no TABs in those times. He operated from the back lane behind the hotel. This was an easy place for punters to find him during the day, mainly Saturdays.

There was another cobblestone lane off to the side of the main lane, which gave access to the back of the shops in Armstrong Street. These shops also had accommodation behind the businesses. There was a theatre on the corner and, across the lane, a cake shop, a fruit shop and further up a dry-cleaning business. A couple of locals, good friends and patrons of my father's, who lived behind the dry-cleaning business, offered Dad the use of their backyard for further convenience to the SP bookmaking business.

It was in this backyard that Sunday settlement took place. Settlement is when bookies and punters meet to either pay-up or collect money, depending on their "luck". Every Sunday morning Dad was there to meet punters, sometimes he took me (a very young child of 4-8 years). I always was given a lemonade and a biscuit, to keep me happy and occupied while he did his settling. After settlement was over, Dad would usually shout his friends and punters a drink of beer – the drink of the day, back then.

Naturally word got around and a lot of men from the district, saw this as a better option than going to Church, or a bit of relief, after Church?? As time went on, this group grew, so instead of Dad buying bottles of beer, they decided a small keg might be a better and more economical option, and everyone contributed to the cost. The group started off as an all-male Sunday morning gathering, but gradually a few females joined the group, although a lot of the ladies were reluctant to be seen in the "Lane".

They then realized that the Sunday keg was popular, great enjoyment and it more than paid for itself, so it was decided that what money was left over after expenses should be donated to the Children's Hospital. One of the regulars then decided on a chook raffle so that meant more money for the Children's Hospital. This also meant the group needed a name for donating purposes, so the "40 Party" was born.

As the ladies became more involved there was a push to move from the "Lane", as it was known then. Another member offered a block of land he had purchased, behind his home in Park Road, Middle Park. The access to this land was in Langridge Street, so it was cleaned up, mowed down, a few chairs and a table installed, and the "Jungle" was christened, so the "40 Party" had a new home. I should also mention here, the Jungle as it was known, was made available by a very generous family who lived in the area. Once the group moved away from the "Lane" off Armstrong Street, it became strictly a social and fundraising group, and definitely not a betting settlement area, which Dad then conducted from the front room of our home in 40 Langridge Street, Middle Park.

Eventually Dad passed on the SP bookmaking to a friend of his, who then moved the business away from Middle Park area to a nearby suburb, relying more on the phone system. This business carried on into the late 1980s early 1990s when this gentleman got sick and passed away.



Suzanne with her Nana in front of 40 Langridge Street



Ru Peel-Walker and daughter, Suzanne

I know many people were of the opinion that once the TAB system was introduced, SP bookies were stamped out, but this is not the case, SP bookmaking business continued as the 'odds' were better, but the bookies became less obvious.

As the "40 Party" continued into the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s as a social group and fundraiser for the Children's

Hospital, they donated many dollars to this worthy cause. Their meeting times of Sunday mornings was moved to Saturday nights as the friendship group got older, and Saturday nights were a more agreeable time. Many 50th and 60th birthday parties were held in the Jungle, including my own 21st birthday. As a child I remember going on many family picnics with the "40 Party" into the rural areas by a bus hired by the group. To city children, they were such fun, playing in open rural areas we rarely saw otherwise.

I should also mention that to the best of my knowledge, the dry-cleaning business fronting Armstrong Street was in no way connected to the bookie business being conducted at the residence and backyard behind the business. While I am aware of the names of people involved in the "40 Party" I will not be publishing these names for obvious reasons.

#### SP bookie

SP – starting price – is the official fixed price of each runner at the close of betting. Until 1931 Aussies were legally only allowed to make a bet with an oncourse bookie. However from 1932 we saw the rise of SP bookies throughout Australia. Starting price bookies were technically illegal in Australia but flourished none the less, thanks to society's need at the time, and police corruption.

When I was a young, 5–8 years old, Dad would take me to Caulfield Racecourse each week in school holidays, usually close to Friday, to watch the horses training and catch up with trainers, jockeys and sometimes owners, have a chat, and obviously get a feeling for the SP on Saturday. It was an early 4–5 am start, as horses are usually training by daybreak. I loved being around the course and the horses, and Dad always went armed with binoculars and stop watch. From memory, bookies always employed runners to look around at what other bookies were doing with their prices, and somehow get word out to their agents, off-course. No mobile phones in those days.



## Mystery object(s) in Middle Park

## Vincent Kane

### Part 3 : Going to the footy and our Coleraine relations

#### Going to the footy

Soon after we had moved into our new home in Middle Park, it became clear that a decision had to be made about the football team we were to follow. In those years the decision was influenced greatly by where you lived, mainly because each of the twelve teams that made up the Victorian Football League was bound to recruit locally.

Our residence was situated about mid-way between the St Kilda and the South Melbourne home grounds, at the extreme eastern end of the municipality of South Melbourne, and only two street blocks from where the St Kilda municipality began. As well, in 1942, South's home ground was requisitioned by the Army, and for the next five years, the teams had to share grounds, firstly at Princes Park, and then the Junction Oval with St Kilda.

So there was some justification for selecting St Kilda as the team to give our allegiance to, but that idea was soon abandoned when we found that virtually no-one at our school, Mt Carmel College, followed St Kilda - almost all were firm South supporters.

With that settled, we looked forward to Saturday afternoons at the 'footy'.

The great majority of supporters went into the 'outer' where the only place to sit was a single row of seating immediately adjacent to the oval's perimeter fence. Of course, there were plenty of seats in the Members' reserve, including the grandstand. Entry to the 'outer' for children in those years was six pence, but at half time, the fee was reduced by half, while by three quarter time, entry was free for all - the gates were just left open.

We boys had no difficulty getting into the Members' reserve, if we felt inclined to, because at the quarter, half time and three quarter time

intervals it was customary to jump over the fence and run onto the ground to congratulate the players, to hang around to listen to the coaches' address, and then if we wanted to, we would return over the fence into the Members' reserve.

The Members didn't seem to care, but apart from the novelty aspect, we didn't find it all that enjoyable in that part of the ground. There was a different atmosphere, barracking was much more subdued and everyone seemed to be better dressed - we were clearly out of our class!

In contrast, supporters in the 'outer' were noisy, rude, intimidating, occasionally humorous, but generally unpleasant - especially those of the opposing team, particularly Collingwood! The South supporters were no angels either. I remember being near two young mothers with their children on one occasion, where the abusive language directed at the umpire and the opposing players was distinctly gross, bordering on offensive.

However, when the break came the two ladies began to chat in a normal, civilized, everyday way. I overheard one ask the other how young 'Billy' was getting on at school. The reply was that he was doing very well - he would be making his First Communion next Sunday!

Going to the footy was a real social occasion - there was a great mix of people, male and female, young and old. My mother would come with me sometimes, especially when South played at the Junction Oval which was a shorter and more pleasant walk from our home in Middle Park.

In the season, kicking a football end to end was our favourite past time - but the 'football' was just a thick wad of old newspapers, rolled together and tied tightly with string. No-one owned a real football.



### Our Coleraine Relations

Olive Murtagh, our cousin from Coleraine came to stay with us. She was the daughter of Tom's sister Margaret (Bubby). She had been named after a racehorse, Sister Olive, that had won a Melbourne Cup in the 20s. Her father Clem had ridden racehorses for his father-in-law Daniel Kane in the early days. Olive would probably have preferred to remain in Coleraine with her horse Bubbles, but she was drafted to work in the Defence administration that was responsible for censoring the contents of letters to and from our soldiers, sailors and airmen. She of course was bound by the Official Secrets Act, but judging by her stories around the dining table, she interpreted the Act quite liberally.

She also took a liberal view of social activities - most nights there was entertainment on the town to be enjoyed, especially with the American servicemen in Melbourne, but it slowed down considerably, after a number of criminal assault incidents were reported and the body of a strangled woman was found in Albert Park only a few blocks away. An American soldier, Leonski was later apprehended and hanged by a US Military Tribunal.

Another relative, Tom's Uncle Ned, came to board in Middle Park in these war years. He was employed at an ammunition factory in Port Melbourne. Back in Coleraine, Uncle Ned had played the piano for the silent movies, and also the clarinet in Coleraine's first brass band. He managed a music shop to which was attached a billiard saloon. He was a bachelor. He lived at 51 Nimmo St and visited us from time to time and stayed sometimes for a meal. When he died in 1966 he left Kitty a sum of money in his will.

During the long Christmas holidays, we were sent to Coleraine by train to stay in the old family house with our grandparents, Daniel and Catherine Kane, and Aunty Dolly, the maiden aunt. The train trip began with an early morning departure from Spencer St station, then a change of trains at Ararat, where to our initial concern, the new train travelled for some miles back along

the track that the first train had come in on, and then finally we changed at Hamilton to a mixed goods train - one small carriage for humans and countless trucks for livestock, sheep mainly, which were picked up and dropped off at numerous sidings along the way to Coleraine.

This part of our journey - twenty two miles - sometimes took over two hours. We would be met at the Coleraine station by Uncle Clem, who worked at the butter factory across the road. We found the train journey quite enjoyable - it took the whole day.

My mother always sent us off with food for the journey and we usually managed to get a window seat. Things of interest were noted, such as when the train would slow down almost to walking pace in some remote area where workmen were camped while repairing the track. They would call out 'Paper! Paper!' and we passengers would open the windows and throw out the newspapers we had finished with. I'm sure they were well used.

The weeks we spent with our grandparents in Coleraine were uneventful, even perhaps boring. There was no electricity in the back part of the house where we were quartered - we used a candle at night - no water inside, while the 'bathroom' was the grain shed in the backyard, near Grandpa's smithy where he shod horses and put iron tyres on buggy wheels. A



51 Nimmo Street

Coolgardie safe by the water tank kept the butter and milk reasonably cool.

We did have some excitement one day when we were sent out to find Nana's five cows that used to graze in the daytime on the street verges and bring them back into the paddock alongside the house ready for milking. We thought we had done quite well, but in fact it was someone else's cows we brought in.

Uncle Clem, who knew where to find blackfish and eels in the Wannan River, always took us out for a night's fishing and we enjoyed that. Sadly, not that many years later, Uncle Clem's only son John, aged fourteen, drowned while fishing with his father in the Wannan. He was wearing waders and slipped off a log and disappeared into a deep hole. Clem never went fishing again.

## History of the MPHG website - the first 10 years

### *Paul Connor*

At our inaugural meeting in September 2011, the President John Stirling was asked if we were going to have a website. He replied that it was something they could look at in a year or so.

I thought I'd give it a go with a new Adobe program called Muse that had just been announced. The first website front page is shown below. Our Gmail address had already been set up but I was able to register [www.middleparkhistory.org](http://www.middleparkhistory.org) with Namecheap for \$15 a year. Google at that time, (to encourage uptake) gave permanent access to Google Workplace for free. We still have available the full suite of Google apps including separate email addresses for President, Treasurer etc.

I'm not sure how long we stayed with Muse but it was too restrictive in its early days. I then switched to the free Google website which we used until September 2020.

Although it was fiddly to maintain we were able to cover everything we needed, including PayPal integration, for zero cost.

In August 2020 Google announced they were transitioning to a new Web look in one year's time - stripped back to suit companies for their internal use. After trying their conversion program

and finding the result limiting for our purposes, I decided to give myself a COVID project.

I looked at alternatives, such as WordPress, but find WordPress sites have a sameness in the hands of amateurs like me. Wix gave me the modern tools to make a fully functioning website.

If you accept a Wix advertisement plus a Wix inspired domain name once on the site, the cost is zero (otherwise \$10 a month). [Middleparkhistory.org](http://Middleparkhistory.org) is still with Namecheap and redirects to the Wix site. Namecheap now costs us \$20 a year for internet registration.

The total spend for the first ten years of the MPHG website is less than \$200.

## President's Report

I am told this is the tenth anniversary newsletter although I suspect the MPHG may have had earlier beginnings before 2011. We will plan for an event in 2022 to celebrate and calibrate more officially. At any rate my memory is that the group had its origins in a walking tour I was leading through Middle Park after I mentioned to the participants that the council was seeking interest in forming a historical group in South Melbourne or Middle Park. This was in order to balance the Port Melbourne and St Kilda societies at the opposite ends of the city. And nowhere could be more middle than Middle Park. Two local residents recklessly put their hands up that day. Rosemary Goad and Diana Phoenix were enthusiastic.

When I found they were both former librarians I know we were on a winner. Librarians never overdue it (sorry). I had been a good friend of Vida Horne the founding librarian of St Kilda Library. She was a tremendous power (for good) to be reckoned with. Her role even included building her own premises. She oversaw the design and construction of St Kilda library by Enrico Taglietti the master of Brutalist architecture in Australia.

We began by meeting at Diana's home in Richardson Street. Over the years we progressed in stages from a kitchen to a bowling club to a church to a school. We incorporated in 2013 under the leadership of John Stirling and then Max Nankervis. Their main flaws were having too many good ideas. Amongst many volunteers,

Diana our secretary always tied up our loose ends. Sonya held us together by doing stuff none of us could do (e.g., deal with money). Max Cameron did the technology and Paul Connor the newsletter. Lots of others of course.

One of our earliest projects was using the trader's shops in Armstrong Street as exhibition spaces for historic photographs as well as selling our books. Victor's Dry Cleaning is a godsend. Another was recording local people's oral histories under the leadership of Anne Miller.

We decided early on to travel light, for example, not having a heritage collection. Very wise for a group with no premises. Our total (non-digital) possessions still consist of a filing cabinet, a computer, data-projector and sign/banner. And we are trying to downsize the filing cabinet. We did once recklessly buy a microphone and amplifiers which relieved us of their burden by mysteriously vanishing. Instead, we chose to invest in people's knowledge through less physical but just as tangible means: films, newsletters, books, exhibitions, recordings, website, walking flyers, research, speakers and school students.

On this journey we have had a lot of fun, learned some stuff about our home and met a lot of interesting people in addition to each other. And there is a lot more to come. Looking forward to 2022 (it just has to be better, surely?)

Meyer Eidelson

## MPHG news

Don't forget the AGM. Monday 8 November 2021 at 8 pm  
Our speaker will be President Meyer Eidelson who will speak on  
**“Melbourne History Mysteries”.**

The meeting will take place using Zoom for which a link will be provided prior.

Following publication of three books on the history of Middle Park, the group assembled a list of writers who are addressing the history of Albert Park. About a dozen chapters dealing with the history, architecture, significant buildings, social history, St Vincent Place and gardens, sea baths and Gasworks are well advanced. More chapters are in the wings and it is planned to publish two volumes within a year, the first early in 2022.

Students from the Middle Park Primary School got involved with the MPHG-sponsored history projects again in 2021, in as much as they could with schooling at home. Five student submitted essays and all will be presented with book vouchers as soon as they reassemble at school. Their names, grades and topics follow:

- Phoebe Gregory, Grade 34B, Jim and Doreen
- Shriya Sampath, Grade 6, Middle Park Primary School
- Zachary Goodman, Grade 5, Tommy
- Justin Lowndes, Grade 3/4D, The Arrow/  
Middle Park theatre
- Gracie Langton, Grade 5, Interview with Ian and Elizabeth Newman

### PROJECT 3206 – AN UPDATE

All the images from the CUA project of the early 1970s that relate to the area covered by the Middle Park History Group have now been identified by street name and number and are available for easy viewing on the MPHG website. Thank you to Donna Mead for her work on this project and to Paul Connor for taking the information in the spreadsheets and converting them into a usable format.

The MPHG has also acquired a set of images taken by Robyn Clinch in 2013 and Donna is working through these to identify the house number in each street set. This is a much bigger project as there are more images to work through. Whereas in the early 1970s the CUA team was using negative film with associated costs for development, Robyn Clinch used a digital camera and recorded houses in the smaller streets not photographed earlier.

A bigger plan is to develop a database which will incorporate the two sets of images, information on who lived there from the Sands & McDougall directories, and any other associated history of the building. Users will also be able to upload information and images.

### Your MPHG committee

President:	Meyer Eidelson
Vice-President:	Vacant
Secretary:	Vacant
Treasurer:	Sonya Cameron
Liaison officer:	Diana Phoenix
Committee members:	Abramo Ierardo, Gary Poore