



Newsletter Friends of St Kilda Cemetery Inc

April 2019

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Happy Easter and Welcome to Autumn
and to the April 2019 newsletter

Volunteers needed...

**COME AND HELP THE FRIENDS BE A WONDERFUL
HISTORICAL GROUP.**



Printing of newsletter



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appreciated.

Contributions to our newsletter are
welcomed. Email for further
information to info@foskc.org

Featured Articles

Ellis family grave – Independent, C95 Pioneers of Prahran Contributed by Vicki Salkin



Ellis Grave; photo Elizabeth Hore

SOURCES:

Allom Lovell and Associates Pty Ltd Conservation Architects, **Former Independent Church 246 Malvern Road Prahran: conservation analysis of the interior**. Prepared for the City of Prahran by Allom Lovell and Associates Pty Ltd Conservation Architects. Imprint: Melbourne, 1994.

R.V. Billis and A.S. Kenyon, **Pastures new: an account of the pastoral occupation of Port Phillip**. 1930, Imprint: Melbourne, Vic.: Stockland Press, 1974.

R.V. Billis and A.S. Kenyon, **Pastoral pioneers of Port Phillip**. 1932, 2nd. ed., 1974; Imprint: Melb.: Stockland Press.

Rev A C Blake, **Prahran Independent Church : 1852-1952, "Centenary memento, 1952"**.

Hubert William Coffey and Marjorie Jean Morgan, **Irish families in Australia and New Zealand, revised Vol 2 Eades-Lyttle: 1788-1985**. Rev. ed. 2nd edition South Melbourne, Vic.: H.W. Coffey, 1983-1994.

John Butler Cooper, **The history of Prahran 1836-1924 : from its first settlement to a city**. Revised edition, 1924.

Joseph Crook, **The early days of Prahran**. 1897. Available through Stonnington History Centre Catalogue.

As we can see from the words on the headstone, Catherine Ellis and her family were deeply religious people:

Why do we mourn departing friends
Or shake at death's alarms?
'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends
To call them to His arms.

This is a family of Prahran Pioneers. There are four people buried here, all from the Ellis family. The key person is Catherine Ellis, who was a Pioneer Woman of Melbourne. The two men are her sons, Robert and Joseph, and Ann Elizabeth is Joseph's daughter.

The Ellis family arrived in Melbourne in 1839, shortly after Melbourne was settled by Europeans. Their daughter Susannah was born on the ship in Hobson's Bay - this unusual birth place was a source of great interest for the rest of her life.

The family took up a quarrying business in what is now the Botanic Gardens. Compulsory schooling did not begin in Victoria until the 1870s, so at that time the children would share in the family's work. Sadly, tragedy struck in 1841, when a fall of earth buried the father and two sons. One son, Joseph, though seriously injured, escaped to raise the alarm. However tragically the other son, William John, aged 11, died immediately, and the father passed away about 10 days later, at home. They were buried in the Old Melbourne Cemetery.

After these tragic events, as you can imagine, the family was in financial distress, as well as grief. There is a record of charitable donations being raised to support the family, and support came in particular from Charles Joseph La Trobe, when he was superintendent of the Port Phillip District (Port Phillip Patriot, July 1841, 1)

But Catherine Ellis was not one to stay down. She was one of Melbourne's pioneering women - an admirable woman, and a hard worker who took initiative. After the death of her husband, with her children she continued the quarrying business, and later turned to brick making. She is listed as a Pioneer Woman of Port Phillip, as she took out a pasturing licence in her own right (Billis & Kenyo). She sold the milk from her cows.

In about 1849, approximately 8 years after the accident, the family has moved to Prahran. They were some of the first residents in this area,

Joseph Crook, **Narrative of the rise and progress of the Municipality of Prahran.** c1860. Available through Stonnington History Centre Catalogue.

Independent Church, **Extracts of Archives,** held by Uniting Church & State Library Archives.

Betty Malone, **Discovering Prahran, Area One.** Prahran Historical & Arts Society, 1998.

Betty Malone, **Chapel Street Prahran: part one 1834-1918.** Prahran Historical and Arts Society. Imprint: Prahran Mechanics' Institute, 1983.

Betty Malone, **Early Prahran 1850-1863.** Prahran Historical and Arts Society in conjunction with Prahran Mechanics' Institute, 1982.

Jill McDougall, **Church community and change: religion in Prahran 1836-1984.** Imprint: Prahran, Vic.: Prahran Historical and Arts Society and Prahran Mechanics' Institute, 1985.

Port Phillip Gazette and Settler's Journal, 'DOMESTIC GAZETTE', 23 August 1848.

Port Philip Patriot and Melbourne Advertiser, 'Advertising', 15 July 1841



Sketch: Jill McDougall, Church community and change: religion in Prahran 1836-1984. Imprint Prahran, Vic: PH & AS and Prahran Mechanics; Institute, 1985

Stonnington,
<http://www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/history/thematic-update-pp175-236.pdf>,
Chapter 10, City of Stonnington, Community & Culture.

and important to its early establishment. They arrived when Prahran had just a few homes, and was essentially bush, creeks and swamps.

They bought land near what is now Chapel Street, in some of the first land sales in Prahran, and the Ellis brothers built the family cottage with their own hands. The family were brickmakers. Catherine kept cows and had a milk round. When gold was discovered Joseph took to gold mining in 1852, bought a bullock team and carried provisions to the gold fields.

The Ellis family, and Catherine Ellis in particular, is inextricably linked to the formation of early Prahran. History books for the beginnings of Prahran show that the very first church services in Prahran were held in Catherine Ellis's home. One of the manuscripts written by another pioneer, a so-called '49er', says:

“... it was in her house that the first sound of Public Prayer and Praise was heard in Prahran” (Crook 1860).

On Sunday afternoons, a Sunday School and service of worship were held in their home. This was taken on alternate Sundays by Rev Morrison from the Eastern Hill Congregational Church in the city, and Rev Odell from West Melbourne. On some Sundays, the 22 year old William Moss attended services – he later became the pastor of the church, and was also an influential citizen in Prahran.

When the first church was built in Prahran, it contained stone provided by the Ellis family, and they undertook the cartage of materials. This Independent Church, near the corner of what is now Malvern Rd and Chapel Street, is what gave Chapel Street its name. It was the only place of worship in Prahran for two years, and it was also the meeting place for other community groups (Stonnington).

Catherine was a public-spirited woman. She was a founding member of the Independent Church in Prahran. According to one historical account, the first public meeting was held in the Ellis cottage. As well as hosting the first church, the first school in Prahran was held in her home. One contemporary account describes it this way:

“It was in this hut where the first school was held by Mr. Masservy as master, and in the hut that the first Divine Service was conducted by the Rev. A. Morrison, minister of the Independent Chapel Collins street, a service to which all who attended brought their own seats.” (Crook 1897)

Sadly, Robert Ellis, one of Catherine's sons, died young. As you can see from the headstone, he was 34 years old. However he was already a well-known and loved person in Prahran, and an obituary reads:

“We have been desirous to intimate that to-morrow (Sunday) evening the Rev. W. Moss will take occasion to refer to the decease of the late Mr. Robert Ellis, one of the earliest residents

Natasha Szuhan, **Prahran and the dismal swamp: uncovering the natural, settlement and disease ecologies of a suburb**. Imprint: Armadale, Vic.: Prahran Historical and Arts Society, 2015.

Telegraph, St Kilda, Prahran & South Yarra Guardian, Saturday June 6 1868.

Resources from Stonnington History Centre:

Ancestry.com
Brickworks Yarra (catalogue SHC)
Electoral Rolls, Prahran
PO Directory, Sands & McDougall 1856 start
Prahran Rates books
SHC catalogue
PROV, Inquest

FRANCIS BOARDMAN CLAPP

Article – Elizabeth Hore

SOURCES

J. Ann Hone, ‘Clapp, Francis Boardman (1833-1920)’ Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University
<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/clapp-francis-boardman-3209>

Jones, Russell (2002), Francis Boardman Clapp: transport entrepreneur
<http://www.hawthorntramdepot.org.au/papers/clapp.htm>

Keating, John D. (1970) *Mind the Curve!* Melbourne University Press

in Chapel-street, and in whose cottage the rev. gentleman first commenced his ministration in Prahran. Mr. Ellis was interred in the St. Kilda Cemetery on the 25th ult, when the number of mourners who followed his remains to their last resting-place evidenced the esteem in which his character was held, and also their appreciation of his uniform kindness and unassuming manner whilst ever conscientiously supporting whatever he believed likely to benefit the districts in which his lot was cast.” (Telegraph)

Sadly, also, Joseph’s daughter died at 3 months in 1870. Then Catherine died in the family home at 611 High St, Prahran, having had a life of adventure, tragedy and overcoming adversity by the power of faith. Joseph died in 1901, himself having had a long and varied life, from quarrying to brick-making to work on the gold fields. He was a colonist of 62 years.

Francis Boardman Clapp

Business man; transport, omnibus and tramway developer
1833-1920

Buried IND A 157; 8 September 1920



Photo: Francis Boardman Clapp

Francis Boardman Clapp, business man, was born on 27 June 1833 at Massachusetts, USA the son of Oliver Clapp, merchant and his wife Mary, nee Boardman. He emigrated to Melbourne in 1853 at the age of twenty and quickly became involved in the transport industry, working in the Ballarat offices of Watson & Hewitt, a noted coaching company. Already experienced in the coaching business he bought and operated Cobb & Co’s Melbourne-Ballarat line in December 1857 and by 1859 was the largest mail contractor in Victoria. Clapp extended his initial service not only to Geelong, but also westward from Ballarat to Hamilton, Portland, Warrnambool and Penola.

In 1860 he had some discussions with the Melbourne City Council with regard to the construction and operation of a horse tramway from the city to Collingwood, but this did not proceed. So in 1867 he sold out of his coaching business and travelled to Europe and America. The



MTOC officials, c1900. Seated from the left: H.A. Wilcox, F.B. Clapp and G.E. Spicer. Back left: J.G. Roberts, G.P. Smith and J.H. Hodge.

Photograph courtesy State Library Victoria / J.G. Roberts.



GRAVE PHOTO – Elizabeth Hore

following year he returned to Melbourne and set up the Melbourne Omnibus Company, together with Henry Hoyt and William McCulloch. The first omnibus service commenced on 23 March 1869, running from the city to the corner of Smith & Johnston Streets in Fitzroy. Other routes quickly followed, firstly to northern and later to southern suburbs. At the height of horse omnibus operation, the company owned 178 omnibuses and 1600 horses.

However, the development of a tramway system for Melbourne was firmly in Clapp's mind and in 1872 the company made its first attempt to get a Bill through Parliament to be given the power to build the tramway system. This initially foundered but in 1877 the company reconstituted itself with additional capital as the Melbourne Tramway & Omnibus Company.

Clapp's former partner Henry Hoyt floated the Victorian Tramway Company in 1881, in direct opposition to the MTOC. Clapp bought out Hoyt's company in 1884, and was so completely confident of success that he ceased manufacturing omnibuses. A Bill authorising the construction of the proposed tramways, the Melbourne Tramway & Omnibus Company Act 1883, was eventually passed on 10 October. Curiously enough, the Act envisaged that horse traction was to be used, but that cable traction or mechanical power other than steam could be used where appropriate.

The Act was also notable in requiring an eight hour day and provision for paid overtime for employees, as well as restricting maximum working hours (including overtime) to no more than sixty hours per week for MTOC employees.

Under the Act, the Melbourne Tramways Trust was formed. It would be responsible for construction of the tracks and the engine houses, including acquisition of property. The first line from Flinders Street to Richmond opened on 11 November 1885, and the last (Windsor-Esplanade) on 27 October 1891.

Clapp was noted for his business acumen and organising ability, together with his dominant (and somewhat abrasive) personality. He was well known as a militant anti-trade unionist, always taking swift action to break any attempt to set up a union shop in the MTOC. To Labour, Clapp was an "astute Yank" and the company seen as grabbing all it could and overworking its employees.

Clapp received both condemnation and praise from his contemporaries. Blind in his last twelve years, he remained chairman and was largely responsible for the success of the MTOC. He died aged 87 at Airlie, Domain Road, South Yarra on 6 September 1920 survived by his wife Isabell Pinnock, nee Pierce, four daughters and three sons.



FACEBOOK

Our Facebook page **Residents and Friends of St Kilda Cemetery** has become very popular. As well as news about FOSK, other items of interest and news from other Cemetery Friends Groups, both here in Australia and also in UK are included, as well as shared pages providing details of WW1 veterans bios and graves, newspaper articles and so much more. We have special featured posts from time to time with bios and photos of historic persons buried at St Kilda Cemetery and elsewhere on our born this day/died this day posts.

We can't put everything into a newsletter, but try to include up to date news and events on our Facebook page on a daily basis.

Why not Follow us on Facebook and see for yourself?

St Kilda Cemetery is located on the corner of Dandenong Road and Hotham Street, ST KILDA EAST

Future Tours and events

PLEASE NOTE: The new toilets in cemetery are near front gate and now require a code to open door. Please ask tour leader.

UPCOMING TOURS FOR 2019

Anzac Tour, 2.00pm Sunday 28 April 2019

Life in the Law Tour, 2.00pm Sunday 26 May 2019

Musicians and Photographers Tour, 2.00pm Sunday 23 June 2019.

PLEASE FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK OR LOOK AT OUR WEBSITE FOR NEWS OF ALL FUTURE TOURS AND EVENTS

Tours Cost \$15; members free. Afternoon tea included. Bookings: email preferred info@foskc.org; or tel: Sheila 9531 3648 or Liz 0422379053

All our tours leave from the main entrance to the cemetery in Dandenong Road. Please wear suitable clothing and footwear as we go all weathers, rain, hail or shine.

Private Group Tours for 2019

We hope to do some tours for private groups in 2019. If your group is interested, please email info@foskc.org for more details. We charge \$10 per head for group tours and if possible, an afternoon/morning tea will be provided.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ON OUR TOURS IN 2019. WON'T YOU COME AND JOIN US!

Become a member of the Friends...

PLEASE COME AND JOIN US...

Membership costs \$15, includes free tours throughout the year and newsletter. Email info@foskc.org for a membership form.

