



FOSKFC NEWS BULLETIN

February 2013

ALBERT JACKA SERVICE

The 81st Anniversary of the death of Albert Jacka, WW1 hero and a former mayor of St Kilda, was observed at a ceremony on Sunday 20th January.

Some of the wreaths laid at the ceremony



The Mayor, Cr Amanda Stevens, spoke of Jacka as being 'the finest front line soldier' of the war, who always stood up for his men and showed outstanding leadership and commitment to those he served, both in war and peace.

MAJ George Logan RFD (Ret), State Vice President of the Victorian Branch of the RSL, spoke of the strange irony that war, itself despicable, can produce incredible examples of bravery, compassion and care for others. He referred to an episode at Pozieres in France where Jacka lead from the front, showing the guts and determination that were characteristic of him and ignoring the danger of being on the front line. Wounded seven times, he kept on fighting. He was awarded the Military Cross for his actions. Earlier, in Gallipoli, he had become the first Australian soldier to be awarded the Victoria Cross for his bravery there.

CEMETERY LINK WITH LUNA PARK

Buried in St Kilda Cemetery are the three Phillips brothers, Herman, Leon and Harold. In 1911 they joined forces with the American showman, James Dixon Williams, to form the Greater J D Williams Amusement Company. Luna Park Ltd was formed in 1912 with Williams as managing director and Herman Phillips as manager. The Park opened on Friday 13 December of the same year. Williams returned to America in 1913 but the Phillips brothers' involvement with Luna Park remained until their deaths.

The Phillips brothers' grave in St Kilda Cemetery



A recently-released film by Meyer and Joe Eidelson, 'A Century of Lunacy - Memories of Luna Park', records how the brothers built up a huge empire of picture theatres in Melbourne and Sydney as well as dance halls and amusements parks. German-Americans, they brought both their German efficiency and their American showmanship to their business enterprises and are remembered as always wearing 'beautifully-tailored suits'. The early Luna Park had a big component of live entertainment including acrobats,

jugglers and highwire acts, which the brothers helped to oversee. They are buried in the Hebrew section of the cemetery.

The DVD of 'Century of Lunacy' is available for borrowing from St Kilda Library or for purchase from melbwalks@gmail.com

NED KELLY TOUR

On Sunday 27 January, Geoff Austin conducted a 'Ned Kelly' tour for members of the La Trobe University Archaeological Society.



Buried in the cemetery are several members of the police force involved in the pursuit and capture of the Kelly Gang, members of the legal profession involved in Kelly's trial and the sister of Aaron Sherritt, a friend of the outlaws who turned police informer.

Thomas Hewitt Kirkham was a police constable who joined the force in 1878 and was a member of the party sent into the bush to look for the gang. He was present at the siege at Glenrowan and gave evidence at the Royal Commission, sharing in the rewards given to the sum of 137 pounds, eleven shillings and eight pence (a considerable sum!) Also involved in the siege and buried in the cemetery is John Lord Stillard who joined the force in 1880 and was posted to Benalla. His share of the reward was 115 pounds and fifteen shillings.

It was Charles Hope Nicholson who, while in charge of the police pursuit of the gang, determined on the strategy of paying scouts and men familiar with the country to help in the search. However, he was removed from command shortly before the

Glenrowan siege, probably for political reasons, and did not share in the rewards.

The Supreme Court Prosecutor at the trial was Charles Alexander Smyth, who is buried at the cemetery as is the Assistant Prosecutor, Arthur Wolfe Chomley, who was known for the prolific notes he took during trials. The Chief Commissioner of Police at the time of the trial was Arthur's brother, Hussey Malone Chomley.

Ned's family could not afford a lawyer so one was provided by the Government, a Henry Bindon who had only been practising law for a few months and was probably one of the few people in the country who was unfamiliar with the finer details of Ned's case, as he had been overseas.

Watch out for details of our 'Ned Kelly' tour for members and the general public later in the year.

FORTHCOMING TOURS

Sunday 7 April 2pm 'Scots in the Cemetery': People of Scottish ancestry have played an important role in the development and life of Melbourne. Many of them are buried in St Kilda Cemetery. The tour will visit the graves of some of these, including politicians and businessmen, a surveyor, police officer, ornithologist, pastoralist, artist and mariner.

Sunday 19 May at 2pm 'What a Way to Go!' As part of Law Week, Elizabeth Hore will lead a tour of unusual deaths and a history of the Melbourne Morgue.

Meet at the Main Gates on Dandenong Road. Cost: \$5 members, \$10 non-members. Bookings essential. Ring 9531 6832 or visit www.foskc.org.

Other tours during the year will include a look at booksellers and authors and architects, engineers and builders.

Thank you to all our members for their ongoing support. We hope to see you at one or more of our tours during the year.