



THE SHOW GOES ON
AT THE LONCHIFFE

The History of St. Kilda, Volume III, 1930-1983

ST. KILDA

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THE CITY OF ST. KILDA

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**THE HISTORY OF ST. KILDA
VOL. III, 1930 TO JULY 1983**

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Anne Longmire,
Warragul, 1989.

UNITS

Measurements are generally given in the units used at the time. The following conversion may be useful:

1 mile	=	1.6 kilometres	1 sq. mile	=	2.6 kilometres
1 yard	=	0.9 metres	1 acre	=	0.4 hectares
1 foot	=	30 centimetres	1 ton	=	1 tonne
1 inch	=	25 millimetres	1 pound	=	450 gram

MONEY

The value of money can be related to wages at the time. In February 1929 the basic wage was £4-6-0 (four pounds six shillings) a week. It was cut to a little over £3-0-0 by February 1933, reaching £3-19-0 by February 1939. It reached £6-3-0 in 1949 and \$11-9-0 in February 1953. In February 1966 conversion to decimal currency occurred, the conversion rate being \$2.00 = £1-0-0, 1 shilling = 10 cents, and the basic by July was \$32.70. Minimum weekly rates reached \$51.86 in 1969 and \$103.74 in 1974. Average weekly earnings in Victoria were \$332.70 when the period covered by the book ended.

INTRODUCTION: St. Kilda Prior to 1930

Origins - Effect of the Gold Rush - St. Kilda becomes the best address in Melbourne but near the exclusive preserve of the wealthy - British in style - Administration of the Municipality as it grows - The Depression of the 1890s - St. Kilda develops as a pleasure resort - The Forestry Committee - Luna Park - St. Kilda at its best in carnival

Melbourne was still largely a figment of surveyors' imagination when people started to look for superior places to live, out of town. The Prince Regent had made seaside living fashionable in England and consideration was given to the beaches bordering Port Phillip Bay. The prospect was not encouraging; the coastline was largely flat and the adjoining land swampy. However, some five kilometres to the south of the city was a green knoll beside the sea. It looked more promising.

From the outset, Europeans regarded this site as the place for a resort. The aborigines had called it Euro-Yroke after the red sandstone along the beach, but that name was cast off as were its originators. In the first Government surveys it was called Fareham, after a watering place near Portsmouth, but the name which stuck was St. Kilda, after the schooner *The Lady of St. Kilda* was anchored long enough in the bay to be associated with the shore nearby. The first allotments were auctioned in 1842. By 1846, land agents described it as the "Scarborough of the South" and sold allotments on the hill to the prospering merchant, F. G. Dalgety, the architect Samuel Jackson, and the lawyer H. F. Gurner, though others still thought it dismal, with its rough assortment of shanties, the eternally shipless bay beyond, monotonous bush around, and woebegone black heathens in mia-mias near the beach.

With the discovery of gold, land prices rose in a spectacular fashion. Early investors made large profits as legislators, merchants and lawyers scrambled for the best blocks to build villas on the hill. They overlooked a busy sea-front now boasting Captain Kenny's bathing ship where men could safely take the waters, an Esplanade where ladies promenaded and shielded fair complexions with their bonnets and parasols, a fine jetty, and a Bay crowded with hundreds of bobbing vessels which the gold had bought. St. Kilda was wealthy enough to command, in 1857, the second railway to be built in the

colony, and a station with a chandelier. After a day's business in the city and termination of a train journey too expensive for the working class to afford, travellers often appreciated refreshment at the hotel opposite, first called the Terminus then splendid as the George.

By the 1860s, St. Kilda was the best address in Melbourne, and those who ruled Victoria lived there in elegant estates. Mansions like *Oberwyl* in Burnett Street displayed the wealth of the gilded city. Known as "de Silva's folly" after the merchant who borrowed heavily to build it, Oberwyl boasted thirty-six rooms, a ballroom, a parapet roof, ornate Victorian decoration, secret chambers and solid wooden shutters to provide security against marauding bush-rangers. Yet this sea-side home of judges, magnates and legislators was never the exclusive preserve of the wealthy. Amongst the poorer classes were cottagers lodged low on the Balaclava flat, servants accommodated in small quarters on large estates and fed on bread, potatoes, or cabbages from the St. Kilda market, and Chinese fishermen camped in tents on the West Beach. Notwithstanding these humble occupants, St. Kilda was overwhelmingly regarded as very well-bred and exceedingly genteel: so much so that when the police found prostitutes in Acland Street in 1886, they were ordered to leave because such characters were not allowed to reside in St. Kilda.¹

The style of the Municipality was uncompromisingly British. The social amenities, like the sportsgrounds and the churches, replicated British originals, and the streets were named after British political heroes, writers, and the military victories which loomed large in the news from Home and heartened colonists who believed they were in imminent peril of invasion by the Russians. Its Anglo-Australian gentry delicately transplanted their customs in a style well described by Martin Boyd, who wrote in his novels of the Boyds, Michies and A' Becketts of St. Kilda, and the house he called Kilawly standing at the corner of Hotham and Inkerman streets. The city's Jewish community, too, was snug in its Anglo-Jewish respectability. It comprised about fifty families in 1871 when they decided to form the St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation, which became as hierarchical in organisation and aristocratic in style as the richest in the Empire.

Administratively, the village was initially part of the Corporation of Melbourne, formed in 1842. However, the great expansion of Melbourne following the first Gold Rush led in 1855 to the proclamation of municipal districts, one of which was St. Kilda. At first the munici-

pality comprised the area round the village but not the village itself. This anomaly was soon removed, however, and in 1856 the village became the core of the new municipality.

Its northern and eastern boundaries were defined much as they are today, Dandenong Road and Hotham Road already existing as road easements on the surveys, though the tracks wandering through the dense bushland, where bushrangers lurked, bore little resemblance to the arteries of a great metropolis.

To the north-west lay a forbidding swamp, shared by the municipalities of St. Kilda and South Melbourne, but unsuitable for development. In the 1870s however, the area was drained and Albert Park Lake formed, whilst a military road called Beaconsfield Parade was built along the foreshore by 1890, and development proceeded.

The southern border of the settlement was initially defined by the edge of the higher ground, for the swampland to the south was if anything more unattractive than that to the north. Settlement was discouraged by the presence of a nightsoil depot and some abattoirs, whose waste products were thrown into a lagoon which drifted sluggishly toward the sea. The area was Elwood, named by Governor La Trobe after a Quaker whom he admired. It was not until the end of the century that the swamp was filled with sand and clay from the foreshore and stone from the bluff, a channel built along the Elster Creek to drain the marshlands, and reclamation of the swamp completed by 1905. The St. Kilda and Brighton Electric Street Railway provided the necessary link to stimulate property development, and with land sales in Elwood in 1908 and 1913 attracting those who sought the middle-class comforts of home ownership and family life, St. Kilda was subdivided into four wards in 1914, giving it boundaries close to those it has today.

The Municipal Council, under the presidency of Benjamin Cowderoy, first met in a room beside the Junction Hotel on 9 March 1857. The first Town Hall was opened in 1860 in a building attached to the Court House, and the first Mayor to take office was Brice Bunny, (later Judge Bunny) father of the artist Rupert Bunny. However, a more splendid home was needed for the administration of Melbourne's most prosperous municipality. There were the inevitable petitions and squabbles, with residents complaining about the cost and the choice of site. Eventually they were resolved, and on 23 June 1890 the Council met for the first time in its palatial new headquarters, a boomstyle palace designed by William Pitt and built in a former swamp at the corner of Brighton Road and Carlisle Street. Six

months later, on 2 December 1890, the Governor Lord Hopetoun, proclaimed the elevation of the Borough of St. Kilda to the status of City.

The collapse of the colonial economy following the end of the Land Boom caused massive hardship throughout the country. Some wealthy families were impoverished, and poor families reduced to penury. St. Kilda was being overtaken by newer suburbs like Toorak and South Yarra, which appealed more to the rich, particularly after the advent of cable cars in 1888 made St. Kilda a destination of day trippers, the lowly classes and larrikins from north of the Yarra. Hence, some mansions were abandoned and became boarding houses as the exodus of the upper crust continued from St. Kilda. Nonetheless, many wealthy people still remained, and some new money was infused as it became fashionable to live in the modish new flats which sprang up there after the Great War.

St. Kilda's importance as Victoria's leading pleasure resort was recognised in the creation of the St. Kilda Foreshore Committee in 1906. This Committee included representatives not only of the St. Kilda City Council, but also of the State Government. It was given the task of managing two hectares of land between Fraser and Dickens Streets, reserved by an Order-in-Council as a site for the "Recreation, Convenience and Amusement of the people". Under the Foreshore Committee's direction, Carlo Catani remodelled parts of the shore to resemble a European resort with a split level Esplanade, amusements, dance halls and theatres. The work was financed by revenue the Committee gained by leasing land to amusement operators. They were required to provide entertainment which was not offensive to "religion or good taste or sound morals". There were open air beach shows like the English Pierrots, the Pebbles, the Dandies and the Serenaders (perhaps the "Dago Band" which serenaded C. J. Dennis' Sentimental Bloke) and there was a short-lived amusement ground called "Dreamland", founded by Erle Sigismond Salambo. But the whole enterprise came of age with the opening of Luna Park.

Luna Park was the newest, greatest and best amusement park in the world when it opened in December 1912. Tucked between two lofty Moorish towers, and under an electric sign which was huge in its day, sat Mr Moon, his eyes rolling and ready for a merry lark, his toothy mouth agape for a very hearty laugh, because he was so happy to be amongst the humans who had written coon songs, and had used

"moon" as a snappy rhyme for "coon". This corny concept was American. The first Mr Moon was at Coney Island, New York, and its inventors, T. H. Eslick and Louis Corbelle, then sold the idea and some of its principal features to local entrepreneurs. The entrepreneur in Melbourne's case was the Greater J. D. Williams Amusement Company. It took its name from an American, James Dixon Williams, who returned to America shortly afterwards. However his partners, three brothers from Seattle called Herman, Harold and Leon Phillips, stayed on to manage Luna Park and extend into other fields. Amusements at Luna Park included a Palace of Illusions, Theatre Comique, Globe of Death, Indian Dart Gallery, River Caves, Scenic Railway, Palm Reading Machine, the Curious Flea Circus, American Bowl Slide and Coney Island Crispettes Stall. During the Great War, in the 1915-16 season, only the front entrance and limited parts of the Park were opened. It was rebuilt to fully reopen in 1923 and new attractions included the Big Dipper, the Whip, a Photo Studio, Joy Wheel and a water chute. The Luna Park Company introduced new features every season which included Dodgems, an American device electrically controlled with eccentric steering in 1927; and Jack and Jill, and Goofy House for the summer of 1929-1930.

Meanwhile, the Phillips Brothers went on to build the Palais de Danse in 1913, though churchmen and councillors stormed about the temptations of the tango and corruption of public morals. The original Palais de Danse was converted to a picture theatre in 1915; then a new cinema was built on the site in 1920, and the Palais de Danse was reerected on an adjoining site. In 1926, the cinema was burnt down, and replaced by a new theatre on the grandest scale which seated three thousand people.

This was St. Kilda as it was left by its first historian, John Butler Cooper, who wrote volumes One and Two of the present work. Writing in 1930, he concluded that St. Kilda was no longer the patrician village it had been in the nineteenth century, but it could be seen at its best in carnival.²

Let us, then, take his cue, and allow the curtain to rise on a St. Kilda carnival in the early 1930s.

CHAPTER ONE

BIG DIPPER 1930-1933

I. St. Kilda in carnival — Accommodation for holiday makers — Luna Park and the funfair — The beach — Gardens — Dance Halls and Picture Theatres — Film making — Sporting and Social clubs — A mixed community — Prestige of St. Kilda

II. Concern about slide in St. Kilda's reputation — Vandalism — Sly grog — Cocaine — Prostitution — Downturn in entertainment industry — Plight of Cr. Albert Jacka, other returned soldiers, families and unemployed

III. Local, State and Federal action to combat Depression — Anxiety of propertied classes — Conservative fears about subversion of social framework — Death of Cr. Jacka — Defeat of Labor coincides with economic improvement — Declining sympathy for unemployed.

I. HIGH

22 October 1931: The Queen of Flowers, enthroned in a carriage drawn by four white horses, waved majestically to the crowd. Behind her followed a colourful procession of kilted pipers, tableaux, and floats displaying the wares of Bryant and May, Electrolux, Atlantic Oil and Robur Tea. Her servants scattered rose petals along the way as she moved slowly from Swanston Street, over Princes Bridge and down the tree-lined boulevard of St. Kilda Road, where people stood on the balconies of gracious homes and cheered. Finally, she arrived at her destination at Alfred Square in St. Kilda. There, she declared that Melbourne's winter had ended, and its summer season of amusement would now begin. At her royal decree, Luna Park reopened after its annual recess. Gloomy thoughts about the Depression could be cast aside — for the time being at least.

After the procession, there was a battle of the petals in the Lower Esplanade: community clubs threw rose petals at members of the Royal St. Kilda Yacht Club, dressed as pirates, who raided their petal ammunition dumps. That evening, the domes of Luna Park were festooned with coloured lights, the foreshore decorated with bunting and thousands of flags, and many people came in fancy dress, buying funny noses, squeakers, and masks at different stalls on the Esplanade.

The fun continued all week. The 14th Battalion paraded on the beach, resplendent in full kit with bayonets fixed. Children's faces were bright with joy as they marched along in a torchlight procession with kerosene flares and roman candles. The Hawthorn Banjo Club played merry tunes from the the piazza in front of the Baths. Fireworks of rockets and fiery serpents were set off from vessels anchored in the Bay, delighting thousands of people who sat on the wide stretches of sand and lawn at the sides of Brooke's Jetty. There were aquatic displays of ornamental swimming, floating and diving by women's life-saving teams, and toughly contested water polo matches presented by members of the St. Kilda based Melbourne Swimming Club. The modish set also enjoyed a beach fashion parade of bathing costumes, capes, wraps and hats at Luna Park where women modelled two-toned gowns by Jantzen, and the Kingsford-Smith bathing caps expected to be the rage that summer.¹

St. Kilda remained the popular favourite, just as Carlo Catani and the members of the Foreshore Committee had dreamt it would be. Visitors still came from far and wide to see its famous attractions, and enjoy the innocent pleasures of its fairground, gardens, beaches, dance-halls and theatres.

They stayed in hotels built in the nineteenth century. There was the Esplanade, offering electric pressing rooms for lady guests, rooms with hot and cold water, telephones, private bathrooms, reading and writing rooms, a fifteen minute electric tram and train service to the city, and free garaging for guests; or there was the George, with its marble entrance hall, banqueting hall and ballroom. It had been newly extended in 1930 by twenty-nine rooms to provide one hundred and sixty-nine altogether, and already housed ninety people, in its resident staff, permanent guests and the family of the proprietor, Frederick Wimpole the junior, whose father had made it Australia's finest hotel in the nineteenth century.²

Other holiday makers chose a guest house instead from St. Kilda's wide range of three hundred and nineteen. *Majestic Mansions* in Fitzroy Street accommodated two hundred and seventy-five guests who paid from £2-17-6 per week (which was a little more than half the average weekly wage at the time) for single accommodation and all meals, or seven shillings a day. *St. Leonards Flats and Guest House* at 10 St. Leonards Avenue was situated on a two and three quarter acre site with two tennis courts, a croquet lawn, billiards and smoke rooms. Both *Mandalay*, with "high-class cuisine" and "large

rooms, newly furnished throughout" at 20 The Esplanade, and *Eildon*, at 51 Grey Street, were set on large grounds, the latter once the city mansion of John Lang Currie, the Western District pastoralist. Other establishments in the vicinity of Robe, Acland and Dalgety Streets also emphasised the prestige of their location: the *Maringa* at 24 Dalgety Street boasted "select company and surroundings", "splendid cuisine" and "electric cooking"; *Illoura* at 53 Acland and Robe Street was another "exclusive guest house" on spacious grounds.³

St. Kilda also attracted day-trippers and picnickers from industrial and residential suburbs all over Melbourne, who enjoyed an outing to the sea. Extensive public transport made it open to all, while others came by foot, by bicycle, or car. Tramloads arrived from Preston, Coburg, Glenferrie, Kew, Glenhuntly, Carnegie, Caulfield and Malvern; and the train from Flinders Street delivered passengers from the northern suburbs to the St. Kilda station. The St. Kilda-Brighton Electric Street Railway passed from Fitzroy Street through Grey, Barkly and Mitford Streets, Ormond Road and St. Kilda Street to Brighton, connecting with the Brighton to Melbourne and Brighton to Sandringham railway. A daily motor bus service travelled from Caulfield, via Inkerman Street to the beach, and there were all-night buses available from the city.

Luna Park was the shrine of pleasure in a capital city some thought prudish and dull. With its slogan "Just For Fun", it dominated foreshore entertainment, and was a showplace envied by visiting Sydney-siders. When Councillors of the Waverley City Council in Bondi, New South Wales, questioned members of the St. Kilda Foreshore Committee about its value to St. Kilda in 1932, Cr. Frank Dawkins had no hesitation in making an enthusiastic reply:

LUNA PARK has been and is still the star attraction with its multitude of lights and its hundred-and-one amusements..a similar feature established on any Beach in Australia within close proximity to a Capital City, could have no other result than to intensely increase the popularity of such seaside resort by reason of its magnetic lure and influence⁴.

Subsequently, a similar park opened in Sydney on 4 October 1935. Luna Park had such drawing power that other amusement operators clustered at a busy funfair nearby, on a triangle of land known as *Little Luna Park*, leasing sites from the Foreshore Committee. This fun-fair included a Ferris Wheel, which had been established by Frank Ireland in 1908 and bought by G. A. G. Moore in 1921. The St.

Kilda Amusement Company ran electrically propelled cars and played waltz music in a building called *The Swirl*. Alfred Evans established a miniature railway with a puffing steam engine, tender and carriages on a track with signals, bridges and tunnels, near the corner of Marine Parade and Cavell Street in 1931.

The merry-go-round, however, had pride of place. It was designed and constructed in 1914 by Herbert Thomson, the designer of Australia's first steam car in his Armadale workshop in 1896⁵. He built the largest portable steam riding gallery seen in Australia, with engines allowing it to carry fifty tons without noise or vibration. There were fifty-two wooden horses running four abreast, carved and decorated with glass jewels, and two wooden elephants, safe enough for the littlest children. William Kelly had run the beloved merry-go-round since 1916, taking over from Anton Weniger, who relinquished it after about fifty soldiers arrived at the Esplanade in tram-cars in January 1916. The rowdy troops praised Baxter, who ran another merry-go-round, as a good Briton; then, armed with lemonade and ginger beer bottles, stones, and pickets from the Lower Esplanade fence, they raided Weniger's Riding Gallery because he was a German. Weniger transferred his lease to William Kelly soon after the scrimmage and assured the Foreshore Committee that the new lessee was a native Australian, born in Collingwood.⁶

More amusements were established on land beyond the control of 'the Foreshore Committee. The idea of Midget Golf was imported from the United States of America, and by the end of 1930 in St. Kilda there were fourteen concrete courses on vacant blocks and at guest houses. Private operators leased other prime sites near the sea. E. J. Kilpatrick, an "International Amusement Operator" installed a Penny Arcade featuring miniature moving pictures, punching balls, fortune telling card machines, electric poker games and shuffle boards in 1931 on a site owned by Sol Green, who lived at 51 Beaconsfield Parade, and was once one of Melbourne's best-known bookmakers and the operator of the Melbourne Tattersalls Club. People could climb Kilpatrick's *Magic Carpet*, composed mainly of "steel piping concealed from the public by artistic surroundings", enter an enclosed chamber at the top and slide on a broad carpet to the floor'. Other amusements included a skittle alley called *Roll Them*, established on vacant land in Acland Street between Albert and Carlisle Street in 1931, on land owned by George Wirth, a proprietor of Wirth's Circus.

The sea provided simple amusements. Throughout summer, groups of all ages picnicked, sang to ukeleles, swam, dived from the pier and built sandcastles. Or they could take refreshments at the *Pavilion Tea Rooms*, or walk down to the *Pier Pavilion* built in 1904. Motor car traffic was very heavy on hot nights: on 10 January 1930, the *Herald* reported that the motor rush to the beach at St. Kilda the night before had almost cut residents off from the water and it was unsafe for children to try to reach the sand. Many preferred to walk down to Elwood Beach, which was especially popular with families, partly due to the supervision of lifesavers in the red and blue costume of the strongest club in Australia.

St. Kilda was the customary site for important sea-side events. More people were learning how to swim, and the state-wide *Herald* Learn to Swim Campaign of 1930 was launched at St. Kilda Beach. In an opening ceremony broadcast by 3DB, life-savers from West St. Kilda, St. Kilda, Esplanade and Elwood Clubs paraded; then they demonstrated how to float and swim using the techniques of Frank Beaurepaire, the Olympic swimmer who lived in Clyde Street, St. Kilda. As well, children who were the Victorian finalists of the *Sun* sand building competition in 1933, built their castles there, complete with flags, turrets and the paper's symbol of the rising sun.

The new St. Kilda Baths were hailed as the most modern in Australia. The gleaming structure was opened in October 1931 and provided a salon for dancing and bridge parties called *Leonard's by the Sea* featuring the Zarf Rivers Band, gymnasiums, hair dryers, hot sea water baths, sun bathing balconies and separate bathing facilities for men and women. The Baths were built by Council on the site of the old wooden baths which had burnt down in 1926, though the Foreshore Committee had opposed their erection because it believed Council had encroached on its territory. Councillors took pride in the fact that they were designed by the City Engineer's Department, which had been inspired by a Moorish motif. They dismissed as sour grapes the comment of the Royal Victorian Institute of Architects, that Melbourne's premier beach site was now dominated by an "appalling piece of design...banal and devoid of good taste".⁸

Council expected the Baths, which had cost £60,000, to be very profitable, and leased them to F. C. Carroll for £3536 a year. However he took less money than he expected after Council disallowed mixed bathing in the ladies' section. This was permitted in other baths, but he formidable local branch of the Australian Women's National League persuaded Councillors to ban the practice at St. Kilda on the

grounds of decency and remove Mr. Alex Sauter, the swimming instructor, from the women's section in February 1932. Though Sauter was reinstated after protests from hundreds of other women, segregated bathing remained. Carroll was also told to enforce stricter standards of dress in the women's section because a teacher from Middle Park refused to take her pupils to the St. Kilda Baths for swimming lessons after she saw some bathers stripped to the waist when they sunbathed there in February 1933². On the men's side, Carroll's task was even more difficult, as he explained:

It is very hard to keep a thousand men in check as far as keeping themselves entirely covered as they will take their vees off when they shower and some of the showers are open and in full view of any person in the baths who desired to look¹⁰

St. Kilda was also proud of its memorials and gardens. Visitors promenaded by the Esplanade or picnicked on lawns studded with flower-beds, rockeries, shrubberies, continental tea-rooms, palms, bandstands and statues. St. Kilda's newest monument was the Catani Clocktower, designed by Norman Schefferle in 1930 from the inspiration of the "Italian Campanile" to reflect the "varied and rich" character of St. Kilda¹¹, and to honour the birthplace of Carlo Catani, who had directed the draining of the Koo-Wee-Rup and Kow swamps, constructed roads to Arthur's Seat and Mount Donna Buang, widened the Yarra River, and the Elster Canal, as well as reclaiming the foreshore prior to his death in St. Kilda in 1918¹². Another new monument was a drinking fountain, designed by the Modern Art Company, in memory of Edward O'Donnell who died on 7 July 1933 after serving St. Kilda as a Councillor for forty-four years, and who had stood alone on Council in 1917 against a resolution to disallow St. Kilda Christian Brothers College to use the Town Hall because Archbishop Mannix, the anti-conscriptionist, would be present.

The beauty of the gardens was jealously guarded by St. Kilda City Council, which undertook many schemes. Australian trees, for instance, were introduced in 1932 to the Blessington Street Gardens, which had been designed by Baron von Mueller in the nineteenth century. Advertising on hoardings was banned in "the interests of aestheticism" ¹³, and St. Kilda City Council also offered to pay the Electricity Commission a small contribution towards the cost of higher poles to carry electric wires and thereby prevent the mutilation of trees". So proud were they of their efforts that Councillors thought it fitting in September 1933 that their own names, and those

of past Councillors, be used in naming recreational areas in St. Kilda. They were less impressed by the joint management of Albert Park, claiming that revenue raised from the St. Kilda end was being spent in the South Melbourne part. They also disapproved of the *Albert Park Land Act* (1932) which allowed the Minister of Lands to appoint a committee of eight with four representatives from the Board of Land and Works, two from South Melbourne and two from St. Kilda; so St. Kilda withdrew and was unrepresented on the Committee for the next fifteen years.

Dance halls offered further refined entertainment. The *Wattle Path* had opened in 1923 on the Esplanade beside Alfred Square as a dancing saloon and a cafe selling ice-cream and aerated waters. It was more expensive to enter than some of the other establishments, and well-heeled patrons heard Joe Aronson and his "syncopating symphonists of twenty performers" and refined vocalists, such as Gladys Verney and Mrs. John Bobbie. The *Maison de Luxe Dancing Palais* in Elwood provided an excellent floor, as well as "loges" for private parties. Another new dance hall opened in 1932, called *Earl's Court*. It was formerly the Mayfair Theatre, which had been registered as a dancing saloon in 1928, then remodelled by the Eureka Trust Company to resemble a mock mediaeval castle with three floors, its entrance representing a drawbridge and moat and its interior decorated with heraldic ornaments. Despite such competition, the Palais de Danse remained Melbourne's peerless ballroom and finest dance-floor, particularly pleasant on a balmy evening, when the doors were opened to the sea and stars beyond, and the music of Ern Pettifer and his band, the Rhythm Boys, wafted over the bay.

Then there were the cinemas: the *Victory*, the *Broadway* in Elwood, the *Memorial Theatre*, the *St. Kilda Theatre* in Fitzroy Street and the Phillips Brothers' *Palais Pictures*. The *Victory* was remodelled in 1928, its foyers splendid with potted palms, comfortable lounges, decorative carpets and fresh flowers, and plush seats inside for patrons to enjoy Henri Penn and the *Victory Concert Orchestra*, as well as the main movie features. Penn was a graduate of the Royal Academy of Music and a winner of the Thalberg Scholarship. He launched a shortlived St. Kilda Conservatorium of Music at Oberwyl in March 1933, which provided tuition, and promoted Chamber Music by its association with the Melbourne String Quartet.

The *Palais Pictures* was more than a cinema; it was a showplace of Melbourne's finest performers. Entertainment was presented by

Henry Osborne (Harry) Jacobs and his Orchestra. Harry Jacobs was born in Birmingham in 1888, the son of a theatre orchestra conductor and trumpet player. The family moved to Blackpool, and at the age of eighteen he played the piano at the Roller Skating Rink while people skated; as the floor was wooden and noisy, he built up an orchestra for more volume and taught himself to conduct and orchestrate. Ada Reeve, the actress and variety artist, invited him to become her private conductor and he toured the world with her company, visiting India, Egypt, New Zealand, South Africa and Australia prior to, and during the First World War. He married another member of the Ada Reeve Company, who performed as Little Lucie Linda; however, she had learnt ballet from Cavalier Enrico Cechetti, and after her marriage to Harry Jacobs, she was known as Madame Lucie Saranova. The couple came to Australia in 1921, and remained after Ada Reeve returned, to join J. C. Williamson's Company, and toured Australia and New Zealand for its Gilbert and Sullivan season. Harry signed a contract with the Phillips Brothers to commence at the Palais on 7 January 1929, and was the theatre's only permanent musical director to produce stage shows there. His salary was twenty pounds a week at first, reduced to fifteen pounds later in the Depression. He assembled an orchestra of hand-picked musicians who would move next door to the Palais de Danse when they finished at the Palais. As well, patrons at the Palais Pictures Were admitted to the Palais de Danse after the pictures finished. Wendy Lee Selover, the daughter of Harry Jacobs, recalled:

Auditions were held in the theatre before Dad, Mr. Gamett Curwen, the Manager of the Palais, and the Phillips Brothers. Dad might like someone but if the Mr. Phillips did not, the performer would not be engaged. People used to say: "If you had a week at the Palais, you had a foot in show **business**".

A show at the Palais was a big occasion which occurred every week in St. Kilda. Ladies wore jewellery and fur coats. Many St. Kilda patrons and patrons from other suburbs had permanently booked seats and paid 2/6, 1/6 or ninepence. Ushers, who were dressed very smartly in burgundy and grey, with a silk ribbon stripe down the outside legs of their trousers, and in jackets similar to those worn in an army mess, would show patrons to their seats.

There was a new show every week and no one knew what it would be until father told them on the night. The lights would go down. A spotlight would shine on the orchestra pit, father would bow and conduct an overture. The musicians wore dinner suits. When father conducted on the stage he wore his tails and white tie but when he conducted in the orchestra pit he wore his dinner jacket and a black tie. The curtains would open for the newsreel. After the newsreel the curtains would close, the

screen would be flown and the spotlight would move to the middle of the stage. Dad would step forward and the microphone, imported from America and like no other in Melbourne, would come up from the floor. Dad would announce the programme and he might say: "Ladies and Gentlemen, tonight I have something very special for you..." — perhaps Mary Miller or Colin Crane. The curtains would open to reveal the set. Sometimes the orchestra might be in costume and set on a rostrum on stage but they remained in the pit if the artists required the entire stage. Once there was a whole circus for several weeks but the elephants would not walk on one part of the stage because it was sprung, and the carpenters had to shore it up underneath. The stage show would last about twenty minutes. The curtains would close and the screen would come down again. The curtains would open for the first full-length film.

At interval, people could hear classical music in the foyer. The Phillips installed a small grand piano on the balcony foyer. Raymond Lambert, or whoever was the orchestra pianist, played classical pieces, sometimes sometimes accompanied by musicians such as Reg Bradley, the violinist, Mischa Kogan, the viola player and Richard Chugg, the flautist...

After interval, the second film, which was the main feature, would end at eleven or eleven thirty. On days when Dad travelled to work on the tram from our home in Bendigo Street, Elwood, people would say: "Good morning Mr. Jacobs, we enjoyed your show last night", and he would doff his hat.¹⁵

Matinees were a special highlight in children's lives. They waited all week to see the next instalment of the serial, and to sing along with the slides Harry Jacobs would prepare for them. The movies also made Empire Day a keenly anticipated event because it was always celebrated in St. Kilda with a film and a bag of sweets which reminded them they were the luckiest children alive to be young white Britons. All schools assembled at the Victory Theatre for their annual treat on 19 May 1933:

1. National Anthem (2 verses) — Slide "The King".
2. Hymn — "O God our Help in Ages Past" (3 verses).
3. Picture Slides — "The Royal Family".
4. Speech.
5. Comedy — "No Boy Wanted" (Snookums).
6. Picture — Head of the River Race, Geelong.
7. Song — "Australia; Land of Ours (2 verses).
8. Cartoon — "The Detective" (Oswald the Rabbit).
9. Fox Movietone News.
10. Picture — "Strange as it Seems".
11. Picture — "Splinters in the Navy".
12. Song — "Hail Britannia". (3 verses).
13. Comedy — "Hog Wild" (Laurel and Hardy).¹⁶

St. Kilda also promised to be an Antipodean Hollywood as ambitious rival pioneers of the Australian sound film industry established film studios there. Stuart Doyle, the founder of Cinesound, had already established studios at Bondi and Rushcutters Bay and installed Ken G. Hall as his leading director. He announced in April 1933 that arrangements were complete for Amalgamated Pictures to acquire the St. Kilda Theatre in Fitzroy Street and convert it into a modern soundproof studio with an area of over nine thousand square feet capable of housing the large sets necessary for production". It was known as *Cinesound Na 3 Studio* and offered facilities for independent producers in return for release through the Greater Union chain, as well as being the Melbourne base for filming Cinesound productions and newsreels, including the *Cinesound Review*. A few months later, his great rival, F. W. Thring, informed the public that he had purchased the Wattle Path Palais de Danse on the Esplanade, and would make it the largest film studio in Australia with thousands of square feet of floor space for sets. Thring, who dominated sound film production in Melbourne, had worked as a conjurer, a touring film exhibitor and a projectionist before becoming the managing director of J.C. Williamson's in 1918. He had merged his theatre interests with Hoyts by 1926; and he was a director of the Victory Theatre in St. Kilda when it was remodelled in 1928. He sold his Hoyts interests to the American company, Fox Film Corporation, and launched his own company called Efftee Film Productions in September 1930, leasing His Majesty's Theatre, converted it into a film studio, and imported the world's best R.C.A. sound equipment from America. Amongst the earliest shorts he produced was a film of Ada Reeve, accompanied by the St. Kilda Palais Theatre Orchestra conducted by Harry Jacobs.

Thring was a man of great style. No cost was spared in anything he did. He gathered the best available actors, writers and technicians around him including C. J. Dennis, Norman Lindsay, Raymond Longford and Arthur Higgins. If expensive costumes or stage properties were required, the very best were ordered from Buckley and Nunn. On opening nights Thring showed panache when he arrived at Melbourne theatres in a Marmon car illuminated from within; smoking a large cigar, he would alight, accompanied by his second wife, Olive. She was a member of the Kreitmeyer family who had run wax-works in Bourke Street, and she customarily wore a mauve gown, a white fox fur, and carried mauve orchids on gala occasions. Their son Frank later gained international recognition as a movie star and actor.

Larger than life himself, F. W. Thring set the hearts of Elwood matrons afflutter as they dreamt of a stage career for their daughters. An *Argus* reporter wrote on 29 December 1933:

Hollywood does not seem to be too far away now that Efftee has "moved in" to the old Wattle Path Palais building, on the Esplanade at St. Kilda. All the apparatus necessary to the production of Australian "talkies" has been removed from His Majesty's Theatre, and, except for those parts which have been installed, it stands against the walls, and litters the vast floor of the Palais. The sound recording room, the cutting and developing rooms, and the special electrical sub-station which handles power for the instruments, are in operation. Yesterday one witnessed the recording of hoof-beats which will be "grafted" upon the pictures already taken for "A Ticket in Tatts" the new Efftee film which will be released early in the new year.

Residents' strong attachment to St. Kilda, and their community spirit, was evident in parochial support for sporting clubs. Successful sporting identities were local heroes. The St. Kilda Cricket Club had several representatives in Australian Test Teams when rivalry with England was at its height. William Ponsford first played district cricket for St. Kilda at the age of sixteen, and made a brave stand during the bodyline test series of 1932-33 in Adelaide when he scored eighty-five, turning his back on Larwood to take the fast rising balls of the bowling attack on his buttocks. Herbert Ironmonger was another legend in St. Kilda. Born on 7 April 1888 in Ipswich, Queensland, he worked as a tobacconist at 17 Grey Street and then became a groundsman for the St. Kilda City Council. He was forty-six years old when he made his test debut in 1928-29 as an accurate left arm spin bowler, with half of two fingers missing from his bowling hand after an accident with farm machinery, and was called "Dainty" because of his approach to the wicket. He took 9 for 86 in the First Test against South Africa in 1931/32; and in the last Test in that series, 11 for 24. His career ended in 1935 when he toured India with F. A. Tarrant's team. Another older team-mate was Donald Dearness Blackie of 33 Acland Street, who combined with Ironmonger in club cricket, and was also forty-six years old when he made his Test debut in the 1928/29 series. He began his run up near mid-off and was an exponent of the off break but he could turn the ball the other way as well's. Ernest ("Slogger") Bromley came to St. Kilda from Western Australia to play in 1932. He was selected for the Fourth "Bodyline" Test against Jardine, and in the Test team which toured England in 1934. However his drives and pull shots were seen at their best in club

cricket, and his slogging prowess was also displayed at the baseball games played as curtain-raisers to the football, St. Kilda's sacred rite.

St. Kilda Football Club supporters found the early 1930s a testing time because their club won few games despite the aerial skill of their magical full-forward, Bill Mohr. A memorable victory was celebrated however, when St. Kilda defeated Charlie Gaudion's North Melbourne team in May 1933, even though only fifteen St. Kilda players were left standing by the end. The *Age* reported:

St. Kilda's training room resembled a hospital after the game. Hudson had a broken fibula; Gove had four stitches put in a cut over the eye; Bence had one stitch in a cut over the eye and in the next term needed four more. W. Mohr had fractured ribs, Harge had a damaged ankle and most of the others had bruises and swellings. The only injury at North was Wrouth who had three stitches over the eye.

The St. Kilda Committee presented a medal to their players for courage. In reply to criticism about North Melbourne's play, its Club President, Arthur Calwell, said that virility and forcefulness were the essence of good football, as it was not a "kiss-in-the-ring" game and could not be judged by "parlour standards"¹⁹, which might apply among the silver spoons of St. Kilda. Despite St. Kilda's lowly position on the ladder, players were idolised. The entire St. Kilda team was present at the Memorial Theatre on 29 June 1931 when a series of moving pictures of them were screened; and from July 1931 at that theatre, the Captain, Harold Matthews, broadcast team news and a weekly message for patrons.²⁰

The club faced financial and administrative difficulties, as well as the inability to win many games. Members were admitted to eighteen matches for about fivepence a match but the *Annual Report* of 1930 noted a falling off of five hundred and sixty in membership and a loss of £194-1-0 compared with the previous year's profit of £401-1-7. By 1932, the Treasurer of the Club estimated that the cost of fielding thirty players and trainers, medical expenses, sustenance for unemployed players, fees for the Seconds coach, umpires and uniforms amounted to £135 weekly while gate receipts averaged only £72 weekly²¹. Supporters, who were dissatisfied with the administration of the Club, petitioned the Mayor, Councillor Moroney, to call a meeting to form a Committee which would "place the St. Kilda Football team in a position in the League more in keeping with the importance of this City"²². Cr. Moroney complied, and after an uproarious meeting in November where the Police were called to restore order, the old Committee, which had told players they were in the position of servants who could be dismissed at any time, were swept

out of office themselves. They were replaced by the "Progressives", led by F. Arlington-Burke as President, a silver-tongued orator of the type some people called a St. Kilda toff. The new Committee sought Council's assistance in finding employment for a few players they wanted to recruit who would "add prestige" to St. Kilda and "provide St. Kilda people with a team of which they may be justly proud"²³. It regained the services of Colin Watson, who had been St. Kilda's first Brownlow Medal winner in 1925, and approved the alteration of the club guernsey from thin red, white and black stripes to three wider stripes; but St. Kilda still had little success on the field.

There were other genteel social and cultural pursuits for residents to enjoy. The St. Kilda Debating Society met at Wickliffe House on the Esplanade at the corner of Pollington Street. They held segregated meetings where the women were called the "Portias" and the men "Stoics". A Film Society called the "500 Club" was organised by Mr. Levoi in 1932 to discuss pictures which were not commonly screened, preview city releases and collect motion picture magazines. Younger sets were very active. The Elwood Younger Set enjoyed theatre parties, chaperoned dances at Leonard's Café, and card evenings, while the St. Kilda Younger Set presented the revue "HMS Elizabeth" at the Princess Theatre with Marge Pynor and Les Levy in 1932. Gossip columnists described functions like the Younger Set Ball at the St. Kilda Town Hall in August 1932: Sid Hamilton was "dark and debonair", Kaye Cohen matched her steps with Joe Bancroft, Bobby Lazarus offset her good looks with scarlet, Frances Ogilvy had Bill Wilson "lashed to her chariot wheels", the Slutzkin boys were there, Alma McGeary wore beige lace with a very french accent, Mark Rosenberg had a polished technique befitting a "young shoe king", and Mrs. Gordon Finlay "revelled in the doings".²⁴

Though the community was predominantly of British stock, a leavening of other groups gave it a slightly more exotic flavour than many other parts of Melbourne. Its musicians were of many different nationalities. Italians, including Joseph Fonti, S. Tesoriero, N. Pittari, D. Dimmattina, G. Canastra, F. Santospirito and the Capicchiano Brothers ran fruit and vegetable shops; Greeks included S. Kostas and G. Anagnos, who had fish shops; and there were several Chinese laundries and cafes. The most numerically significant 'minority' was the Jewish community: in the Census of 30 June 1933 it was estimated that there were 1,217 females and 1,173 males who were "adherents of the Hebrew Religion in the City of St. Kilda".²⁵

Many Jews, who practised their religion with pride, regarded it as the only part of their lives which differentiated them in a Municipality which they had helped shape. They still saw St. Kilda as a most prestigious address, and their presence there as much a mark of their own success as it had been in the nineteenth century. The St. Kilda Hebrew congregation, noted for its Anglo-Jewish conservatism, was proud of its massive new Synagogue of Byzantine style in Chamwood Grove, which opened in 1926. The congregation still included some very wealthy and venerable giants of Melbourne Jewry. Frederick Michaelis lived in *Orwell* in Robe Street, his brother, Ernest remaining in *Linden*, the family home. They were the sons of Moritz Michaelis, who had founded the congregation and was a partner in the firm Michaelis, Hallenstein and Company whose fortune was based on the operation of a tannery in Footscray in 1864. Reuben and Lucie Hallenstein dwelt in *Woonsocket*, a mansion set in spacious grounds off Barkly Street; Cr. Alfred Levy lived in Robe Street; Myer Zeltner lived in *The Lees*, St. Kilda Road; and Shalom Judah Slutzkin who had operated a warehouse in Flinders Lane, lived in St. Kilda Road. Another member of the congregation in Trevor Rapke, the son of Abraham and Julia Rapke, later recorded his memories of the congregation in the 1920s and 1930s:

When the stalls at the Victoria Market produced the necessary deposit, the more affluent and assimilated members of the community joined the earlier indigenes or immigrants in the burgeoning suburb of St. Kilda. There Anglo-Jewry reigned supreme and undisputed. Toorak was not then the next social stepping stone. It was only in the latter part of the two decades I am scanning that chutzpah [effrontery] was defined as the attribute of a man who moved from Carlton to Toorak without first sojourning in St. Kilda...

Dress was a feature of early St. Kilda life. All Barmitzvah boys had to wear straw boaters with a long black cord attaching the hat to the coat lapel. The entry of the Blashki and Slutzkin family to the old synagogue was a period cavalcade of impeccable salon manners. Their wives entered alongside their spat-clad husbands, left their sides to enter their front pew seats. Then the male children followed in strict order of primogeniture. A selected son got a siddur or machzor [prayer book] with the place found and returned to his mother, raised his hat and handed her the book. Her response was to smile at the family and the son who did this ministration.²⁶

The St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation was led by Reverend Jacob Danglow, a man of great presence and physical charm. Danglow was born in Wandsworth, Surrey on 28 November 1880, and inducted at *Chamwood*, St. Kilda in 1905; he married May Baruch, the grand-

daughter of Moritz Michaelis, and was given the title of Rabbi in 1935. He considered it a duty and privilege for Jews to serve the immediate community, and thereby serve the British Empire as Sir John Monash had done. Sir John Monash was elected a member of the St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation in 1920, as well as having another important connection with St. Kilda as the Chairman of Directors of Luna Park, and when the famous General died in October 1932, Danglow officiated at the memorial service at Queen's Hall at State Parliament House. Danglow was also very proud of the achievements of Sir Isaac Isaacs, who was married to Deborah (Daisy) Jacobs, the daughter of Isaac Jacobs, one of the founders of the St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation. Isaacs became Chief Justice of the High Court in 1930, and the first Australian born Governor-General in 1931, despite opposition from King George V, at the very time Danglow was inspiring a young choirboy at the synagogue, Zelman Cowen, who would later follow in Isaacs' footsteps in another period of national crisis. Danglow set an example of loyalty to the Empire himself in his expressions of Anglophilia at the Synagogue, his service as an Army Chaplain and Captain in the AIF during the Great War, and his encouragement of the formation of the first troop of Jewish Boy Scouts in Australia, the Third St. Kilda, later called "Danglow's Own".

Members of his congregation still dominated the Melbourne Jewish Advisory Board which was formed in 1922 to coordinate all Jewish activities, but disavowed the Yiddish language and Jewish secular culture which was visible north of the Yarra in working-class suburbs such as Carlton.

Nonetheless, not all Jews in the Municipality were rich, nor were they all part of Danglow's fold. The St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation itself contained many people who could no longer afford their seat rents by 1930, whilst others led secular lives, or sought a new religious emphasis. Ada Phillips, with the assistance of her daughters, established the first successful Liberal congregation in Australia in the Temple Beth Israel, which was based in St. Kilda in its foundation years. Rabbi Jerome Mark came to St. Kilda from America in September 1930 until August 1933 to minister to the congregation which met at Wickliffe House, the Town Hall, and the Church Parish Hall in Acland Street. Although Danglow described the liberal movement as emasculated Judaism, Phillips believed that the survival of Judaism depended on providing a bridge for those to whom Orthodox practices meant little. Services were shortened and other

liberalising reforms were made, including the acceptance of women as equals in all facets of congregational life. This contrasted with the St. Kilda Hebrew Synagogue in 1933. Julia Rapke, the President of the National Council of Women of Victoria since 1925 and one of the earliest Victorian female appointees as Justice of the Peace since 1928, failed to secure the right of female members, who paid seat rents, to vote on matters concerning their congregation.

St. Kilda City Councillors too, had a strong sense of social order, being very conscious of the traditions, dignity and status of their office, and the prestige of the city, which remained one of the most dearly loved locations in Melbourne. They were accustomed to meeting regal visitors and other dignitaries at official landings at St. Kilda pier where protocol was observed and arrangements made by the English born Town Clerk, Frederick Chamberlin, whose sense of propriety and duty testified to his belief in St. Kilda's importance.

Councillors believed St. Kilda remained one of Melbourne's socially superior cities though the distribution of wealth there was as uneven as its famous Big Dipper: the wealth of old families was obvious in the mansions on the St. Kilda hill; streets like Los Angeles Court, one of Melbourne's most fashionable streets in the late 1920s with its houses in the Spanish Mission style spoke of new money; respectable middle-class folk tended solid villas in Elwood; whilst poorer families rented humbler wooden cottages in narrow streets like Neptune. Such diversity was tolerable, Councillors believed, providing everyone knew their place.

Mayoral functions were usually grand, as befitted such an important wealthy city, and the Mayoral allowance of £500 in St. Kilda was second only to the City of Melbourne. The Mayoral Ball in 1932 was not considered unduly lavish, and ran like clockwork as Council employees obeyed the precise orders of the Town Clerk as he expected. Richard Hoffman's ten piece orchestra sat between potted palms and played items including "Lily of Laguna" and "Golden Slippers" for the Barn Dance; "She's So Nice" for the Fox Trot; "Jolly Good Company" for the One Step; and the Viennese and circular waltzes. The Hall was decorated with pink sateen on the balconies, hanging baskets of flowers, pink and mauve streamers, and three ornamental centrepieces with pink and mauve box lanterns. Councillors watched the proceedings with satisfaction as they enjoyed the best imported whiskies and cigars. Their city, it seemed, had everything.

II. SLIPPING

There were other pleasures which could be pursued in St. Kilda as well as its innocent attractions. The existence of vandalism, sly-grog dealing, drug peddling and prostitution there confirmed the prejudice of some who had thought the social death-knell for St. Kilda had sounded in the late 1880s when cable-cars made the city accessible to all, and that its fate had been sealed when the Foreshore Committee pandered to the tastes of the masses before the Great War. Many influential and snobbish sectors of Melbourne society had left it long ago because they thought the mass entertainment facilities vulgar, or because they harboured less explicit anti-semitic feelings, living as they did in a city where no Jew was a member of its most exclusive fraternity, the Melbourne Club. St. Kilda may have been well rid of such types, but now that Depression was clouding everything, and it had pinned its future on mass entertainment, that future did not look promising; even the position of the moderately well-off looked as precarious as a carriage on the Big Dipper slipping down the rails at breakneck speed with no brake-man aboard.

Respectable residents were increasingly troubled by evidence of indecorous behaviour and criminal activity in St. Kilda. The Chief Commissioner of Police, Thomas Blarney, downplayed the extent of problems; nonetheless he stated in October 1931 that there had been a slight increase in the number of offences reported there, as in other districts, but they were mainly of a minor nature and attributable to the abnormal economic conditions which prevailed.²⁸

Vandalism was often attributed to ruffians from other suburbs, but sometimes local lads were charged with offences. Three young hooligans damaged picket fences in Tennyson Street, tore down netting at Bickham's tennis courts in Scott Street, uprooted saplings and broke a plate glass window of the grocery store at the intersection of Scott and Tennyson Streets on 28 December 1931. Earlier in the evening, startled residents in night attire had been disturbed by eight van horses, which had been released from the paddocks of Kellett Brothers' Bakery in High Street and had galloped down Scott Street at nine thirty²⁹. A labourer and motor mechanic, who resided in St. Kilda, were convicted of knocking over weighing machines on the pier and stealing the coin boxes, smashing alabaster ornamental globes and electric lamps on concrete columns in Shakespeare Grove with beer bottles, and breaking cisterns and a pedestal pan in the men's toilets there in December 1931.³⁰

There were complaints about the illicit sale and abuse of alcohol in St. Kilda. Thomas Blarney investigated a claim by Eleanor Glencross, an honorary justice on the St. Kilda Bench in 1927 and 1928, that St. Kilda was "honeycombed with sly grog shops" in 1930. He denied the allegation, claiming that from 1926-29, police had received fifty-two written complaints of sly-grog selling; forty were genuine and twenty people were prosecuted³¹. But complaints continued. Occupants of flats at the corner of the Esplanade and Robe Street complained of "cliques" who parked in Robe Street and made the nights "hideous with their sprees", breaking bottles on the pathway and road, using profane language and creating a public nuisance along the fences³². Mr. Stafford, a Police Magistrate at St. Kilda Court, heard charges in March 1932 against an unemployed motor driver of selling two bottles of beer without a licence in Fitzroy Street. The beer was stored in a sack in a nearby rockery which Mr. Stafford described as an unlicensed hotel, and he fined the offender £30, dismissing the man's plea that: "Work is hard to get. You have to do something"³³.

Such arguments held little water for the many advocates of temperance in St. Kilda, who were vigilant about such abuse. Their strength was shown in 1930 after legislation in 1928 had ordered that a licensing poll be held every eight years in Victoria, and if sixty per cent of Victorians voted "Yes", then liquor licences would be abolished in the State: in the poll of the St. Kilda Licensing District, 10,210 voted "Yes", while 14,326 voted "No". The strength of the temperance movement was even more significant considering that there were some advocates of temperance who voted "No". Mrs. Percy Russell, President of the Australian Temperance Union and the Housewives Association, had spoken to a large audience at the St. Kilda Town Hall prior to the poll, and argued against a "Yes" vote because prohibition in the United States had worsened the sly-grog problem, and weakened women's chances of controlling alcohol abuse.

Cocaine was favoured by a few who could obtain it in St. Kilda. Some thought it a more fashionable drug than alcohol, and had used it in the 1920s; others used it out of necessity rather than pleasure, having first relied on it during the Great War when it was used as a pain-killer, and continued to look for it. Its distribution was sometimes linked with sly-grog shops and brothels. Senior Constable Walters commented in March 1930 that the use of cocaine had grown alarmingly in the suburbs: since his vice squad of cocaine police began operations in 1929, they had seized more than five ounces, arresting

sixteen runners and charging two chemists. Walters claimed that more cocaine was sold in St. Kilda than anywhere else in the State, with most of it coming from the "East", via Sydney. In St. Kilda at the time, it was rumoured that the drug, which was sold in paper twists around the Junction and was known as "Two Bob Joe Blow" or "Snow", was brought in by seamen. Senior Constable Walters knew that exorbitant profits were made by distributors who obtained the drug for about £2 an ounce, and broke it down with boracic acid or phenacitin for distribution in little packages, for an ounce could return £120. Some runners who faced a penalty of £50 or six months imprisonment, carried supplies in packages of brown paper dirtied to the colour of street asphalt, and would drop their parcels at the threat of police approach.³⁴

Prior to his death in 1927, Squizzy Taylor's name had been linked with drug smuggling. Taylor frequented St. Kilda in the 1920s, living in Alma Road, in various flats and at 443 Barkly Street, St. Kilda. The night he was shot, he had fought with Snowy Cutmore in an exclusive grog parlour and brothel in Tennyson Street. He had also met Ida Pender, his accomplice, girl-friend and wife at the Palais de Danse, and for years after his death, she was seen dancing there regularly; in the early 1930s locals called her the "Angel of Death", and her fast companions the "dancing crowd" because they could be seen in different dancing saloons every night.

The presence of prostitutes in St. Kilda was a shock to those respectable residents who associated such sinful women with poorer working-class suburbs; though the matter was so taboo and some local women so protected, they were unaware such pariahs existed. Although most brothels were located north of the Yarra, St. Kilda was a likely place to solicit custom because of the the mobility cars allowed, the depressed economy, St. Kilda's entertainment facilities, and the wealth displayed there. Furthermore the parks were conveniently close to the street for prostitutes who could not afford to rent rooms, and for customers who had cars (which applied as well to couples who were not involved in any commercial transaction). A resident of 93 The Esplanade complained to the Mayor and Town Clerk in March 1932:

Your park is littered with Motor Cars at night and goes right into the Morning of following day and Disgraceful Conduct is the order. Next morning when one goes to exercise His Dog, It repeatedly Picks up Frog Skins You Know What I Mean."

The complainant probably noticed more of the disgraceful objects soon after, because more prostitutes moved southwards after police raids in Little Lonsdale Street in April 1932 and the subsequent enactment of By-law 208 by Melbourne City Council which gave the police further power to suppress and restrain disorderly houses for "immoral purposes" and "nuisances" within its boundaries.

Prostitution in itself was not illegal, an indication of how unmentionable the subject was in polite circles, and the strength of unwritten laws which prevailed about ladylike behaviour. Some prostitutes were sent to convents to mend their errant ways: a sentence of six months imprisonment against two women appearing at the St. Kilda Court of Petty Sessions in April 1930 was suspended provided they "go and remain in the Convent of the Good Shepherd at South Melbourne for a period of six months"³⁷ The circumlocution of the law did have the effect of making prosecutions very difficult to obtain. Women could not be charged with soliciting unless the evidence of the person solicited was gained. Furthermore, the *Police Offences Act* of 1928 made every prostitute who importuned anyone passing in a public place, or within view of any person, liable to a penalty of £5 or imprisonment for not more than a month; however the Supreme Court had held that accosting was not importuning, and it was difficult to prove importuning.

The action initiated by a resident of St. Kilda in 1932 and 1933 illustrated problems associated with prosecution, and the fact that the police normally associated prostitution with South Melbourne rather than St. Kilda, which was much more posh. Gerald Lightfoot of *Gainsborough*, 602 St. Kilda Road complained to Russell Street Police Headquarters in November 1932 about the behaviour on the pathway in front of his flat because it had become a place regularly frequented each night by prostitutes:

The state of affairs is really desperately bad; the women fragrantly and openly accost men. They hail and endeavour to stop passing motor cars occupied by men and they have brought with them all the other objectionable elements associated with their business.

Under these circumstances it is obviously exceedingly objectionable for unescorted women or girls to use the pathway after dark. The same women frequent the place night after night and yesterday evening two of them were actually sitting on the low brick wall in the front garden of these flats accosting men who passed.³⁸

The police referred Lightfoot to the South Melbourne City Council because they believed the women were operating in that locality. However, Lightfoot did live in St. Kilda so the Town Clerk of South

Melbourne forwarded his complaint to Chamberlin who referred the matter to the St. Kilda Police. Subsequently, on 6 January 1933, women were arrested on vagrancy charges with all but one case dismissed because the women could prove they had lawful means of support; the exception was Peggy Toohey, who was described by police as "a notorious prostitute". She was sentenced to three months imprisonment, but on appeal, a five shilling fine was substituted. Police continued to patrol streets between the Junction and High Street and numerous women were warned.³⁹

St. Kilda Council tried to deal with the matter discreetly because they thought it so distasteful. Chamberlin obtained a copy of the City of Melbourne's new By-law 208. It was considered improper to bring the matter before a full Council meeting as Lightfoot requested, but the Legislative Committee sought legal advice as to whether a similar by-law could be made for St. Kilda in relation to soliciting and accosting. They were advised that any by-law would be difficult to enforce because it had to be proved that the defendant was a prostitute who accosted, as it would not be an offence for any woman to accost a man in the street. Hence, such women, who were judged as particularly vicious by some who thought they should have earned money as domestic servants, continued their work.

The future of the jaunty funfair by the sea looked even blacker because it was more difficult to peddle pleasure as the economic slide accelerated. The entertainment industry suffered as the spending power of the public declined and unemployment increased. Many entertainers were in serious trouble. The Musicians Union of Australia asked Council for help in February 1930 because there were so many musicians living in straitened circumstances in St. Kilda. Cr. Morley blamed "talkie canned music" for their plight, but Cr. Renfrey thought that they should have no more consideration than other unemployed, even though "they were not like pick and shovel men"⁴⁰. Although they received no assistance from Council, musicians were assisted by their friends who were employed. Wendy Lee Selover recalled:

During the Depression when Dad had his best musicians, he wanted to do 'Rhapsody in Blue'. The Phillips wrote to George Gershwin who gave them permission and sent photographed copies of the score from America. Dad had extra instruments in and presented it at the Palais Pictures for what my mother believes was the first performance outside America; Raymond Lambert, Mischa Kogan, Reg Bradley and Em Pettifer played in it. A bit later when so many musicians were out of work, a benefit was

held at Earl's Court. The Phillips gave their permission for Dad to perform there and the biggest orchestra he ever conducted did "Rhapsody in Blue" again

Everyone in St. Kilda was keen to go and support the musicians.⁴¹

Those musicians fortunate enough to have a job, did as they were told. Later, Ern Pettifer recalled that even though his music satisfied dancers who executed quarter turns and glided to conventional sweet rhythms, musicians needed to satisfy their own urges at times:

Every now and again...the band would get stuck into something and we'd go mad...Well, that sort of blew our tops and let off a bit of steam, because we felt a little bit hemmed in with our public music...Now all of us want to do this all our lives, but if you want to stay alive you've got to do something else, in order to eat regularly.⁴²

Fewer holiday makers were arriving in St. Kilda, and many apartment houses and boarding houses were forced to close. They had declined in number to two hundred and seventy three with 3,634 beds in 1933, some so run down they were regarded by a few as being fit only for the poorer classes. Appalling standards were exposed in the course of a government-sponsored holiday scheme for poor families from the Mallee, run in conjunction with the Country Women's Association in 1930. The St. Kilda City Council Medical Officer of Health, Dr. William Vance, reported in January 1930 that thirty Mallee women and forty children were accommodated at the rear of a guest house in Beaconsfield Parade. He found children with sore eyes eating food from a filthy floor. There was only one lavatory available, forcing them to adopt practices which Vance thought might have been permissible in the country but were not acceptable in St. Kilda. Another group was located at an unregistered boarding house in Acland Street. There, Sister Norah Lehman, the Health Inspector, found sixteen children and four mothers housed in three "appalling" rooms, with a filthy kitchen, stove and crockery, some beds without mattresses, and pillows and bedclothes crawling with bugs.⁴³ Many amusement operators were in difficulty. William Kelly was unable to pay rent for his merry-go-round. He was charged £100 for the site in 1930, and in June 1931 he wrote to the Foreshore Committee:

Things have gone from bad to worse buisness [sic] has been very very bad this last summer, That I have not taken the rent. I am not asking for a reduction of rent but for an extension of time. I regret to have to ask this request it is the first time in my sixteen years that I have had to ask for time to pay..⁴⁴

He was granted some concessions, but this was of little use. He was permitted to change his "Aunt Sally" side-show on the site to electric "Roll-down Poker" in November 1931 because according to Kelly: "Aunt Sally" has played itself out since new games have come in and does not now play wages", however his expenditure was £511-0-0 and receipts only £322-17-0 in 1932. Matters became worse too, because the Foreshore Committee determined that site boundaries should be fixed in October 1931, and the erection of a fence between Kelly's and the Swirl prevented him from bringing in waggons to remove the merry-go-round in winter and earn money elsewhere. The Foreshore Committee was soon surprised to learn in November 1933 that Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Thomson of Haverbrack Avenue, Malvern had taken over the business called William Kelly Proprietary Limited in 1929, that Kelly had been in their debt since 1924, he was unable to pay their principal or interest, he owed them £4,000, and they intended to safeguard their asset. According to Thomson: "Amusements have probably been harder hit by the depression than anything else and people who have monetary interests in shows have been faced with heavy losses".⁴⁵

Other amusements changed hands. William Foster bought the Ferris Wheel and lease in October 1931 from G. A. G. Moore who told the Foreshore Committee that he had had a "very bad spin" since 1927. Foster secured the wheel for £600 under the terms of £40 deposit and £560 within three years. He was permitted to install electric games in January 1932, and the Foreshore Committee lowered his rental by £25 after he told them he had reduced the cost of his ride to threepence. The St. Kilda Amusement Company, which operated the Swirl, went into voluntary liquidation in 1932 and Walter O. J. Phillips of 40 Vale Street, St. Kilda, who was not related to the Phillips Brothers from Seattle, purchased its assets in June 1932. To the strains of the "Blue Danube", he ran electric cars which he had designed to swirl a full circle. The Foreshore Committee agreed these were dissimilar to the Dodgems at Luna Park which only deviated about forty-five degrees, and therefore did not contravene its policy that one operator should not poach or duplicate another's game. Phillips was one of the few operators to remain open in winter when he stored his cars and used the Swirl for roller skating. He still claimed his venture was unprofitable because the beach season was limited to eight weeks and was "subject to the vagarious (*sic*) weather of which Melbourne is notoriously noted".⁴⁶

Even Luna Park was in financial difficulties. Lieutenant-General

Sir John Monash, the Chairman of Directors, had noted in his *Annual Report* of 1929 that :

The industrial world during practically the whole of the Season under review was in a state of unrest, and the consequent effect was to lower the spending power of the public, particularly upon a project of this nature.⁴⁷

Profits, which were £13,328-9-7 in 1926, had fallen to £7557-8-0 in 1930, and in 1930-31 the company reported an unprecedented loss of £152-9-2; in August 1932 their annual contribution to the Foreshore Committee was reduced by £250 to £1,000. The situation called for drastic remedies, so a month later the Company went into voluntary liquidation, to be reconstructed as Luna Park Limited.

Another victim of changing fortune was Captain Albert Jacka, V.C., who was a St. Kilda councillor. Albert Jacka was born at Layard near Winchelsea on 10 January 1893, and had enlisted as a Private in the 14th Battalion on 18 September 1914. This Battalion, which had been presented with colours by enthusiastic citizens of St. Kilda at the Esplanade on 13 December 1914, consisted of men mainly from St. Kilda, Prahran and Bendigo. Jacka saw his last four mates killed or wounded at Courtney's Post, Gallipoli, on 19 May 1915 when the Battalion was attacked by Turkish troops who had captured some twelve metres of the Australian line. When he heard Turks around the bay of the trench, he killed five by rifle fire and the remaining two with his bayonet. He was awarded the Victoria Cross for this action, the first to be awarded to an Australian in the war.

He then applied for entry to officer training in Egypt after leaving Gallipoli but was refused at first because he lacked a University education. After persisting he was admitted, ultimately to graduate top of the course. He then left Egypt with the 14th for France, where in the judgement of Australian war historian, C. E. W. Bean, his actions at Pozieres on 17 August 1916 and at Bullecourt should have earned him another two Victoria Crosses rather than the Military Cross and Bar which he was awarded". He received no more decorations by the time he was invalided after being gassed at Villers Bretonneux in May 1918; his candid demeanour did not endear him to some of his superior officers who found him unwilling to be subservient to any authority he considered unworthy of his respect. Such qualities increased his stature in the eyes of his subordinates who were not noted for praising officers. Adulation, however, made Jacka uncomfortable. He was embarrassed by his welcome when he arrived in Melbourne where he was greeted by the Governor-General

and a large crowd. A convoy of eighty-five cars with Jacka at its head transported him to the Melbourne Town Hall where he was greeted by members of his Battalion. He avoided similar scenes in Sydney.

His V.C. brought him into contact with John Wren, who had promised £500 and a gold watch to the first Australian to win the award. John Wren, the model for John West in Frank Hardy's novel *Power without Glory*, had built up business empire in Melbourne which included racehorses, boxing stadiums, pictures theatres, newspapers and hotels based on the profits made at his tote shop in Collingwood in the 1890s. After demobilisation on 10 January 1920, Jacka and two other members of the 14th Battalion, established the firm Jacka, Edmunds and Company which imported and exported electrical goods in which John Wren, his brother Arthur Wren and the boxing promoter, Dick Lean had a financial interest. At first, all went well, and Jacka balanced his business interests with entry into local politics, becoming a St. Kilda Councillor. Then, everything fell apart. Wren withdrew his support in 1929, after (it was rumoured) Jacka refused to lend his name to some of Wren's other enterprises. Jacka reportedly told a friend:

I am closing down. I am being closed down. Wren, thinking that he bought me, wants me to take a course of action politically, but I refused to do so. He said, "Alright if you don't I'll close you down".

I prefer to be closed down."

In the same year, the Scullin government increased tariffs on imported goods and Jacka's firm went into liquidation. This left him in a poor financial position at the very time he was about to become Mayor. He obtained some work with the Anglo-Dominion Soap Company but the extent of that work was limited and spasmodic. His prayers would have been heartfelt when, prior to his Mayoral term, he presented the King's Regimental Colours of the 14th Battalion to the Municipality at the Anzac service on 27 April 1930. Reverend J. J. McCall prayed forgiveness for all worship of Mammon, and asked God to show them "the folly of selfishness; the folly of warfare between man and man, and class and class, and party and party".⁵⁰

Many other returned soldiers, families, and single unemployed men and women in St. Kilda were in strife. Frederick Chamberlin dispensed limited Repatriation Relief Funds to returned soldiers judged to be deserving by Sister Norah Lehman, the person on whom he relied to be his unofficial welfare worker during the Depression. The wife of a returned soldier living in Gourlay Street wrote to him:

[My husband]...has had a severe mental attack due to over worry and undernourished having only done 10 months work in 3 years. He is a returned soldier receiving only 6/— a week pension and the only other help 13/— Susterance. He is expecting to be discharged from hospital any day and...he has no clothing or proper bed linen...I feel that coming home broken in health that he will not be able to stand up to present position. We have been put out of two houses and every possible chance of another if something dont turn up. The situation has got us broken down. My father has been employed by the St. Kilda City council for over 20 years, he has helped us all he can but his own wages are very small...⁵¹

Given such a bleak account, it is not surprising that the Depression made some soldiers question the meaning of their service:

...what with my sick general looking appearance am quite unable to obtain employment and even I am afraid if I got work I would not be able to do it...One often wonders why one was spared to return from the War to go through all this suffering and deprivations.⁵²

Qualities of determination and independence which had been lauded in war persisted in the lives of old diggers during Depression; now, such qualities made them reluctant to seek aid but they were not necessarily enough to ensure their survival. The proprietor of *Huntly* in Herbert Street, wrote in June 1931 to the Town Clerk on behalf of one boarder, an invalided soldier, Mr. Whiting, who had "had a very bad spin". Sister Lehman found him bedridden and in constant pain, spending all of his invalid pension of 17/6 on medicine, while his landlady had pawned jewellery and clothing to buy wood to keep him warm. Chamberlin sent £2 for immediate relief. The same sum was again supplied in October when Whiting suffered from influenza and Lehman found him in "pitiable circumstances". Whiting pencilled a note to Chamberlin from Chaucer Street, apologetic that his hand was too shaky to use ink:

The Doctors say I will never walk again but they often make mistakes. I am very optimistic, and feel sure I will. I am getting stronger every day. Trust you are enjoying better health yourself.

I am sorry to worry you but I am in trouble again, my diet is a considerable expense and I am in need of summer clothing; and my pension very small as you know. Can you help me once again? I hat (sic) asking but I am forced to do so. Mrs. Wolff wishes to be remembered to you. She is also having a bad time her rooms being vacant.

Sister Lehman judged him to be a chronic invalid: "...it is impossible to get him into an Institution and it is really hard for him to exist. He is constantly in pain and requires extra care". The final letter was received by Chamberlin on 19 February 1932. Whiting's optimism had vanished as he was penniless and bedridden by a "severe gas

attack caused by the hot spell". Sister Lehman interviewed him and found:

[the landlady]...who is looking after him is really reduced to penury providing for him and I am sure is getting insufficient food. She spends her income providing medicine and necessities for him. I know the only remedy is an Institution for him but he cannot be compelled to go.

Chamberlin sent £1 but filed no further correspondence from the old soldier°. Unlike his comrades killed in war, Whiting was remembered by few at the time of the Depression which finished him off.

The hardship of the Depression, meant, amongst other things, that families could not pay their rates. Their letters to the Town Clerk requesting extra time to meet their basic obligations sometimes revealed their shame and the extent of the domestic upheaval they were experiencing. Some men conveyed their sense of degradation. A family man in Mason Street, Elwood, begged Council to hold off on rates until he found employment, because: "I have been compelled after a long fight to take the Sustainance"°. Often, families were forced to separate. Male members of a household in Spray Street who could not find employment in the building trade in Melbourne, took up a timber milling venture, "in not altogether comfortable conditions being in the forest", near Molesworth. Their house and contents

were mortgaged and the property was on the market but no buyers or lessees were forthcoming. They informed Council that they had no 'money to pay their rates:

It is impossible to pay anything without money and this won't be available till all orders are fulfilled and payments accordingly. It would be a loss to take proceedings for recovery and the best that can be done is when there is money so payments will be forwarded.⁵⁵

Many begged Council to employ them so they could pay that way. Others believed they were not being treated fairly:

The money I earn teaching has only been sufficient to keep house with for husband self and two children...I also wish to protest against the high rates I pay. I have, to my mind, only the same class of house as my neighbours on each side and in one case I believe my rates are £2 more. It is a struggle to keep the house at any time and as the Credit Foncier has reduced the quarterly instalments to enable me to do so I hope that you will be able to make what I consider a fairer adjustment.⁵⁶

Many of the letters the Town Clerk received were written by women, who were supporting the household. A mother of four in Carlisle Street worked at Gordon and Gotch in the city and supported her invalid husband. She found that the imposition of several weeks off at intervals without pay, strained "one's housekeeping purse to

the utmost⁵⁷. In order to keep a son, daughter, and a husband who had earned only £8 in two years, a resident of Alexandra Street, East St. Kilda, worked as a charwoman earning 4/6 on Mondays in Caulfield; 5/— on Tuesdays at Lempriere Avenue, St. Kilda East; 4/—on Wednesdays at Empress Road in East St. Kilda; 5/— on Thursdays at Lempriere Avenue, and 8/— on Fridays at Caulfield⁵⁸. Nurses found their patients had difficulty in paying for private care. A nurse living in Robe Street wrote that it was "very hard to get paid for the work I do, night and day, some of my cases I even have to take food to"; to tide her unemployed husband and family over, she pawned their furniture at the Mont de Piete.⁵⁹

Some children, seeing how their parents were suffering, fended for themselves. Des Bicknell, who was born in 1915 and lived in Robe Street during the Depression, recalled that youngsters in St. Kilda in the late 1920s and early 1930s were influenced by the exploits of street gangs:

Some children who went barefooted in the street were like street arabs. There was no money. Children would take billy-carts made of old boxes and pram wheels along the beach at the crack of dawn and collect the bottles left there by drinking parties. They would pinch poodles belonging to rich women and wait for advertisements to appear, or stick palm fronds in the weighing machines along the pier to try and get the coins out. Some would set fire to mail-boxes. They knew of Snowy Lister, the street fighter who was all muscle, and members of his gang, all over twenty-one, who patrolled the narrow streets like Marlborough Street and Rosamund Street and were called the "Bosses of Balaclava". Stories went around about them lifting fur coats from the Town Hall after they ransacked the cloakroom, and putting a local policeman in the horse trough in Carlisle Street.⁶⁰

Many people depended on sustenance payments and handouts. The State Relief Committee advised and coordinated the work of local relief organisations and the Town Clerk enlisted the support of members of the St. Kilda Ladies Benevolent Society to fill empty sugar bags left by the unemployed at the Town Hall on Fridays for collection on Saturday with tea, sugar, potatoes, onions, rice, plums and apples or fruit in season.

Women were in particular distress. The State Relief Committee recommended that male and female who collected such provisions should be separated:

..as many instances have come to hand where women and girls who are obliged to stand in long queues with men, have been subjected to rather embarrassing comments, and...because of this undesirable feature, many

women and girls who are in need of assistance are not coming forward because of the remarks passed by some of the men.⁶¹

Such harassment was sometimes due to resentment. Although paid a little more than half the male wage, women in work were resented by unemployed men who saw there was no work for themselves. While this made some men bitter, it made others confused or stoic. Des Bicknell recalled:

Young male factory workers, who were put off work between November

and February, or those who had lost employment in heavy manufacturing or building industries would congregate near the Palais de Danse. They watched people who could afford to go in, and were prevented from attending patrons' cars for a tip unless they were licensed to do so by the Palais management. The Esplanade was likened to the "Boulevard of Broken Dreams" of which Gladys Moncrieff sang; there, those who could afford a ride at the Swirl or on the Big Dipper were often women who still had work in offices, domestic service and the retail trade.⁶²

Nonetheless, the government did not acknowledge the absolute right of women to have paid employment, and like most municipalities, St. Kilda did not provide relief work for unemployed women who lived there. Many were desperate for work: nearly three hundred women from St. Kilda and other suburbs responded to an advertisement for a factory worker at 84 High Street, St. Kilda in October 1931⁶³. To alleviate the plight of such people, the Central Council of Victorian Ladies' Benevolent Societies launched Girl's Week in September 1930. Jessie Henderson, the President, and Mary Hewison of St. Kilda, who was a Vice-President of the Central Council, invited members of the St. Kilda Ladies Benevolent Society to seek out unemployed girls in economic distress who were either homeless or living with relatives, find them employment, administer relief, or establish them in "workrooms". The Mayoress was asked to cooperate "as by reason of her office", she was "in touch with all the social activities of her district and is in a position to give invaluable aid to the cause of the unemployed girl". The State Government offered some support, allocating a maximum of 12/6 per week for shelter and sustenance to a single, homeless girl in September 1930; nonetheless the Assistant Chief Secretary added the proviso that:

..the larger proportion of this amount should not be utilised for rent..in these times of acute distress and the necessity for sacrifice by all sections of the community, I am of opinion that it is not equitable to pay more than 5/— per week for the rent of a room engaged by a single girl who is homeless."

The Council Health Inspector, Sister Lehman, submitted a list of

thirteen names to Chamberlin in September 1930 with the observations that some of the girls had no clothes to wear to assist them to seek a position, that they were willing to take any work offered to them, and the majority were "quite a fine type of girl". By 11 November 1930, twenty-seven more names had been added to the list. Lily Vale, the Secretary of the St. Kilda Ladies' Benevolent Society, found immediate positions for a few fortunate applicants including forty-one year old Violet Neale, who had been unemployed for five weeks and sought domestic work or a job as a machinist. However officials did not record the fate of others like Lillian Coade,

who was described by Sister Lehman as being "in desperate need of help — is penniless", who did not know the whereabouts of her father, and who sought work as a cashier, domestic, or in sweet sales."

The St. Kilda Ladies' Benevolent Society also supported Muriel Heagney's work in organising an Unemployed Girls' Relief Movement. Heagney was a socialist who advocated equal pay for women, and although members of the St. Kilda Ladies Benevolent Society did not share her views regarding the sexual division of labour, they did know of the economic position of the unemployed women they visited. The Movement established twenty-one centres in Melbourne where unemployed women could work for a small amount of money. For some St. Kilda families the money was crucial but still not enough. A resident of Elm Grove could find no permanent work between 1930 and 1932, and he wrote to the Town Clerk:

I am only receiving 8/6 sustenance money for wife and daughter. She is also out of a job but is receiving 7/6 per week at the girl's relief centre Prahran. My wife is getting 17/6 per week old age pension which make an income of 25/— per week coming into my house. After paying rent and gas bill there is nothing left and 3 of us are trying to exist on 8/6. I have contracted a few small debts which I cannot pay and being pressed for which I hold bills.⁶⁷

As one response to this financial stress, the YMCA Hostel in Alma Road, in conjunction with the Relief Movement, trained girls for domestic service. The Association's employment department found permanent positions for four hundred and ninety girls from October 1930 to March 1931, but by July its work was curtailed due to lack of funds even though the demand for domestic servants remained. In Parliament, Burnett Gray, the MLA for St. Kilda and a St. Kilda City Councillor, congratulated Miss Heagney on her work as: "The girls run great moral dangers in having nothing to do".⁶⁸

III. LOW

As the crisis worsened, many people expected governments to steer them safely through, and hoped that fairness and decency would prevail. However, events lurched out of control and lives were lost, broken or scarred by hardship, resentment, fear and a sense of betrayal as the wealthy looked after themselves. .

As Mayor, Jacka tried to fight as decisively as he had done in the trenches by taking action to combat the growing chaos around him. He endorsed the St. Kilda Unemployment Organisation, organised fundraising activities and attempting to protect residents from eviction.

The St. Kilda Unemployment Organisation was affiliated with the Central Employed Committee at the Trades Hall, and had been formed by unemployed people connected with an Odd Jobs Bureau at 120 Carlisle Street, where a register was kept of those willing to perform odd jobs of any type. The scheme, however, had not proved successful. Cr. George Robinson, the previous Mayor, argued this was because: "the basic wage was demanded and the citizens not unreasonably expected expert tradesmen"⁶⁹. With the help of Cr. Burnett Gray, the self-styled Australian Liberal who had shocked conservatives in ousting Sir Frederick Eggleston from the State seat of St. Kilda in 1927, Jacka tried to encourage such initiative in the unemployed. He secured better premises for the St. Kilda Unemployment Organisation in the vacated Court House at 244 High Street where a telephone was extended from the Town Hall. The Mayoral car was lent to the Organisation by Jacka to collect food regularly donated by stall holders at the St. Kilda Market, the Colonial Meat Company and other traders. During his term, £758-16-8 was allocated to the Organisation, but it had to be thinly spread: for firewood, cartage and distribution; cartage following eviction; an honorarium to the Secretary; supervision of relief work at Albert Park; a wage to Miss Jene, the "sustenance typiste"; and a special Christmas grant for provisions.

A special project was finance for gold prospecting parties, a project strongly supported by Cr. Gray whose experience on the Bullfinch goldfields, and at mines at Ararat in 1911, made him believe that gold prospecting could be a solution for the unemployed". The St. Kilda prospecting parties were "more than holding their own" in July 1931, and Cr. Robert Morley, a real estate agent, noted that the men were obtaining plenty of exercise, and feeling the benefit of work.⁷¹

Mayoral relief funds were augmented by dances, film nights, musical evenings, community singing on the pier, and the abandonment of the usual smoke night for Council employees. A Council sub-committee was formed in May 1931 to discuss ways to alleviate distress and founded a boot repairing depot for soling, heeling and patching boots. Jacka, who knew that sometimes the unemployed trudged many miles barefooted or in tattered sandshoes lined with cardboard searching for work, described boots as "just as necessary to the unemployed as food"⁷². The sub-committee also conducted an "SOS Appeal" in July 1931 under Jacka's direction. Volunteers, including Councillors George Cummings, Robert Taylor and Robert Morley, the Boy Scouts, thirty of the unemployed, and charity workers, collected hundreds of pairs of boots, men's suits, women's dresses and children's clothing, "90% useful and serviceable", which were distributed to the poor from the Town Hall.⁷³

Jacka also realised the importance of secure housing at a time when his own housing arrangements were disrupted. Although he was listed in St. Kilda Rate Books as the owner of 23 Murchison Street, St. Kilda, he moved to the corner of Gordon Avenue and Broadway, Elwood before December 1929, leaving Murchison Street to be occupied by a "commercial traveller", Jad Louis Blashki. Blashki remained there until 27 November 1930, when Jacka, his wife Vera, and adopted daughter Betty returned". On behalf of tenants in the Municipality, he arranged a meeting in August 1931 to discuss the problem of eviction with Councillors Unsworth, Robinson and Gray, Mr. Wallace the MLA for Albert Park (which encompassed part of West St. Kilda), four representatives of the unemployed, and a committee of local estate agents. It was agreed that local estate agents would be requested to "stay their hand for the period of one month in any case of eviction"⁷⁵ while the Landlord and Tenant (Rent Reduction) Bill was debated in Parliament.

Jacka expected governments to show the flexibility and leadership he had sought in his commanding officers during the war but he had been disappointed then, and would be again. The Labor Prime Minister, James Scullin, was hampered by deepening divisions within his party; and the Labor Premier, Edmond Hogan depended on Country Progressive Party support to remain in power. The Victorian Legislative Council was dominated by conservatives who looked to the past for solutions and found economic wisdom in those who had cut expenditure, increased taxes and attempted to balance budgets in the 1890s Depression. They approved of Hogan's endorse-

ment of the proposals of Sir Otto Niemeyer of the Bank of England, in the Melbourne Agreement struck by the Premiers on 30 August 1930, that overseas debts to British bondholders dating from the 1920s should be repaid by balancing budgets and by reducing local expenditure and wages. Hogan compromised with the United Country Party at the end of 1930 to ensure the passage of amended legislation which reduced Public Service salaries and raised unemployment relief taxes to fund sustenance works through the Council. He was in a weak position; even if he had endorsed the mildly inflationary approach to create credit which E.G. Theodore, the Federal Treasurer, espoused, he lacked the numbers in the Legislative Council to force measures through. His Opposition was content to leave him as Premier, guarding Victoria from what they saw as the dangerous ideas of J.T. Lang, the Labor leader in New South Wales, who proposed the suspension of interest payments to British creditors.

To St. Kilda City Council's displeasure, the State Government made Municipalities largely responsible for the administration of relief schemes. Council was not elected by the poor who needed help most, but by property owners, and was reluctant to support work schemes because the Government would not subsidise those it favoured, such as the draining of Elster Creek, the covering of Elwood Canal, and the reclamation of forty-five acres of shallow water along Marine Parade. Instead, the Council financed minor unemployment relief works and sustenance payments from government grants provided on a pound for pound basis from revenue raised by the *Stamps (Unemployment Relief) Act* of May 1930, which imposed stamp duty on incomes of £1 to £6 per week and a sliding scale of taxation on other incomes. The sum of £1201-17-7, for instance, was spent employing six hundred and seventy married men for two days each, and three hundred and thirty five single men for one day each, on the Point Ormond Reserve and the Foreshore for four months work from 15 July 1930 to 17 October 1930. The City Surveyor, Richard Kelly, allocated the work by ballot because there was not enough to go around for the hundreds of applicants with certificates stating that they were unemployed.⁷⁶

Council also had to answer to increasingly disgruntled business interests, who believed that the Labor governments were not acting in their interest, and were dismayed by a decline in their living standards as the average weekly wage in Australia fell from over £5

in 1929 to a little over £4 in 1933. Cr. Burnett Gray MLA appealed to the government to do something on their behalf because almost everything had been done for the "labouring section of the community", and said in the Legislative Assembly:

The people are not as wealthy as they used to be. There are a lot of business men who are finding the times pretty difficult. I know that a large number of people in my electorate would, if they were pressed by their creditors, be insolvent tomorrow. It is safe to say that business people are experiencing just as much difficulty as are the working people of this community.⁷⁸

Business proprietors in St. Kilda, including hoteliers, small goods dealers, tobacconists, butchers, fruiterers, dry-cleaners, carpenters, house-painters, glaziers, garage proprietors and hat renovators, applied for extra time to pay their rates. Shop-keepers' premises became more dilapidated and they feared that more customers would shop at the Emporiums in Melbourne's Central Business District. Businesses such as the Grove Cafe in Acland Street and the Cairo Cafe on the Esplanade, which were dependent on seasonal trade, found that rates "came at the very worst time of the year"⁷⁹. Dr. A.V. Kosterlitz, who was the proprietor of the Pavilion Tea Rooms on the Lower Esplanade, wrote:

...the unfortunate weather conditions of the last two years in connection with the depression made it impossible for me. I can prove that the last two years brought me a loss of between 350-400 pounds, paid in rent and wages, whilst I did not make my own living at the pavilion (I managed my living by teaching foreign languages).⁸⁰

The proprietors of rental accommodation complained bitterly to Council about their plight, and many asked for further time to pay their rates. Those who had taken long leases on blocks of flats for sub-letting in booming conditions during the 1920s, were unable to meet loan repayments. One landlord wrote:

My experience as a landlord this year has been that I have received in rents over fifty pounds (£50) less than I have paid in interest rate: and there is nearly an additional £50 of rates still owing. These I can pay only from savings in salary (which has just been reduced over 20%) or as rents come in.⁸¹

Collins Street solicitors wrote on behalf of their client of 67 Marine Parade who was unable to pay her rates of £34-3-0:

Unfortunately her flats are heavily mortgaged, she has had only one flat let and has not been receiving sufficient to pay a minimum of living expenses. The mortgagees have allowed her interest to stand over and it is in arrears for three quarters. She has now had a second flat let and

hopes to be able within three months to let the other flats...She has no other means of livelihood than the flats and is having a very bad time indeed, like practically every other flat owner in Melbourne at the present time.⁸²

A number of owners removed rents altogether in order to retain tenants. The female owner of a property in Dalgety Street, and of *Voltaire Racine Residential Mansions* at 81 Fitzroy Street, wrote in August 1931:

I have had no income at all from the property at Dalgety Str for the past 18 months and have had to dispose of the furniture for another account which was pressing, and altho I have a couple of tenants (*sic*) in at present I cannot get any money from them (I leave them there so that there will be some one in the place) I hope to be able to pay any arrears as soon as things brighten up. I have only 8 guests here at present and it does not pay the rent... I was very unfortunate in a speculation and have lost a lot of money which have used up any surplus money.⁸³

Some property owners and real estate agents believed the Government was unsympathetic even though the *Financial Emergency Act* of 1931 provided for reduction of interest on mortgages. The *Landlord and Tenant Act* which came into force late in 1931 provided that rent could be reduced to 15/6 for every pound for leases entered into before 1 January 1931. Estate Agents, who knew of many cases where tenants left without paying rent arrears, argued on landlords' behalf. Leonard Bridgford, whose offices were opposite the Town Hall at the corner of High and Carlisle Streets, wrote to R. Ashton, the Rate Collector:

I don't know how other Agents have fared this year but I have found it most difficult to successfully handle both the landlord and the tenant in a way that suits both sides. I see no reason for a Moratorium judging by the way most of my Clients have treated the other fellow; and myself too.⁸⁴

The proprietor of 159 Fitzroy Street could not pay his rates on time. His words revealed that he viewed himself as the victim of a conspiracy abetted by the State Labor government:

Regret very much to tell you that account of rates cannot be paid this year, it is the first time of failure. If it were just a few pounds one would not demur and make an especial effort to pay having an aversion to being in debt. But that to me, big sum, is more than I can face. Place to let for months and months, and still not satisfactory. My friends are in a bad plight from business so bad, cannot help me. Folks in our position are the worst off. We cannot ask for relief or help with a little property no matter how much burdened with debts. Ones troubles are more than can be borne and now this awful Moratorium Bill on the table. Rogues are now in readiness to do folks out of their property altogether and are playing up fearfully in anticipation of that drastic measure.⁸⁵

Such residents, whose status rested on the existing structure, became frightened that their struts of capital and property were being threatened by dangerous radicals. To prevent the collapse of their position, they elected conservative politicians to ride out the catastrophe. They had assets to protect and were particularly fearful of any social slide towards communism which might strip their property away.

Some decided that a strong stand for traditional British values would put Australia back on the right course. In April 1931 one hundred and fifty four of the disaffected asked the Mayor, Councillor Jacka, to convene a meeting of the All For Australia League which had been founded in Sydney in early 1931, then amalgamated with the Citizen's League of Melbourne in March. Supporters of the League included leading Melbourne business and professional men such as G.J. Coles; E. Lee Neil the Managing Director of the Myer Emporium; Staniforth Ricketson, the Senior Partner in J.B. Were and Son; and Ernest Turnbull, a former President of the Returned Soldiers League, and founder of cinemas devoted to the screening of British films. At the meeting at St. Kilda Town Hall, the audience was told what the League's philosophy was: "Australians have got to stick. We can win through", "We must build for Australia and the Empire"; and speakers developed themes raised in the League's Manifesto. They raised questions about national integrity which would be undermined by any failure to pay debts, and attacked Labor policies and the action of the dangerous rebel J. T. Lang who would renege on Australia's obligations to the Motherland:

While the great mass of the people are true to the ancient British ideal of fidelity to a bond, there is a small but vociferous element that constantly preaches the pernicious doctrine that a little dishonesty is no ... matter.⁸⁶

Such rhetoric fuelled some listeners' fears that the community was being undermined from within by traitorous communists who held ideas which threatened their British heritage. The meeting elected a committee of fifteen men to communicate with Major Sexton, the Melbourne organiser of the League; it included Cr. George Cummings, Cr. Robert Tolson Taylor, proprietor of the Junction Grocery Store, and Cr. Herbert Moroney, a business man who believed that sustenance was an unfair burden on taxpayers. The committee also supported the establishment of the United Australia Party by the National Party and a group of disaffected Labor members, including J. A. Lyons.

Social divisions were widening by the time Jacka's Mayoral term

ended in September 1931, when the unemployed presented him and Vera with a home-made blackwood boomerang mounted on silver. Although he had been effective as a conciliatory Mayor, some of the poor were becoming angrier and more outspoken about their situation. His successor, Cr. Herbert Moroney, decided that it was time to take a firmer stand against those who were forgetting their place. Within a few weeks, some members of the St. Kilda Unemployment Organisation alleged that he took much less interest in their plight than Cr. Jacka had done⁸⁷. All Councillors agreed that the complainants were insolent. Even Jacka condemned the "unseemly conduct" of members of the Organisation, and reminded them that the "Council was sympathetic and out to do the decent thing by them" ⁸⁸

Indeed, Jacka was increasingly at odds with some of the unemployed because he championed the idea of work for sustenance. He claimed "intimate association with problems of unemployment" and argued for the right of the unemployed to work for money and not simply receive hand-outs so they could lead decent lives: "pay rent, purchase food and otherwise provide for their families". He argued that job creation schemes would increase "demand for manufactured goods which would stimulate industry and further relieve the position". He introduced a motion which all Councillors endorsed on 7 September 1931:

That in the light of last year's experience, and in the interests of the morale of the community as a whole, also in recognition of the fact that it would be unfair to continuously rely on the generous help by the citizens that has been accorded in the past, this Council is definitely of opinion that the time has arrived for the Government to immediately provide relief works for the unemployed in lieu of sustenance.. ⁸⁹

While many members of the St. Kilda Unemployment Organisation shared Jacka's view because they craved the dignity, the order, the self-esteem and the identity that work gave to their lives and were humiliated by the idea of handouts, a more radical minority of the unemployed believed they were victims of an inequitable economic system which depended on exploitation. They spurned the idea that they should be grateful for that which a fair economic system would have guaranteed in the first place, and believed that the work for sustenance philosophy was an extension of their economic subjugation.

The rift between Council and the Unemployment Organisation worsened after an angry clash between A. J. Harris, of Scott Street, and the Mayor, which occurred on 2 October 1931 after Harris accused the St. Kilda Ladies Benevolent Society of being neglectful

and Cr. Moroney defended the right of property owners to take rent. The Town Clerk directed the Secretary of the Unemployment Organisation to lodge the complaint in writing, and he submitted on 3 October:

1. Mr. A. J. Harris of Scott St. reported having four sick children and wife sick. On Monday the 28th inst. he appealed to the Sec. of the Ladies Benevolent Society for aid. He was informed that one of the members of the L.B. S. would call at his home as soon as possible but nothing has been done.

2. J. Gibson of Chusan St. reports having a sick child, and has failed to obtain any aid from the L. B. S., states that a lady called at his home and advised the mother to damp some bread, place same in oven then put milk on the bread. It was pointed out that they had no milk, and were advised to take same on sustenance.

The Town Clerk consulted Lily Vale and dismissed the complaints after she advised him on 8 October that Gibson's complaint was a misunderstanding, and that:

One of our workers called on Mrs. Harris and reported case and our society allowed 1 quart of milk pr day and one bottle of emulsion, since doing this we find that Mrs. Harris is employed at the Rev Buntine's Church at 7/6 per week, and have also been greatly assisted by the Church funds over and above his sustenance of 17/6 weekly and wood.⁹⁰

The Town Clerk's response seemed high-handed to some unemployed who were tired of expectations of gratitude from such authorities. Over one hundred and fifty of them met at the Old Courthouse on the same day. Harris told them that the unemployed of St. Kilda should demonstrate as the unemployed of Glasgow had done, and that the Council was treating them unfairly. The Mayor was subsequently expelled from the Organisation.

Such behaviour made some wealthy residents snort as they read the papers next morning while their servants served their breakfast, and noted the confounded cheek of Harris who had stated:

The Mayor has asked us to act constitutionally but his conduct has been enough to encourage us to act unconstitutionally. We have done a lot of barking — it is time we did a little biting.

Later on, they grunted with approval at the Mayor's response. Cr. Moroney announced that Council would not support the St. Kilda Unemployment Organisation any more unless it was convinced that the resolution to expel him was not carried "by the responsible section of the St. Kilda unemployed":

We are determined that law and order shall be preserved and no Soviet methods introduced in St. Kilda. It is true that I told the representatives

of the unemployed at the conference with the council that I considered property owners were entitled to their rent.

The property owners are the thrifty section of the community that provided for a hard time like this.

I consider it the duty of the State Government to find work for the unemployed instead of free sustenance. The general opinion is that the granting of sustenance without work is causing discontent and fostering a spirit of idleness.

I was elected mayor by a unanimous vote of the council, and I intend to uphold the dignity of the council and the prestige of St. Kilda.⁹¹

Such an uncompromising response made some unemployed think they had gone too far, and some members of the Unemployment Organisation worried about the consequences of Moroney's expulsion. Its Executive assured Council that the action was not representative of the one thousand five hundred registered unemployed of St. Kilda. They argued that before the Depression, hundreds of those subsequently unemployed had been "part of the thrifty community and owned their own houses"; and no one "with humane feelings" would say they should be put on the street for failing to meet their rent obligations. They emphasised that the rank and file appreciated the sympathy shown by the Councillors of St. Kilda and called for tolerance from the Mayor because this would help keep any "red element" in check, and would aid unemployed families whose circumstances were cruel⁹². They signed a declaration prepared by Council that they would not join any other organisation for the unemployed. In return, Council agreed to make a grant for a weekly hand out of foodstuffs and approach gas and electricity suppliers on behalf of the unemployed. Approval was given for regular Euchre and Dance Nights. However, use of the Town Hall for a protest meeting against work for sustenance was not allowed. Councillors recognised the principle of divide and rule and retained the services of James Pimm to quell discontent and maintain civic order. Pimm, who received an honorarium of £153 from Council, described his tireless efforts:

My time is fully occupied for at least ten hours of the day, admittedly most in the interests of the Unemployed Organisation. I am handling all evictions, distrains and bailiff cases —my personal attention is necessary in dealing with cut-off notices from the Gas and Electric-light companies. I am instrumental in keeping the unemployed of this suburb from acting on un-constitutional lines, thereby saving the municipal authorities endless time and worry, and upholding the prestige of the St. Kilda Council and citizens. I am continually interviewing people who have debt cases against the unemployed, and have never yet failed to effect a satisfactory compromise.

I continually act as a buffer between the authorities and the unemployed; and in the last resort am the one who settles all disputes between the Sustenance Department, the Unemployed and the local tradesmen. I am in sole charge of all hand-outs, social functions, dances, etc., which we run to augment our funds.

There is hardly a night that I do not have to go out on an eviction or case of distress in this locality.⁹³

Conservative interests looked for other signs of weakness within St. Kilda and decided it was time to turn Cr. Burnett Gray MLA out of the seat he had usurped. They believed a conservative well bred man like T. W. White, the Federal member for Balaclava, was far more suitable for a Municipality as eminent as St. Kilda.

They also opposed Gray's views about unemployment relief, thinking him particularly unwise to argue in parliament that sustenance paid without work being required in return was insurance against revolution. Gray had said:

If the Government had not disbursed money in relief work and sustenance during the last twelve months serious riots would have occurred in Victoria and particularly in Melbourne. I have been in close touch with the unemployed, and know their feelings; there are a large number in my electorate.⁹⁴

Such views seemed far too soft to members of the St. Kilda Branch of the Australian Women's National League, the All For Australia League and the United Australia Organisation. They agreed with Robert Menzies MLA, who claimed that Gray masqueraded as a liberal and consistently voted for socialism, even though Gray replied that he was a true liberal who supported measures rather than parties, that he had fought for the Empire instead of talking about it, and that he did not spend time at afternoon tea parties munching cream puffs like his opponents. Fifty representatives of the Australian Women's National League and fifty representatives of the United Australia Organisation chose candidates for the state elections in November 1931. Mrs. M. C. Atchinson, the President of the St. Kilda Branch, hoped St. Kilda would not return a man who "sat on the fence"; while the League President, Mrs. Claude Couchman, said there were men in parliament "with very wobbly backbones", "who were not straight and true". To oppose Burnett Gray they chose Archie Michaelis, grandson of the founder of the St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation. Subsequently Michaelis denied Gray's accusation that he had been attending afternoon tea parties held by the St. Kilda Australian Women's National League for the past fifteen months⁹⁵. Soon after, members of this tea party set were all jubilant when the

Scullin Government was swept out of office in December, J. A. Lyons became Prime Minister, and T. W. White held Balaclava convincingly, and looked forward to ousting Gray at the forthcoming State elections.

Others saw little joy in anything politicians were doing. A day before Lyons' victory, Cr. Jacka entered Caulfield Military Hospital. The Minutes of the last Council meeting he attended on 30 November 1931 recorded his regret that legislators had done "nothing practical to provide the unemployed with work before Christmas". Unexpectedly, he died in hospital, on 17 January 1932. Immediately, Cr. Moroney returned to St. Kilda from a holiday in Mornington after a call from the Town Clerk, who used the telephone because the matter was so important, and a flag was flown at half mast from the Town Hall. The unemployed secured another flag and fixed it to the pole at the Old Court House where several hundred gathered and bared their heads in sorrow for two minutes. The Secretary of the St. Kilda Unemployment Organisation, T. Morgan, spoke on behalf of them all when he said:

No man in Australia has done more for the unemployed than Captain Jacka. He took a keen interest in them, attended their meetings, talked to them, got to know each man's difficulties, and helped them generously out of his own pocket. He fought on behalf of every one of the 1,600 unemployed in St. Kilda, his object being the alleviation of distress and the finding of jobs.⁹⁶

Such a fight on Jacka's part led the Mayor, Cr. Moroney, to describe him as "a helper of the helpless" and pay tribute to his "clarity of vision, his straightforwardness of purpose and general fairmindedness".⁹⁷

Jacka's sudden death at the age of thirty-nine was attributed to nephritis and kidney failure. His wounded body had been subjected to stress since his loss of employment in 1929 and tenure of Mayoral office at a time when uncertainty, social divisiveness, fear and suspicion of authority predominated. In war he had been thrown back into battle before his wounds had healed; in peace he was elected Mayor after only one term as a Councillor when his own position was precarious. As Mayor, well-heeled ratepayers expected him to quell any rabble-rousing whilst the unshod looked to him for leadership and hope. Just as adulatory crowds had thronged the city streets to welcome him back as the hero of the Great War, so thousands of subdued mourners assembled to farewell Albert Jacka and wonder

what had happened to Australia when such soldiers were now dying in penury. The pallbearers in the funeral procession, which moved from Anzac House in Collins Street to the St. Kilda Cemetery, were other Victoria Cross winners: Lieutenant A. Borella, Captain R.C.Grieve, A. Lowerson, Lieutenant W. Dunstan, Captain J.E. Newland, Captain W.D. Joynt, Captain R.V. Moon, Lieutenant W. Ruthven and Sergeant I. Smith. The procession was led by about eight hundred diggers; some were collarless in broken boots and threadbare suits. As they passed the Shrine, others in the procession were still passing Princes Bridge. Two hundred unemployed joined the mournful cavalcade at St. Kilda Junction: some who had once worn khaki were now grimly garbed in the dyed black buttonless military tunics which the Defence Department had supplied to the destitute.

The conservative drift in politics continued at the State level. Edmond Hogan was defeated and Sir Stanley Argyle became the Premier of Victoria, governing a Ministry composed of United Australia Party and United Country Party members. Another casualty of the election was Burnett Gray. To the delight of his enemies, he was swept out of office by Archie Michaelis, who had campaigned on the UAP platform of Imperial unity under the Crown, the balancing of budgets, the curtailment of socialistic enterprises and the encouragement of private enterprises.

Argyle took measures to reduce expenditure of unemployment relief. The Unemployed Girls' Relief Movement ended because the new Minister of Sustenance, Wilfred Kent-Hughes, was of the opinion that whilst domestic work was available at any wage, under any conditions anywhere in Victoria, the Government was not obliged to provide assistance for unemployed women". As well, work was demanded in return for higher sustenance payments, and from June 1932 the unemployed had to make monthly statements of income, and ensure that identification cards were stamped every month.

Public Assistance Committees to administer relief were established in Municipalities, with Councillors as no more than one third of the members; and in St. Kilda the influential Ladies' Benevolent Society was granted representation on the Committee after persistent lobbying. The Government appointed a Registrar but Council had to employ clerical staff and provide office accommodation.

Declining numbers on sustenance were partly due to Registrars toughening their criteria, subjecting applicants to severe scrutiny

and reassessing cases more frequently than before. Except when work was performed, sustenance was not paid in cash but in the form of orders on approved shopkeepers. This dual system meant that unemployed workers competed for the scarce unemployment relief works available: St. Kilda City Council only spent 1.4% of its rate revenue on relief work, or £1270 in 1932-33; it was still unable to gain approval for work on the Elwood Canal and foreshore reclamation so it refused to spend more.

**Numbers registered for sustenance, Town Clerk's Estimates,
City of St. Kilda, 1931-33⁹⁹**

31 July 1931 31 July 1932 31 July 1933

1,150 775 457

The administrators strictly applied the rules. Charges were laid against people suspected of making false declarations. Some of the more informal arrangements which had existed between Council and the unemployed were suspended by the Registrar who expected them to deal with the Public Assistance Committee rather than with Council. In the past, Council had supplied cross-cut saws, a dozen axes and hand-carts to the unemployed, permitting them to saw and chop wood at the Council depot. The Registrar, Mr. Wilkinson, announced that this practice was prohibited in September 1932 and that sufficient two foot sapling spars would be supplied to meet requirements. Previous practice in regard to evictions was discontinued. The unemployed had been able to draw on funds from the St. Kilda Unemployment Organisation to pay a carrier to remove their furniture and pay a week's rent in advance on new lodgings. However the Public Assistance Committee ruled that this was not in order in June 1933.

There was little improvement in the prospects of the poor. In a time of continuing hardship and decreasing sympathy, many of the workless subsisted. Some relied more on their Unemployment Organisation. It employed a barber in 1933 so they could look "respectable and clean, especially when applying for work"¹⁰⁰, and provided Christmas treats for children which Archie Michaelis supplemented in 1932 by giving sixpence for every child, and sponsoring a Punch and Judy show and "legerdemain entertainment".

At times, though, the unemployed showed their anger against those who controlled them. They dumped furniture on the Town Hall steps in September 1933. It belonged to two women, an elderly pensioner and a girl, who had been evicted from Duke Street. The *St.*

Kilda Press of 23 September 1933 endorsed their action, censuring the Public Assistance Committee for only meeting twice in the past seven months and leaving the unemployed to shift for themselves. They showed their resentment of the way authorities had treated them in more covert ways as well. William Dod, the St. Kilda hall-keeper since 1890, attributed unprecedented larceny at the Town Hall to "the large attendance of men on the sustenance, who are ever on the look out for mischief". The red carpet was stolen shortly before the opening of the Judean Ball by the Governor-General Sir Isaac Isaacs in November 1932. Dod had never seen such behaviour in all his years as hall-keeper. He submitted that he did not know what to expect next, and provided the Town Clerk with a list of other misdemeanours he had noticed:

Continuous loss of sanitary Rolls from Ladies and Gentlemens Lavatories.

Electric Globes (both large and small from all parts of the building (serious)).

Loss of electric heater from old Supper Room. 60 feet of Red Felt.

Electric leads and fittings.

Cutting of dados by penknives.

Obscene writing on wall of lavatories¹⁰¹

Fears of social disintegration and conspiracy, which were still prevalent, began to be tinged with anti-semitism. Whilst a minority who had been set back financially attributed their difficulties to a conspiracy of bankers, the greatest fear, still, was of communism. A few citizens were attracted to the ideas of the Douglas Social Credit Movement based on the ideas of an Englishman, Major C.H. Douglas, who advocated reform of the administration and distribution of credit. He argued that bankers, whom he portrayed as predominantly Jewish, were conspiring against ordinary citizens' rights to enjoy the wealth of their country. The Secretary of the Elsterwick branch, Ian Phiddian of Elwood, described the movement as not being political, but having as its ideal the emancipation of mankind, and the overthrow of financial power that threatened to turn Australia into a servile state rather than a democracy.¹⁰²

Other people's fears of communism were fomented by the Empire Honour League founded in 1930 by William Murchison. He advised Council about the proper conduct of Empire Day and an appropriate

oath in 1933, providing literature about the danger of communism, which he described as so rampant, that "an upheaval such as taking place in Germany will be necessary to eradicate the treasonable Revolutionary Plan already in dangerous progress", and thought most communists were Jews.¹⁰³

Such a view of Hitler or of Jews was not shared by Reverend Danglow. At the opening of a Persecution of German Jews Relief Fund at the Melbourne Town Hall on 27 April 1933 where £7000 was raised, including £1,000 from Michaelis Hallenstein and Company and members of the Michaelis family, Reverend Danglow said:

The persecution of Jews shows us what might have happened had Germany won the war...In their cloak of false pseudo-scientific theory of Aryan cultural spirit there still swaggers the pre-war Junker spirit?¹⁰⁴

For the unemployed, the poor, the working class, the middle class and the rich, who all lived in St. Kilda in 1933, the memory of the Great Depression would never slip. It had thrown Hitler up overseas and cast the ominous shadow of fascism over St. Kilda already, made decent citizens question the fairness of the existing order, set neighbour against neighbour, jeopardised the entertainment industry so crucial to St. Kilda's image and prosperity, exposed class differences, and was still being borne most unevenly. Such a bitter ride influenced their ensuing actions as they rolled from Depression into war, and heard those in authority speak of duty and propriety yet again.

CHAPTER TWO

ROLL UP! 1934 — December 1941

I. Amusement operators try to drum up business on the foreshore — Nostalgic recollections of Edwardian days — Luna Park — Funfair — Gardens — Beaches — The Galleon — The Prince of Wales Hotel — The Astor — Efftee Studios becomes "The Streets of Paris", then "St. Moritz"
— Business drummed up beyond the foreshore with flat development
— Inadequate building controls — Traffic problems
II. Storms mirror the upheaval of the age — Shifting moral standards
— Bathing costumes — Gambling — Continuing effects of the Depression
— Local anti-semitism — Problems posed by refugees — Early preparations for war
III. Patriotic response when war is declared likened to that of 1914 — Measures to boost the war effort — Concern about flagging interest — Japan enters the war.

I. DRUMMING UP BUSINESS

The foreshore was noisier than ever. Raucous spruikers bawled "Roll Up!" and beat their drums as they lured customers into hessian or canvas tents, erected on the once gracious lawns near St. Kilda Beach. Once inside, the patrons saw motoring monkeys, a dog circus, a rodeo or a boxing troupe. On 31 December, 1933, a New Year's Eve fireworks display drew a crowd of over one hundred thousand, many of whom stayed until 6.30 am when Luna Park closed its gates. Other attractions on the foreshore included a combined regatta by the Royal St. Kilda Yacht Club and the Elwood Lifesaving Club, performances from the roof of the Baths, band competitions, and the provision of free hot water and milk for country visitors.¹

The side-shows were organised by a special Shore Publicity Committee formed of Councillors, Foreshore Committee members such as Frederick Wimpole, and managers of amusements, including Garnett Curwen of Luna Park. The Committee was very concerned that the city's popularity as a pleasure resort was declining because many of the foreshore amusements were old-fashioned, the spending power of the public was still restricted because of the Depression, and because many wealthy patrons were travelling by motor-car to more distant exclusive resorts. It dismissed the arguments expressed in the *Argus* of 23 January 1934 that the showmen were ruining the

lawns, making objectionable noises with their loudspeakers, and attracting the "wrong class of people to St. Kilda" because it seemed so important to dispel the Depression, brighten up business, and maintain the pre-eminent popularity of St. Kilda.

The Committee promoted St. Kilda's charms in new tourist brochures. St. Kilda was described as the "Lido of the South" in a "delightful environment" with evenings of "high carnival":

...the bejewelled edifices devoted to the most ancient and most modern of popular diversions, dancing and the talkies, blaze forth in cascade of color. The soft air is clamant with the voice and laughter of youth on pleasure bent, the clatter of the scenic railway swinging round its dizzy track; the ecstatic scream of thrilled damsels swept from breath-taking heights to fearsome depths in the crazy career of the demoniac big dipper. In minor key the pipes of a merry-go-round drone wearily through an unending round of mechanical melodies, and across the darkling sea soft lights along the pier promenade alluringly".²

If such a picture were not enough to convince the potential visitor of St. Kilda's charms, the Committee was confident that no tourist would resist its new brochure called *St. Kilda the Beautiful*, distributed by the Victorian Railways Department, Shipping Companies and overseas travel services. A beckoning woman in a bathing costume adorned the cover of the booklet, which listed attraction after attraction to be found in St. Kilda in its fifty-two pages. The photograph of the bathing beauty was taken by Athol Shmith, born in St. Kilda in 1914. (He was the son of Henry Woolf Shmith, of 47 Barkly Street, who had discovered the formula for making Aspirin after the Bayer product was unavailable during World War One; he sold his interest to George Nicholas, and the Aspro empire was the outcome.) Young Athol established a studio in the *Warwick* in Fitzroy Street in 1931, his novel approach of photographing bridal parties in the Catani Gardens and his work for *Table Talk* making him one of Melbourne's most fashionable young photographers, and a most appropriate choice on the Committee's part.

Many of St. Kilda's most endearing attractions remained those which dated from Catani's day, such as the pleasure domes, the funfair, the ornamental gardens and lawns, and the beaches. But any popular resort is burdened with the need to remain fashionable, and is prey to the fickle taste of the thrill-seeking public. At least newer features such as coffee lounges, modern hotels, another theatre and an ice skating rink helped dispel some doubt about St. Kilda's capacity to drum up more business and keep up to date. Nonetheless, there were

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some observers who believed the city's best days were past, and were nostalgic for the innocence they remembered of their childhood when the Pierrots performed in Edwardian St. Kilda. Hermon Gill, a journalist for the *Star*, fondly described the appeal of St. Kilda then, and in 1934, in an article appearing in that paper on 20 January 1934:

...when night comes, a spirit of romance swings over the Catani Gardens as the moon lifts up from St. Kilda's back door. Cigarette ends glow in the darkness under the palms, and there are whispered voices. The coloured Neon lights and the brightness of the trams along the Esplanade glow warmly. Carlo Catani must have breathed some of the softness of his native Italy into the scene.

There is a musical tinkle of water from the fountain...and a subtle scent from the lavender beds. Passing slowly along...goes an old-fashioned horse-drawn ice-cream cart, the light from its dim oil lamp shining up under its frilled awning. The Continental touch is complete.

Once this corner of St. Kilda was very English. Then the English Pierrots had their stand where now is the fountain, and used to sing,

Some say we're dukes and marquises, perhaps we are, p'raps not, But as I heard a lady say, "Oh! that is all pier-rot".

And the men of the troupe used to walk to the stand from the hotel in their white pierrot costumes with black poms. That was before the days of the pictures. Before St. Kilda went cosmopolitan. And the pierrots' ditties were of gentle love, and the air throbbed softly to "come on over the garden wall", and "Come roller skating with me" where now it syncopates to the more cynical "I was her man, but I done her wrong"...

St. Kilda has grown since then...Sitting..at a table in the (Baths) cafe, looking through a colonnaded frame to the beach and palms beyond, you could be in a hundred places at once, from Durban to Dieppe, from California to Cairo...St. Kilda is Melbourne's Margate...only the Londoner cannot get there on a fourpenny tram from the centre of the city. And back of it all, as is back of the St. Kilda's of the world, lies the land of flats, hotels, and boarding houses. The cosmopolitan land.

Norman tower and Spanish patio lie cheek by jowl with Tudor half-timber and early Melbourne. But blue-blooded Norman, Spanish hidalgo, bluff Elizabethan and dinkum Aussie dress alike these summer days in bathrobe and shorts, bath towel and bathers.

Such sentimental recollections made the St. Kilda of 1934 seem all the more world weary and cynical compared with the St. Kilda some remembered in the days of trust and hope prior to the Great War and the Great Depression.

Luna Park remained the focal point of amusements in St. Kilda. The reconstruction of the Luna Park Company in 1933, forced by the Depression, was successful, and in 1934 it paid a twenty per cent dividend on preferential and ordinary shares, and purchased intrigu-

ing rides called the Bug, the Pretzel and the Caterpillar. However the ensuing season was marred by the first accidental death at the Park occurring on the Big Dipper. The following year, another man, Harry Maltby, died in December 1936 after he had fallen from a trolley-car and was hit by another before the brakeman could drag him clear of the tracks. The manager, Garnett Curwen, defended the safety of the ride and estimated that the Big Dipper had operated over ten million times since 1923 without any serious accident. The Big Dipper was still described as its "supreme thrill machine" and "a recognisable symbol of St. Kilda" two years later, when Luna Park celebrated its Silver Jubilee on 24 September 1938. The birthday celebrations included the release of five thousand balloons, decoration of its merry-go-round as a birthday cake, a reliability test of caravans from all over Australia which ended on the Esplanade, and a dinner for couples celebrating their silver wedding, at the Palais de Danse where they met the band leader, Jay Whidden.³

Amusements at the Little Luna Park funfair, that site of unbridled private enterprise, were always changing. The rival spruikers jockeyed for position in the race for profits, and found their task difficult because of increasing competition from new amusement parks like George Wirth's *Olympia* near Princes Bridge. In the struggle for survival in the funfair, some operators went under, while others tried to anticipate fashions, set trends, or at least keep abreast of popular taste. William Kelly was a loser because he had to give up the merry-go-round. Herbert Thomson's accountant placed the following advertisement in the *Age* on 24 March 1934:

THE FINEST PORTABLE MERRY-GO-ROUND
IN AUSTRALIA

Carries Over Sixty Passengers,
Also its ROTUNDA BUILDING,
Operating in the Premier Site.

A rare chance to possess a money-making plant.
It will pay for itself within 12 months.

Buyers were found and Thomson transferred ownership in August 1934 to two budding capitalists in George R. Phillips and Percy Lennon, involved in Lennon's Flagstaff Hotel in West Melbourne, the Railway Hotel in Brighton and the Hotel Australia (completed in 1939). They installed twenty-five slot machines around the merry-go-round in September 1934. All William Kelly could do was politely thank the Foreshore Committee for their past favours, and transfer

his electric poker machine to Foster's Ferris 'Wheel site where he hoped it would present "a smart natty appearance" and provide him with a living. The blow was most severe for Kelly because the other operators expected that the Centenary Celebrations planned for November 1934 to mark Victoria's foundation, would be a windfall, and were installing new attractions to capitalise on the event. Foster, for instance, placed twelve more slot machines of the "latest American type" on his site in November 1934. At the Swirl site, W. O. J. Phillips installed electric table ball games of skill which he had designed himself. The most novel amusement of all however, was introduced by Daniel O'Donogue in October 1934. O'Donogue employed the architect and St. Kilda City Councillor, Harry Johnson, to design a hundred by fifty foot pool at the junction of Marine Parade and the Lower Esplanade, and installed electrically driven *Scoota boats* which could travel at eight miles per hour. Such boats had operated at British resorts like Bognor and Brighton for over two years, but those whooshing about at St. Kilda were the first in Victoria.

All of these entrepreneurs were very disappointed when the anticipated crowds did not eventuate during the Centenary, and searched for new money-spinners. The celebrations were less than St. Kilda expected partly because, against all precedent, Port Melbourne was preferred to St. Kilda as the landing place for royal visitors and other dignitaries. Many interpreted this as another sign of St. Kilda's changing fortune, though Councillors condescendingly hoped it might provide the many unemployed of that working-class Port with some work. William Foster believed that the Ferris Wheel was outdated so he dismantled it in 1936, robbing St. Kilda of one of its most elegant old Edwardian amusements. W. O. J. Phillips decided that: "The spirit of the day seems to be SPEED", so he tried to change his old cars to "Auto-skooters" in May 1935, but was prevented by the objections of Luna Park, which was anxious to protect the profitability of its Dodgem cars.⁴

The Palais de Danse remained a show place for different bands. Jim Davidson and his Australians, billed as "the maddest and merriest aggregation of musicians to take Melbourne by storm", played there between November 1933 and April 1934. Davidson was surprised by the conservative style of the ballroom, the slow tempo, the absence of jazz in the ballroom, and the inhibitions of dancers compared with those he was accustomed to playing for at the Palais Royal in Sydney.

Despite his apprehensions that his sound would be too much for such slow moving marionettes, Melbourne warmed to his style, though he thought that city failed to appreciate its unique ballroom on the bay, which would be a major attraction in Europe, and believed that part of the reason was that St. Kilda was no longer thought smart by the in-crowd of 1934.⁵

Upon Davidson's departure, there was a succession of other popular performers at the St. Kilda Palais de Danse. Ern Pettifer resumed with his band called *The Good Companions*. Hal Moschetti played there in 1936, as well as Sammy Lee and his Americanadians, and Bobby Gibson's band. Accompanying artists included Geoff Brooke, Johnny McMahon, Olive Nichols, Margaret Nicholson, and her husband, Hec McLennan, who played the banjo.

Dancing competitions were another highlight. The Australian Dancing Competitions were customarily held there, and Mickey and Mascot Powell would perform on the gleaming floor bordered by illuminated glass bricks, his black tails flying and her sequins flashing in the light.

The arrival in 1938 of the band-leader and American heart-throb, Jay Whidden caused a sensation. He was feted as a star in Melbourne, having appeared in American films including *Sweethearts* with Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy, and *Dancing Lady*. He, his wife, and the singers Sylvia Sefton and Laurie Brookes, were welcomed by the directors of the Palais de Danse, with a party at the Long Room of the Menzies Hotel, and it was considered a great coup for a hostess to secure him as a guest at any Toorak party, or for society photographers to snap him sunning at St. Kilda Beach. His admirers flocked to see him in his tails and white tie on the bandstand at the Palais de Danse when he opened on 1 October 1938 and introduced a new rhythm called *Sweet Swing*. The dancers were still and hushed with delight whenever his vocalist Sylvia Sefton sang *A Tisket A Tasket, My Little Yellow Basket*, as she wagged her finger and performed the little shuffling dance step which she called "trucking" when she introduced it to Melbourne. The sentimental sound of Sweet Swing was so popular that Harry Jacobs introduced a show of the same name at the Palais Pictures where the singers Olive Lester and Mavis Curtain sang, sitting on swings festooned with flowers.

Roy Fox replaced Whidden in February 1939. Fox was born in California, and, as a trumpeter in Abe Lyman's orchestra, he had introduced "whispering" trumpet playing. He had played at the Café

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de Paris and the Kit Kat Club in London and was a musical director at Decca Records. On his arrival in St. Kilda, Geoffrey Hutton, a reporter for the *Argus*, and a jazz lover, assessed his style:

His style is easy and confidential...He believes that dancers like to have a tune to dance to. He also believes that they enjoy a rhythm which is smooth and fluent. Every now and then he gives them a hot one to show them what he can do but his taste is for "schmaltz" (sweet music) very often an up-to-date arrangement of some familiar tune like "Louise". The old time jazz, of course, is known as "boop-a-doop" while the modern swing is "hi-de-ho".

His orchestra is more or less a standard one, with a violin to *give a leg*; an accordion, a "wood-pile", and an "iron-works", in other words a xylophone and saxophone".⁶

Hutton also reported that Fox was very pleased with the Palais de Danse band, which included Vincent McCartney and George Watson on drums and other musicians hand picked by Harry Jacobs, and declared the orchestra there was as good as the best in Europe.

The Palais Pictures attracted full houses of over three thousand people every week. Esther Jones (later Wyatt) began work there in 1938. Mr. Herman Phillips had died in April 1938, but she remained in the employ of Mr. Harold and Mr. Leon Phillips as their private secretary. She recalled her first year there:

My job was to sell tickets there, take bookings for the Palais de Danse too, and answer the phone. I was in the booking office from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. every weekday, and 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Fridays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 4.30 to 8.30 on Saturdays, earning £2-15-0 per week. Auditions for the stage show would be held on Tuesday mornings, and I had to take down the names and addresses of a lot of young hopefuls. At rehearsals on Friday afternoon, Mr. Curwen, Harry Jacobs and Rupert Browne, the scenic artist, would sit in R row with the wide aisle, and I would have to take in three cups of tea in the dark at three in the afternoon. The pictures would be packed, with over three thousand people present on Friday, Saturday, and often Thursday nights. People paid 1/1, 2/2, or 3/3 in 1938 for a newsreel, two films and a fifteen to twenty minute stage presentation.

There would be eight girls in the ticket boxes outside, and two in the office inside. A portion of the stalls were permanently booked and so was the lounge up to H row, mainly by people from St. Kilda to Brighton, who regarded their outing to the Palais as the social highlight of the week. Upstairs, the gas fires would burn, and flames would lick the imitation logs in the fireplace, and friends would chat before the show and at interval. The Commissionaire in his long grey coat and cap with a red band would stand outside the theatre and welcome them. Inside, before the show, the ushers would stand stiffly to attention for inspection: they had to be six foot to be employed there; and wore cream pants with a black

stripe, a white shirt, a grey vest, a grey Eton jacket with red lapels and "P" embossed on it, and a red bow tie.⁷

The gardens and streets changed in accordance with the fashions of the day, and required careful attention. Palms were planted along Marine Parade in 1934, ti-tree on Bluff Road, and plane trees in the Goldsmith Street area. Elm trees in the rockeries in St. Kilda Road near the Junction were removed in June 1936 because the forty to fifty year old trees were riddled with borers and their roots were adversely affecting the road. Cr. Alfred Levy donated a special variety of dahlia tubers and orchids to Council glasshouses in 1937, and an octagonal seat was placed around the canoe tree in Alma Park East in 1937. After residents of Orange Grove complained in March 1935 that the state of the former Chinese market garden, renamed the J. H. Hewison Reserve, compared unfavourably with the "poor suburbs of Port Melbourne, South Melbourne and Collingwood", part of the area was enclosed with a wire fence for a children's playground with swings, see-saws, slides, ocean waves and horizontal ladder in the same year. The Town Hall grounds were enlarged in 1938 when Council purchased land at the corner of Carlisle and Chapel Streets; the ornamental iron entrance gates, hedges and fences on the Brighton Road/Carlisle Street frontages were removed, and several several old trees were replaced according to a modern plan, despite Cr. Moroney's objection that this constituted vandalism, and that some of the trees had been planted by distinguished people.⁸

Attractions at the beaches included intricate sand models by John Suchomlin, a Russian, who built calsomined tableaux of the Nativity at Christmas, and executed a work called "Captain Cook visits a Native Camp" for the Victorian Centenary Celebrations. There was more convenient access to the beach by 1936 when a roadway from St. Kilda pier, along the seawall to Beaconsfield Parade, was formed and paved in 1936 from St. Kilda Foreshore Committee funds. At Elwood Beach, picnickers bought Sennitt's ice-creams from Mrs. Olingues' kiosk or hired donkeys. An *Argus* investigation in October 1937 concluded that while other bayside Councils were indifferent to the condition of the waterfront, the Foreshore Committee provided the finest facilities and best cared for beaches anywhere, and praised Elwood as well, even though swimmers had to take a cross country hike to reach the Council facilities there.⁹

Nonetheless, the condition of the beaches was jeopardised because different authorities squabbled about their jurisdiction and blamed each other for shortcomings. Different bodies claimed control over the sea, including a Foreshore Erosion Board, the Commonwealth Government, the Ports and Harbour Department, and the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works.

The Ports and Harbour Department was in charge of the pier, but spent too little on its maintenance for the liking of Councillors, who were also miffed because it meant that they could not enforce their draconian regulations governing bathing costumes.

The authorities took a different line when things went wrong. For example, after three children drowned at Elwood in December 1935 and January 1936, the Elwood Life Saving Club blamed the undertow and holes, but both the Council and the Ports and Harbour Department claimed the sea floor was the other's responsibility.

Similarly, the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works was in charge of drains which ran into the ocean. After heavy rains, swimmers near the Cowderoy Street drain at West St. Kilda Beach noticed the water became more discoloured and smelly as rubbish, which included debris from the Albert Park Tip, was washed into the ocean. The Elwood Canal was a source of pollution as well. The St. Kilda City Council assumed that the MMBW had taken over maintenance of the canal in 1923, but the MMBW denied their financial responsibility for improvements. Householders from Brighton to Gardenvale dumped rubbish in Elster Creek or along the embankments, and kerosene tins and garbage littered some of the black marshy canal banks in Elwood, which were also a breeding ground for mosquitoes, and far removed from the glorious Venetian waterway carrying gondolas some had dreamt of in the nineteenth century.

The most public rivalry however, occurred between the Council and the Foreshore Committee. Some Councillors believed that although the Foreshore Committee monopolised the most profitable part of the shore, where it permitted games of dubious legality and taste, it was not contributing enough to maintenance and repairs after floods, and thought St. Kilda would be well rid of the troublesome body. In turn, they were labelled mealy-mouthed wowsers by other Councillors who belonged to the Foreshore Committee and staunchly defended its management of the shore. Debate was often marred by personal exchanges which made the Elwood Progress Association label the Town Hall a "brawling chamber" where scenes occurred which placed

St. Kilda "in the same category as Richmond and Collingwood"¹⁰. The Foreshore Committee was described in *Truth* newspaper of 22 June 1935 as "a child of Council's creation but in fact an uncontrollable infant which at times treats its parent with marked disrespect". Committee members knew there was no better way to anger their opponents in Council than by accusing them of neglecting Elwood Beach or referring to the ill-fated Baths. Committee Secretary, Councillor Dawkins, often suggested that if his committee had been heeded in the first place, St. Kilda would not have been left with such a white elephant.

The Baths were proving to be very unprofitable as more bathers enjoyed the pleasure of the open sea. The lessees induced Council had to reduce their rental by £1,000 a year in April 1935 because takings were so poor. In desperation, Council finally approved mixed bathing at the weekends in the ladies' section in 1938 in an attempt to increase use of facilities. Even that decision did not please some women who worked during the week, were self-conscious about their appearance, or were elderly. One woman, Miss Slater, wrote on behalf of her mother to the Town Clerk in October 1938: "Have not the men their own baths? Surely fastidious women have the right to be considered. Why should their domain be invaded?"

New attractions also lured people to St. Kilda. Ye *Kynge's Galleone Coffee Lounge* (later called *The Galleone* or *Galleon*) had opened at 130 Acland Street in 1933. It was run by William Arthur (Bill) Goulding, who extended it by 1936 after buying Winifred Coady's dressmaking shop at 132 Acland Street, Veale's drycleaning shop at 128 and Percy Vaughan's printery at 126 Acland Street. The new coffee lounge was modelled on some lounges Goulding had seen in the United States, and he decorated it as a Spanish galleon with swords and nautical motifs. Patrons enjoyed the cosy informality of the lounge, and the excellence of the artists. Among the performers engaged there were Laurie Wilson, the semi-blind piano and organ player who played on the Hoyts Circuit at the Rivoli in Camberwell, and the Park Theatre in Albert Park; Don Humphries, Joe Barille; Alec Ferrier; Stan Bourne from 3AK; Stan Roy and Bobbie Bell. Some of the visiting overseas artists played jazz there as well, and musicians enjoyed jamming late at night, playing music less schmaltzy than swing which truly expressed the turbulence of the time. The business was taken over in February 1940 by Maurice (Mick) Ress,

who became a leading Melbourne hotelier and Prahran City Councillor, and was run by his wife, Chifra.¹¹

Hotels were redecorated to attract more women and a younger clientele as the temperance movement waned in influence. The *Prince of Wales Hotel* was rebuilt in 1936 by Hansen and Yuncken to the specifications of the architect, R. H. McIntyre, and was one of the smartest hotels in Melbourne. The entrance to the residential section was faced in black Carrara glass superimposed with the motif of the Prince of Wales' feathers in stainless steel, whilst windows and glass doors of the public rooms on the ground and first floor had sand engraved glass panels of the same motif. Whereas the old hotel had depended on the bar trade, the architect believed that not everybody wished to stand up at a bar, and included lounges with log fireplaces, easy chairs, carpets, private rooms for parties and a dining room with an attractive menu. An modern cash handling system was provided with the installation of cash registers, and electrical refrigeration included a chamber near the bars for storing reserve casks and bottled beer, and making it possible to have cool beer always available, regardless of the weather or the rush.¹²

The construction of a new picture theatre in St. Kilda was further evidence of the popularity of motion pictures. The *Astor Picture Theatre* was built in Chapel Street near Dandenong Road, St. Kilda to the design of the architect, R. Morton Taylor. Its construction was deferred after two hundred and fifty ratepayers complained that the theatre was too close to churches, and Cr. Moroney submitted that: "a noisy, showy place of entertainment would detract from the dignity and charm of one of the loveliest localities in St. Kilda"¹³. Despite such protests, the Astor was finally opened in April 1936 by Archie Michaelis. The theatre seated 1,700 and had the latest Western Electric wide range sound equipment and Hill & Dale recording equipment installed. It screened MGM and Paramount films, the program for the first week being Carole Lombard and Fred MacMurray in *Hands Across the Table*, and Jean Dagger and Gail Patrick in *Wanderer of the Wasteland*

The American stranglehold on the motion picture industry thwarted F.W. Thring, the most flamboyant entrepreneur of all in St. Kilda in 1934. In its first few months of operation, the future of the Efftee Studio seemed bright. Thring completed *A Ticket in Tatts*, *Clara Gibbins* and *Streets of London* in St. Kilda. The first two films were based on escapist themes popular during the Depression but *Streets*

of London was not screened publicly in Australia. In *A Ticket in Tatts*, the popular vaudeville star, George Wallace, played an amiable accident prone stable-hand whose whistle made the horse Hotspur win the cup. In *Clara Gibbins*, the heroine, played by Dorothy Brunton, rejected the decadence of the British aristocracy to pursue a better life in Australia.

Other film makers, such as Charles Chauvel, hired the studio for filming. Chauvel, who was more successful than Thring in expressing an Australian ethos, produced interior scenes *of Heitage at St. Kilda*. This epic, which involved a cast close to one thousand, told the story of three generations from the arrival of the first Governor to the Great War. Sets constructed in the St. Kilda studio included the garden of Governor Macquarie's home, and the Old Bull's Head Inn, replete with a real bull's head obtained from the abattoirs.

Elsa Chauvel, who referred to Thring as "Daddy Thring", later recalled the problems which arose when live bullocks were required for one scene. They had to be pulled in to the studio with a winch because they were frightened by the lights, and were hastily painted brown with permanganate of potash because their colours differed from those used in the exterior scenes filmed in New South Wales and Queensland. At another stage, the crew had to comb St. Kilda for a suitable baby because one was required in a scene they had forgotten about. Amongst others who worked on the film were Harry Jacobs, who arranged the music, and Damien Parer in the camera crew". The Parer name had long been associated with St. Kilda, with the tea and refreshment rooms on the pier being known as *Parer's Pavilion* in 1913 when it was used as a meteorological bureau. Damien was born in 1912 at Malvern, enrolled at the Christian Brothers College in St. Kilda for a brief period, and attended Mass at Sacred Heart in Grey Street. He became Australia's most highly acclaimed war photographer, and died in action.

The survival of the Effttee Studios depended on Thring securing government assistance and dealing with stiff overseas competition. He had relocated his studio at a time when he was facing distribution problems: Hoyts and Greater Union had temporarily merged, and he could not rely on Hoyts to release his films. His grand dreams seemed unrealisable unless the State government stepped in, and the burgeoning Melbourne industry was shocked by Thring's decision to suspend production at Wattle Path in April 1934. He announced that resumption of operation would depend on the Victorian government introducing a revised quota for Australian films and more industry

support. He told parliamentarians debating the Cinematograph Films (Australian Quota) Bill that if the Bill was passed, he would immediately recommence production at the Efftee Studios, expending £1000 per week in wages to actors, actresses, writers, costumiers, designers, camera men and technicians. He believed that the real opposition to an Australian quota came from "foreign film interests who do not desire to see a national film producing industry arise in this country"¹⁵. When the Bill was passed in 1935, Thring considered it unsatisfactory because the Act would not operate until a sufficient number of films were produced.

However his rival, Stuart Doyle, retained his studio in St. Kilda. Doyle announced his intention to install new equipment from Hollywood in St. Kilda in 1936. He had made a deal with United Artists to produce a full length feature film in his Australian studios for worldwide distribution, and announced in November 1936 that he would produce six Australian films every year, including *Tall Timber* and *Robbery Under Arms* and would organise another unit for outdoor pictures and news reviews.¹⁶

Meanwhile, Thring's Efftee film studio, Wattle Path, was re-registered as a dance salon called the *Streets of Paris*, and Thring was directed by the Health Department to remove all inflammable screens, partitions, mock walls, set materials and production equipment in June 1935¹⁷. Thring decided to move to the Mastercraft Studios in Sydney and take advantage of what seemed to be more sympathetic legislation. He died from cancer in 1936, haemorrhaging on the ship on his return from Hollywood with his ten year old son Frank.

After his death, the *Streets of Paris* was run as a dance hall by H. H. (Harry) Kleiner for a while. Amongst the artists who appeared there with Art Chapman's band was Benny Featherstone, a trumpeter, drummer and vocalist billed as "Australia's Louis Armstrong", who had played before at the Palais de Danse with Ern Pettifer. However the dance hall was not as profitable as Kleiner hoped, and it was not long before he employed the architects Cowper, Murphy and Appleford to convert it into a skating rink — a starry palace of ice called St. Moritz. Wendy Lee Selover, the daughter of Harry Jacobs, recalled:

Mr. Kleiner had other dance halls. When he was a young man he had worked in side-shows and he told me that when he read about the earthquake in San Francisco he had sailed over there because he knew there would be work and money to be made. He was a well known old

showman and entrepreneur in St. Kilda, big in stature, commanding, white-haired, who dressed in a suit with a big diamond pin in his tie; and he was in attendance like the Phillips Brothers were at the Palais. They didn't run businesses without being there. You had to be there.

In '38 many dance halls were doing very badly, their cycle was over. One night at the "Streets of Paris", May and Gordon Haiming, the well-known ballroom dancers, were the only two people on the floor. Kleiner shut the doors, told the band to stop playing and they all got drunk. They never opened it as a dance hall again and the Kleiners went overseas.

They returned to open St. Moritz. There was only one other ice-rink in Melbourne at the time and that was the Glaciarium. The Kleiners knew nothing about ice-skating at all but managed the front of the house and brought in full-time refrigeration engineers who ran ammonia through the pipes of the plant, and employed a triple certificate nurse during public sessions to attend to first aid. They built a new fence for the rink and took the tables away from the stepped up place behind the railings. The balcony from the Wattle Path remained; the band stand, ticket boxes and entrance remained the same but a skates hire room was installed. The Kleiners had the ceiling painted dark blue with the moon and aeroplanes hanging down. In the middle of the ceiling of the ice rink was a big ball made up of pieces of glass like a bee-hive, probably ten feet in diameter. They would turn the lights down and put spots on it and the reflected lights would twinkle like the stars. When we used to dance in closures, the crowd would go off and the skaters who could do the set patterns would come on. Mr. Kleiner would sit on the bandstand and announce: "Now dancing in the spotlight is...(whoever it might be, usually an instructor) — You can come to the office and book lessons any time of the day or night". The evening public sessions were professionally run with a live band every night and Saturday afternoon as well. There was Ray Graves, Frank Chapple and his musicians, and Ray Dean's combination. Ray Dean was a leader so he didn't conduct. He could play the violin and the sax and in his band there were two saxes, a trumpet, a trombone, drums, bass and piano.

The rink could accommodate more than two thousand people and had more than twenty thousand square feet of ice made by a refrigeration plant with four thirty-five ton compressors; lounges and easy chairs from the old Wattle Path; and a steam heating plant for the warmth of patrons. It was opened by the Mayor, Cr. Mitty on 10 March 1939. Wendy Lee Selover was employed by Kleiner to produce shows there in the following years:

I was mad on skating. Mr. Kleiner asked me to go in an ice-show which a woman from Sydney was producing. After the ice-show, when my Father come across from the Palais with my mother and we went into the office at St. Moritz, Mr. Kleiner asked me what I thought of the show. I told him I thought it was most inartistic and old-fashioned like the dancing schools used to be like when I was a child. He said: "All right Miss

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Smarty Britches, you get your bronze medal and I will put you on". I used to tear out of school every afternoon with my white boots and dash down to the Glaccie or St. Moritz. I was about seventeen when I got my bronze after a year of skating and I started teaching at St. Moritz. I only knew enough to be able to teach the next lesson. When I had given it I would go back to the Glaciarium and have another lesson so that I could teach the next day at St. Kilda. I began producing shows. I would discuss the ballet routines with mother, and Dad would help me build up a show with an opening and climax, and then orchestrate some music for me. Ray Dean would say: "What are you going to do next!" as I asked him to play a lot of classical pieces. Mrs. Nellie Kleiner insisted that if people paid money and had lessons they had to go in the shows and I had to find somewhere for them even if they were not show material. The Kleiners were sensible managers and I had to do what I was told.¹⁸

The scramble for profits evident at the fun-fair was seen elsewhere in the municipality. Spruikers on the foreshore had their counterparts inland where business was being drummed up as landowners capitalised on rising land prices and surging property development, and investors grew more confident. The face of St. Kilda was changing as rapidly as its amusements, and the city seemed to be booming as new buildings were constructed and the population increased. Money was being made, but some who loved St. Kilda as it was, wondered about the price it might pay in the future for such development, and feared they were losing control of their city.

St. Kilda was second only to Camberwell in the value of building permits issued in 1937. Development was dominated by flat construction. Low unit costs coupled with the high rents obtainable from new flats made them very profitable; the average flat cost less than £700 to erect in 1934, with self-contained units in large blocks being less than £500 per flat¹⁹. Rate revenue was boosted as more flats and fewer houses were built in St. Kilda than in any other municipality at the time. For example, whilst the Council approved 115 blocks of flats, only 11 applications for private houses were granted from 1 July 1934 to 30 June 1935. In comparison, during the same period, Camberwell Council authorised 431 homes and 19 blocks of flats.²⁰

Local estate agents were delighted with the development and maintained close links and representation on the St. Kilda City Council. The St. Kilda Branch of the Real Estate Agents and Auctioneers Institute of Victoria sent a note of thanks to Council in January 1936 for the courtesy and consideration it had shown to agents the previous year; it pointed out that estate agents regarded themselves as the city's natural town planners, and that they were always

looking for old property which could be developed and replaced with something "bigger and better", provided it showed ten per cent on capital outlay and increased municipal valuations.²¹

Streets altered as more flats were built. Robe Street, for example, had eight blocks of flats in 1930-31 with eight on the south side opposite the private homes of citizens including Councillors Samuel Raphael and Alfred Levy, and Herman Phillips, the showman; by 1940 there were eleven blocks of flats and four apartments on the south side, and five flats and one apartment house on the north side.

The design of many new flats was regarded as smart and progressive. So-called bachelor flats, designed for business people, were erected at the corner of Cowderoy Street and Canterbury Road in 1936, for instance, to the specifications of Mewton and Grounds, architects of Little Collins Street. The units offered "kitchenettes" with modern conveniences such as stainless steel sinks, built in cupboards and central heating; and a flat roof, decorated with shrubs in tubs and sun umbrellas, which gave a view over the bay and Albert Park. A reporter noted:

The aim of the proprietors has been to keep the cost of the building down without sacrificing appearance, comfort or good construction...Dark red and pale cream bricks have been used to form deep unbroken bands. The bands of light bricks have been set slightly back and carry the hingeless casement windows, the frames and sashes of which are painted white. The two main entrances have been emphasised by the deep windows, which light the stair hall, and by large flower boxes. A flat canopy is also carried over the entrance.²²

Shopping centres boomed because the population increased as more flats were built, and promoters rubbed their hands in glee as new commercial demands had to be satisfied. The *Village Belle* in Acland Street became one of the busiest shopping centres in Melbourne, and by 1938, shops were opening almost weekly. G. C. Coles opened a new St. Kilda branch store on a triangular piece of land between Barkly Streets and Acland Streets during that year. It embodied the latest ideas in chain store retailing and was designed by the office of the architect, Harry A. Norris:

The first impression gained of the interior is one of spaciousness and abundance of natural light. The high main roof, descending abruptly and sweeping in natural curves downwards and outwards to the side walls, imparts a "streamlined" effect which is one of the most noticeable characteristics of the store. The show windows are rounded at the entrance doors, the counters are curved at the ends, and it is indeed very difficult to find any harsh projecting cornice or abrupt architectural detail anywhere inside or outside the building.

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The ceilings are finished in cream and the walls textured in a warm and delicate tone. Counters are Queensland maple of dark-reddish brown color. The concrete floor is finished with variegated colored terrazzo. The confectionery counter, containing one of the most tastefully arranged displays in the store, has a white porcelain enamelled base relieved with black lines and polished steel strips. The color scheme on the outside of the building is simple but striking, the buff colored cement background with black facings of tile, lined with polished steel, contrasting effectively.²³

In comparison with such a modern store, older shops looked poorly lit, cluttered, old-fashioned and less convenient.

While Acland Street boomed, High Street fell out of favour as a shopping centre, largely due to the dangerous, unpleasant traffic conditions which prevailed there. Only sixty feet wide, it had become the most notorious bottleneck in Melbourne for it connected the important Brighton and St. Kilda Roads, which were one hundred and ninety eight feet wide; earlier plans of the Town Planning Commission of 1929 to widen it having been abandoned due to the Depression. Some who remembered the street in its former glory as a shopping centre regretted the change. The Mayor, Cr. Burnett Gray said in August 1934: "High-street as a shopping centre is now a memory and will never again be what it was before modern transport was introduced"²⁴, and he favoured the purchase of properties and the widening of the street. No action was taken and more customers, who had once shopped there, went to Prahran or the Central Business District in preference to a street where reckless motorists, sometimes three and four abreast, travelled at high speeds and occasionally crashed into verandah posts²⁵. Council noted with concern at their meeting on 6 July 1936 that fifty-one accidents with two fatalities occurred in High Street from 1 January 1936 to 30 June 1936.

Despite smart new developments in property and commerce, many people were unhappy about the changing face of St. Kilda, and believed that they were losing control of the very city which had been viewed as testimony to human might in the nineteenth century, when their predecessors had shaped it from scrub and swampland. Increased traffic on roads, and the flat development which most Councillors and realtors were so pleased with, made it a less pleasant place to live in many ways.

Motor traffic was increasing, not only in High Street, but throughout St. Kilda. Roads designed to carry horse drawn vehicles, had become passageways with unregulated intersections and ill defined

parking areas for motorists. There was no uniform traffic code because councils, the police and various transport authorities had no policy agreement. Local councils were expected to develop safety measures but St. Kilda City Council was unwilling to spend money on measures which they considered a state responsibility, especially when the State Government gained revenue from motor registration.

Nowhere were problems more evident than at the St. Kilda Junction. Police could not continuously man the Junction because of a lack of personnel, and Cr. Barnfield noted at a Council meeting on 3 August 1936 that the "dilapidated state of their gauntlets" made it difficult to distinguish them in the evening. In spite of RACV objections that such schemes infringed the rights of motorists, Council constructed a safety zone at the Junction in 1935. Barriers were marked with red hurricane lamps, and a red line, painted on the roadway at the intersection of Nelson Street and Punt Road, directed motorists travelling along Punt Road to skirt the zone before turning in. Congestion was relieved somewhat in November 1936 when gates, which blocked the road through Albert Park, were left open after sunset in order to improve access to the city, even though the roads through the park had not been designed to carry heavy traffic when they were reconstructed with a concrete centre and bituminous surface by sustenance workers.²⁶

St. Kilda City Councillors were suspicious of a Traffic Advisory Committee formed in 1936 to develop a uniform traffic code even though they were empowered to nominate representatives on the Committee. They thought councils would be expected to enforce the code and install regulatory signs at their own expense. The Traffic Advisory Committee suggested that cars should keep to the left, stop at stop signs and give way to the right but many motorists regarded such suggestions as harassment, and ignored them.

St. Kilda City Council also rejected the Committee's suggestions to paint "Stop" at intersections, erect stop signs on yellow octagonal discs with red reflectors, and to install traffic lights at first, because all costs were to be borne by them. However, they did frame By-law 118 to define parking areas throughout the municipality in 1937, and installed traffic lights at the Junction in 1939.

Many residents believed that the greatest threat to residential amenity however, was the construction offlats. Council by-laws were ambiguous and had not been framed with flats in mind. There was no standard building code, only limited coordination between neighbouring councils, and no independent body of review to rectify

anomalies. Builders who engaged in projects in various municipalities were often unsure about variations in local council by-laws and the relative powers of the Health Department and the MMBW. In August 1935, St.Kilda MLA Archie Michaelis urged the Government to revoke the authority of councils in framing building regulations. He referred to fine old homes in his own district which had been cut up, perhaps with the two original bathrooms shared by three or four flats, and concluded that: "We are likely to have slum dwelling in what is apparently a good type of house".²⁷

The very applicability of the St. Kilda building by-laws to flats was doubtful after a court ruling in October 1934. Mrs. Ruth Jackman, a resident of Vautier Street, Elwood tried to prevent the building of five self-contained flats, on land with a frontage of thirty-six feet ten inches and a depth of one hundred and thirty two feet. Her argument was that a flat was a dwelling house and that Council by-laws required a the minimum area of seven thousand square feet for attached houses. Judge Macfarlan ruled against her, saying that the erection of flats was not in the minds of the framers of the by-laws, and if Mrs. Jackman were correct, no more flats could be built in St. Kilda. The Supreme Court affirmed this ruling, deciding that legally, as well as in fact, "a flat was not a dwelling house, however much of a dwelling place it might be"²⁸. This ruling, coupled with the absence of restriction on height of buildings in streets more than forty-nine feet wide, was further incentive for property owners to tear down homes on small blocks and build flats like those erected in Blessington Street in 1935, where six flats were built on a forty by one hundred and thirteen foot block — too small for a single house, according to Council's own regulations.

Some residents believed that flats were destroying the municipality's charm, prestige and quality. The good citizens of Elwood were very upset that Council was permitting the tone of their suburb to deteriorate. The Elwood Progress Association made repeated protests to the Council. A deputation complained in February 1934 that:

An epidemic of flats has invaded Elwood..These flats are often crowded together on ridiculously small blocks, breaking the building alignment and otherwise spoiling the appearance of the whole street. Laundry, including girls' lingerie, is hung out of the windows with a very disfiguring effect.

The indignant Vice-President of the Association, W. D. James, gave the instance of one block where twelve flats and twelve garages had been erected on a plot of land only fifty-five feet deep²⁹. James

again led residents of Byrne Avenue, Elwood, in 1935 who protested to Council that the value of their homes was depreciating because of their proximity to "socially inferior" flats. He said that on one side of the desirable street there were very fine homes which were well tended, and on the other were blocks of flats on depths of fifty-five feet; and that these conditions were becoming typical in Elwood. He added: "Flats were destructive of the best citizenship and home builders should have the protection of the council against the intrusion of them into streets of family residences"³⁰. Supporting his case, the *St Kilda Press* of 25 May 1935 argued that the city was becoming "pock-pitted" by undesirable buildings, and the one family home would cease to exist unless zoning was introduced so that St. Kilda would not be "blighted" any further. A year later Cr. Robinson said at the annual meeting of the Progress Association that although the increase of flats had increased rate revenue, "they were attracting a type of people that were not desirable in the best interests of St. Kilda".³¹

There were health problems in connection with the development of flats and the subsequent population increase. The Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Vance, reported that the Council garbage destructor was becoming overloaded. The garbage collectors' task was more difficult because they had to climb flights of stairs to collect more garbage tins from flats. Garbage accumulated in some yards and fell from open drains. As the vermin problem increased, Council appointed a rat-catcher who laid over 5296 baits in back yards in 1937.

Dr. Vance also attributed an unhealthy increase in the noise of radios, dogs, cats and "squalling birds" to flat development, and advocated the use of more sound-resistant materials in their construction. He urged Council to ban dogs from flats because after their owners vacated buildings the stench could not be removed from some flats; in one case the whole of the flooring and skirting boards had to be relaid. He was concerned that the subdivision of large estates meant that the municipality was losing many large gardens which were the "lungs for the city". He deplored the practice, which was particularly marked in the West and South Wards, of constructing new buildings in front of older ones, which restricted existing structures' access to sunlight and ventilation and created the potential for slums. Dr. Vance's concern about St. Kilda's prestige also made him oppose the conversion of *Aylesbury*, a two storied brick residence in spacious grounds at 71 Queens Road, into a convalescent home for nervous people in 1935 because of the situation of the premises "in

one of the best residential areas in St. Kilda" and "the risk of some of the neurotics becoming a nuisance by their behaviour".³²

The subject of slums was sensitive because the Council suspected the Dunstan Government was using housing inquiries and slum investigations as a means of eroding the power of Local Government. Dunstan had appointed a Housing Investigation Slum Abolition Board in 1936 to formulate a short term policy of rehousing for areas needing immediate retreatment, and a long term policy for town planning which included the establishment of the Housing Commission in Victoria in 1938. The Secretary of the Board, J.H. Davey, and other members conferred with St. Kilda Councillors at the Town Hall on 4 May 1937 and were told that Council was reluctant to force elderly people to leave condemned houses because of the acute shortage of housing. Council accepted the Board's classification of certain doubtful houses and streets in the municipality, but satisfied it that there were no housing conditions in St. Kilda which it was unable to deal with itself because By-Law 115 had been passed in March 1937. This prescribed stricter regulations for the dimensions and materials used in the construction of buildings. No house erected in future was to have an area of less than six hundred square feet, a frontage of less than thirty-five feet, and an allotment less than five thousand square feet; in the case of flats, only fifty per cent of the allotment could be built on.

The price which might have to be paid for drumming up business at any cost and selling St. Kilda, and the toll the Depression was still exacting, remained to be reckoned with in St. Kilda.

II. STORMS

In November 1934, a furious storm rolled in over Port Phillip Bay, lashing St. Kilda and breaking the sea-wall. A two tonne metal buoy broke loose from its moorings and dashed against the wall along Beaconsfield Parade. The asphalt footpaths between Elwood Canoe Club and Point Ormond were washed away. Concrete blocks and wooden sheathing were strewn across Marine Parade. Brooke's Boatshed collapsed in the gale and boats were carried to safety on to the Lower Esplanade. Mussels, squid, and sea-weed were banked up along the beach, and tonnes of wet sand were thrown on to the roadway from Blessington Street to Point Ormond. The men's baths were almost wrecked and gales of one hundred kilometres an hour

drove sea water up the Elwood canal³³. Sand banked up within the Baths' walls, and the wooden reconstruction work undertaken after November 1934 was damaged by further storms. The hastily repaired sea wall was ripped open again in January 1935; Marine Parade closed to traffic again in April because it was blocked by sand and timber; and Foam Street was inundated in May. After waves beat the sea-wall at Elwood in November 1935, furniture floated in homes and boys delivered the paper from rowing boats.³⁴

St. Kilda saw other kinds of storms as well, and even those clashes which seemed petty were signs of the turmoil of the time. Churchgoers and Councillors' attempted to impose their standards of decency on the entire population, and their failure was yet another sign of increasing disrespect for authorities who had once held sway.

Some citizens believed it was time to take a stand against the erosion of moral standards in St. Kilda. They complained loudly about lax standards of dress on the beach and gambling on the foreshore, and enlisted considerable support on Council, particularly amongst the enemies of the Foreshore Committee. They believed it was most important to protest about shifting standards in St. Kilda for it remained the capital of Victorian pleasure, and if standards slipped there, the rest of the state would follow suit. Sadly, they saw that even the King of England was abdicating his responsibility and failing to set an example as he continued his improper liaison with Mrs. Simpson. Clearly, such moral rot had to stop and their city would be damned should their mission fail. However, pleasure seekers were less likely to obey regulations which had governed behaviour in the past, and do as they were told as they had been expected to do during the Great War and the Great Depression. Many showed little reverence for kill-joys who seemed so self-righteous and humourless they could not be taken seriously and were called wowsers.

Bathers ignored regulations about swimming costumes because they were so outdated. The relevant Council by-law pre-dated the Great War, and required swimmers to wear a neck to knee costume of two pieces with sleeves to the elbow. Councillors argued that they retained it as a safeguard but it was rarely invoked. Some spectators, however, were offended by the evil they imagined in brief, figure-hugging costumes. Churchgoers decided to form the St. Kilda Churches Citizens' League to lobby Council and support Councillors such as Cr. William Buck who were prepared to speak out on their behalf. Subsequently, Council reviewed the regulations after vestry-

men of Christ Church, Acland Street, complained in 1935 about women walking past, wearing backless, tightly fitting short costumes, and about men in half-skirted trunks. Council passed another by-law requiring bathers in public streets to cover themselves with a wrap from shoulder to knee. After complaints that too much leniency was still being allowed in 1937, Council proceeded against thirteen offenders in April; including men who let their shoulder straps down, people who left the beach in swimming costumes, and women who undressed in the lavatories at Point Ormond and Elwood. *Truth* commented on 22 May 1937:

Time marches on...everywhere except at St. Kilda, where the clock has gone into reverse...Hysterical Grundyism is at the back of it, and the laughter and gaiety that should be the atmosphere of our premier watering-place is dulled by the puling puerilities of an outmoded Puritanism...It was towards the end of last summer that St. Kilda came out in one of its periodic rashes of indignant virtue, and the Mrs. Grundies on the council began to pull woeful faces and talk of impropriety and indecency every time they sighted sea-going sylphs in shorts or in jazzy bathing togs.

Prosecutions did not deter bathers, and the *Argus* of 5 January 1938 observed that any individual obeying the law in regard to swimming costumes would create a sensation. Councillor Burnett Gray agreed, pointing out that neck to knee costumes were not obtainable in Melbourne any more³⁶. After great deliberation, Council approved half-skirted bathing trunks recommended by the Royal Life Saving Society in September 1938 but warned swimmers who wore the popular one piece trunks that they were in danger of prosecution.

There was great alarm in the Protestant churches when a highly popular gambling game called *Skillball* started at the funfair. W. O. J. Phillips finally found the fortune he sought after Luna Park had objected to his auto-scooters at the Swirl building and he introduced a new game there of doubtful legality. Known as *Keero* and *Fascination in America*, he called it *Skillball* because its legality depended on skill being involved. The game was approved by the Foreshore Committee which welcomed it as an opportunity to increase its own revenue, and it soon raised the cost of rental of the Swirl site as Phillips' game boomed. *Skillball* attracted crowds of over one hundred thousand people to the foreshore on some evenings. Players in the Swirl building sat on stools at a counter surrounding a long enclosure. Inside, attendants in white Eton jackets watched over a

honeycomb of small compartments numbered from one to seventy-five. Players paid threepence for a card with twenty-four numbers plus a blank in the centre, and were given four rubber balls to throw at the boxes. If, on a rare occasion, four throws produced numbers making a straight line on the player's card, then the skillful thrower won. However, if no one succeeded, various players were invited to throw. The numbers were announced and recorded on an illuminated sign; this continued until someone completed a row on their card and took their winnings.³⁶

The controversial game exposed further rifts between some Councillors and the Foreshore Committee. The St. Kilda Churches Citizens' League asked Councillors to make the Foreshore Committee close the game down. While some Councillors saw the issue as a means of discrediting the Foreshore Committee, others believed that members of the St. Kilda Churches Citizens' League were unprogressive kill-joys who would retard St. Kilda's popularity. After W. O. J. Phillips was fined £20 at the St. Kilda Court of Petty Sessions for conducting a gambling game, he took the case to the Supreme Court, then the High Court, which upheld the decision against him in August 1936. Council became even more divided when he became a St. Kilda City Councillor himself in the same month, replacing the retiring Councillor and Mayor, F. E. Dixon. Soon after his election, the Foreshore Committee approved the continuation of a slightly altered version of the game. After a heated meeting, marred by "foot banging", "angry shouts, the shaking of fists, quotations from the Bible, attacks on the Church and the liberal use of epithets", Council decided to support the St. Kilda Churches Citizens' League. The Mayor, Cr. Alfred Levy joined a deputation in December which included the strait-laced Archbishop of Melbourne, Dr. Head, the Reverend George Judkins of the Methodist Church, and Mrs. J. Downing of the National Council of Women. However Cr. Dawkins refused them entry to the Foreshore Committee office and cheeky onlookers cheered as Dr. Head walked away in indignation.³⁸

The Foreshore Committee was supported by over eight thousand people who signed a petition in defence of the game, and some interested in its continuance engaged the services of Eugene Gorman KC. to make representations to the Foreshore Committee. Gorman claimed that the petitioners felt "an indignation equal to, but different from, that of the rather ostentatious professional moral athletes, who have been so vociferous in this matter". He argued that while the more wealthy could find recreations in their clubs, persons of limited

means could receive "a little bit of excitement from Skillball which distracted their minds from ordinary problems"³⁹. The game spread to the Green Knoll, Earl's Court and other buildings beyond the control of the Foreshore Committee, and Cr. Morley believed that if money games were extended any more "St. Kilda would become notorious as the Monte Carlo of Australia. They would sweep through St. Kilda and into other suburbs if they were not stopped now"⁴⁰. However the Town Clerk advised that Council's jurisdiction covered only the building and not the game which might be played there. Further protests to the Minister of Lands, Mr. Lind, were unsuccessful. Dr. Head's claim that gambling was worse than polio because it ravaged the minds of the young did not sway Lind, who infuriated Councillors by contended it was a matter for the St. Kilda City Council and refused to disband the Foreshore Committee. The game ended after Cr. Phillips was again convicted at the St. Kilda Court of Petty Sessions for running a common gaming house in March 1939, and the Supreme Court disallowed an appeal to the High Court.

Members of the St. Kilda Churches Citizens' League were much more silent about the matter of prostitution, for that was totally beyond the pale. Nonetheless, its increasing incidence forced a reluctant Council to take some action, and convinced more residents who regarded themselves as respectable that St. Kilda was definitely not the place for them to live. The number of prostitutes in St. Kilda had increased after the City of South Melbourne passed a by-law prohibiting soliciting in May 1935, inducing more women to work in St. Kilda because it was more difficult for the police to charge them there in the absence of a relevant by-law. Recognising some action was needed, Council passed By-law 117 on 19 July 1937 which made brothel keeping an offence and prohibited any prostitute from soliciting or accosting anyone, or loitering in a public place. The Police Arrest Register, recording convictions and charges from 19 August 1937 to 17 November 1938 at the St. Kilda Court of Petty Sessions, showed that four charges were made under By-law 117 during the period. The first charge was laid on 31 August 1938 against a woman who loitered in Fitzroy Street. Another was fined £5 on 3 November 1938 for the same offence and for refusing to state her place of abode as the by-law stipulated. A woman who was sentenced to three months imprisonment on 14 November 1938 for keeping a brothel at 71 Marine Parade had her sentence reduced to a fine of £15 after an appeal, and charges

were dismissed against four women in the house suspected of having insufficient legal means of support.⁴¹

The Depression dwarfed local storms about propriety and standards for it continued to cause immense suffering, and made others ask different questions about morality. Unemployment, it seemed, was insoluble as far as governments were concerned and their idea of work for sustenance was often cruel in practice. Some fifty St. Kilda men were employed by Brighton Council at Elsternwick Park in July 1934. After a long walk to the site, they worked in the mud: emaciated, in tattered clothes and bare-footed. The overseer was concerned that he would be unable to gain sufficient work from them to satisfy conditions so Chamberlin authorised the supply of fifteen pairs of boots to the men so that they could do the work as required⁴². Others were sent to the Ovens Valley to work for sustenance for twelve weeks the winter of 1934. They were not paid on rainy days and had to endure wet boots, clothes, blankets, and tents⁴³. When such work was completed the men went back to the starvation level of sustenance on lower rates.

Relief provisions changed frequently and were so technical they sometimes even baffled the Town Clerks, Frederick Chamberlin and his successor William Greaves, who both usually revelled in red tape. William Greaves took office after Chamberlin collapsed and died in the Town Hall grounds in October 1934. Like Chamberlin, he too was born in England and served his apprenticeship as Deputy Town Clerk prior to his appointment, ensuring that the administrative procedures established in the nineteenth century were perpetuated in St. Kilda until his retirement in the 1960s. The fact that such experienced bureaucrats were sometimes baffled by unemployment regulations indicated their complexity. Regarding complicated regulations as another means of controlling the unemployed, the Registrar at the St. Kilda Town Hall, W. E. Wilkinson, was annoyed by the knowledge and impudence of one applicant whom he suspected of making a false claim in regard to his wife's earnings from housekeeping:

He appears to have a great idea of the technicalities and legalities of the administration of Sustenance. I pointed out that since January his wife had received 30/- monthly which was equal to 7/6 weekly. I have deducted one unit, Mr. _____ maintaining that I have not the right and requesting that I write giving him the Regulation under which the power appears as he states that he has correspondence from the Minister which protects him from my handling of the matter.⁴⁴

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Though the numbers of such applicants declined, relief organisations still had many cases to assist. The Municipalities of St. Kilda and Port Melbourne were combined into one unemployment district for administrative purposes in May 1936 due to dropping numbers, but to the hall-keeper's displeasure St. Kilda Town Hall continued to house the Registrar until another office was established in Carlisle Street. The unemployed still relied on the St. Kilda Unemployment Organisation for extra vegetables, clothing, food, medicine, rent, fares, firewood and occasional employment. Increasing numbers also sought help from the St. Kilda Ladies' Benevolent Society, as its Annual Reports showed:

Cases assisted by St. Kilda Ladies' Benevolent Society, 1936-1939

July 1936-June 1937 July 1937-June 1938 July 1938-June 1939

273

360

449

The polio epidemic of 1937 and 1938 worsened some poor families' situation as a number lost jobs as domestic servants because of it. The deadly disease was at its height in 1937 when twenty-six cases were reported in the municipality; and according to the Health Department, from 21 June 1937 to 9 March 1938, there were 1,979 cases in the State, of which St. Kilda had 33, Brighton 30, Camberwell 40, Port Melbourne 38, Footscray 89, Coburg 89, and Brunswick 88⁴⁵. The causes of the disease were unknown and many doctors linked it with lower living standards. Dr. Vance noted in his *Health Report* for Council in 1937 that in St. Kilda polio had "showed itself in the smaller streets and houses almost exclusively. Latterly, however, it has invaded the better class houses". Many wealthy people were dismayed that the disease was prevalent in their better class homes in St. Kilda, Brighton, Elsternwick and Caulfield as well as in the industrial suburbs, and cast suspicious eyes at their servants. The St. Kilda Ladies' Benevolent Society reported in its *Annual Report* of 1938 that many poorer families experienced renewed distress as the income from domestic service on which they depended was no longer available because they were being dismissed in case they were carriers of the disease. Another prime suspect as a carrier was the Elwood Canal which ran through some of the most afflicted areas south of the Yarra. Many called it a plague canal, and in response to complaints, the MMBW announced in October 1937 that it would clear and widen the upper reaches of Elster Creek.

The Depression also made people more ideologically confused at a time when clarity was needed about the meaning of *fascism*. The unevenness of the Depression had sharpened class consciousness and made more people endorse Marxist principles and clearly identify their class enemies' interests in the profits of war, and voice suspicions of war-mongers. In turn, pacifists were branded communists, and restricted to a degree which made local members of the anti-war movement question the commitment of Federal, State and Local Governments to democratic principles and call them repressive.

Official conviction that peace activists were communists was illustrated by an incident in St. Kilda in 1934. After accepting a booking for the Town Hall from Frank Nugent for a National Congress Against War in November 1934, Councillors became perturbed by press reports that the main organising body, the Victorian Council Against War, had resolved that increased Federal Defence spending was preparation for an inter-imperialist war for the re-division of world markets. Members of the Council included Vance Palmer, Maurice Blackburn, Mrs. Boyce-Gibson, Percy Laidler, and local representatives who had formed a St. Kilda branch in August 1933 in Jack Maughan, an artist of 15 Irwell Street, St. Kilda, N. E. (Nattie) Seeligson, a Marxist poet and Secretary of the Victorian Council Against War, and J. Dinan of 23 Meredith Street, Elwood. St. Kilda City Councillors sought advice from T. W. White, their pukka MHR, as to whether the organisation was "bona fide and single-minded in its appeal against war" or "covertly using an appeal to the humanitarianism of our people to propagate communism or revolutionary ideals". White immediately referred the matter to the Commonwealth Police and Attorney-General's Department, and Captain Brown of the Investigation Branch of the Attorney-General's Department advised the Town Clerk that Nugent was recognised as a communist, and that:

Communists under the guise of swagmen are now travelling from other States to Melbourne in order to take part in demonstrations counter to the expressions of loyalty on the occasion of the Duke's visit, and actually some of these swagmen have already arrived. Some time in October 1933, the Brisbane Executive of the Communist Party received a communication from J. James, National Secretary of the Anti-War Movement (through the Communist Headquarters in Sydney) stating that the aims of the Communist Party, through the Anti-War Movement, were

- (1) General strike of munition workers;
- (2) Mutiny against Army and Navy;

- (3) of all shipping, railway and other transport industries;
- (4) Gigantic strike of all miners; and
- (5) A farmer's general revolt. ⁴⁶

After such intelligence, it was not surprising that the Town Clerk refunded the booking deposit for the Town Hall to Nugent immediately. No reasons were given. After many letters of protest from individuals, some clergy, unions and Labor Party branches, Council thought it politic to receive a deputation from Frank Nugent, but took no notice of the argument that they were denying free speech.

Soon afterwards, the Lyons Government banned Egon Erwin Kisch, who had been invited by the Victorian Council Against War to speak at the Congress, from entering Australia. Kisch, who was described as in the press as a visiting German Jewish novelist, and an escapee from a Hitler concentration camp broke his leg when he jumped ashore at Port Melbourne in defiance of the ban. Subsequently, the High Court dismissed the Government's argument that he could not stay in Australia after failing a dictation test given in Gaelic, because Gaelic was not a European language as required by the *Immigration Act*. While the distortion of the *Immigration Act* made opponents of the Lyons Government call it fascist, Kisch's arrival also confirmed the prejudice of others that many Jewish trouble-makers were communists, and that Hitler's actions against them were well deserved.

The Spanish Civil War also awakened great idealism in residents who dreamt of resisting the dictatorial Franco, and standing with the freedom fighters in the anti-fascist cause. Some like Tony La Gruta, the violinist of Robe Street, would meet friends like Les Williams in coffee lounges, or Brian Fitzpatrick, the civil libertarian, at the Italian Society and brood about the war, and what he should do. Then, when Spain fell, he agonisingly tried to reconcile anti-fascism with the idea of appeasement of Germany, Italy and Japan in order to prevent another evil war.

The anti-semitism seen abroad as Hitler's storm-troopers struck Jews down was of deep concern to Jews in St. Kilda. The cataclysm in Germany was distant yet they keep a watchful eye out for any signs of anti-Jewish sentiment in their own community. In 1936, a year of intensifying persecution of German Jews following Hitler's Nuremberg laws, many were shocked by an incident which showed signs of such sentiment in their own Council, which represented the orderly

British tradition of government which they cherished as Anglo-Jews. Although they were moved by the support they received from non-Jewish people, the incident made them more insecure about their standing in St. Kilda.

Some Councillors decided that the most emotional ceremony Australians had devised in the name of peace, should be changed in the name of Christ. As part of its desire to take a decent Christian stand, a Council sub-committee announced that the traditional undenominational Anzac Service, introduced in 1917 by the Mayor, Cr. John Love with the cooperation of Reverend Danglow, would be replaced by one which would "conform to Christian ideals". The Mayor, Cr. Dixon, explained that the majority of citizens in St. Kilda would have a service which met the full expression of their faith, and said: "Should they be debarred always to meet the wishes of the 3000 Jews in the community?". A number of people wrote letters to him commending his stand: Reverend Hugh Buntine of the Elwood Presbyterian Church advised that he would attend the Anzac service in St. Kilda for the first time because previously he had been unable to: "To me attendance at a religious service where I am forbidden to introduce the name of my Saviour, Jesus Christ, is a denial of the Master I have sworn to serve"; Archbishop Head believed Australians should not be ashamed of being a Christian nation; and a solicitor and Commissioner for Affidavits wrote:

Do stick to your guns — I don't like Hitler but really do you blame some of his antics though there's such a thing as moderation. There seem to be some minorities that give them an inch and they'll take an ell and why the "ell" should they rule the roost; after all this is a Christian country, why should we allow an offence to be put on us by the authors of the Crucifixion who seem to want to keep on doing it.⁴⁷

The Mayor's announcement was greeted with a storm of opposition. Danglow advised with dignity and profound regret that Jews could not attend the proposed service. He said he asked for no favours, and added: "I think it a pity that anything should be done that may drive a wedge between two sections of the people at a time when everything should be done to enable people to work together"⁴⁸. His heart was warmed by the unsolicited support he received from clergy and citizens: Canon Crotty of the Christ Church Vicarage, believed the service should advance the cause of peace and opposed any change which would cause discord and exclusion; Reverend Ewan Watts of the East St. Kilda Congregational Church protested against "continued attempts at the alienation and humiliation of the Jewish

community"; Miss Davern of Elsternwick wrote to the *Argus* on 4 April 1936: "Herr Hitler has some fine henchmen here. Small things are the beginning of big movements for good or evil"; Cr. Mitty said that enlistment in the A.I.F. had not been governed by creed; and Thomas Unsworth, Secretary of the St. Kilda Branch of the RSSILA, recalled that the leader of the A.I.F. was a Jew, that no parochial authority said there was no time or place for Jews in 1914-18, and that thousands of soldiers were attended to at the St. Kilda Patriotic Lounge by "a wonderful and large-hearted woman, a Jewess", Lucie Hallenstein.

Many of the clergy suggested that in a spirit of tolerance, St. Kilda should have a secular civic ceremony so the Council capitulated, shocked by the adverse national publicity it had received. The decision was also welcomed by Fr. Mangan and Fr. McKenna, who were former padres in the A.I.F., and by Archbishop Mannix as well, who said that Catholics too, would be conscientiously able to attend the service for the first time⁴⁹. Danglow expressed his gratitude for the "loyal and brotherly way the Christian clergy of St. Kilda had treated him in the attitude he felt bound to take up" and believed the episode was no storm in a teacup, but had some important lessons which Jews should not overlook:

...no matter how firm and secure may appear our situation, we Jews never know when and from what quarter a shaft, sometimes a poisoned one, may be directed against our community, or how far-reaching and mischievous may be the results of such an attack, particularly one launched as had just happened under the cover of religious zeal.⁵⁰

The Town Hall was filled for the Anzac Service on 26 April 1936. General Sir J.J. Talbot Hobbs told Jews, Gentiles and non-believers that they should prepare for war; and Brigadier-General J. Campbell Stewart, a resident of St. Kilda who had commanded the 5th Battalion, the 57th Battalion and the 14th Infantry Brigade in the Great War, said: "The younger generation will have to defend Australia sooner or later".⁵¹

Many Jews in St. Kilda realised more clearly day by day that Hitler was unleashing reserves of anti-semitism for a fearsome end, and that appeasement could not be countenanced. They were told about what was happening by refugees like Dr. Herman Sanger, who had first hand knowledge of the situation in Berlin, and had visited Paris and New York to speak about the perilous plight of Jews in Germany from December 1935 to March 1936. He was warned that his life was in danger in Berlin, and was sent to Temple Beth Israel

in St. Kilda by the World Union for Progressive Judaism in 1936. He arrived in August on the ship *Vimiale* and his congregation settled into its new synagogue at 78 Alma Road after Sir Isaac Isaacs laid the foundation stone there on 11 July 1937⁵². Knowledge of his experience, his wisdom and his sympathy for other refugees attracted more German and Austrian Jews to his congregation after they found cheap rental accommodation in St. Kilda. Dr. Sanger welcomed them, and emphasised the need for tolerance and fellowship between Christians and Jews, who were both prepared to live and die for the same moral principles⁵³. Sanger was an influential champion of Zionism as well and became vice-president of the southern section of the Victorian Zionist Organisation in November 1937. Although Rabbi Danglow did not share Sanger's views, he too warned his congregation of impending doom. His sermon at the St. Kilda Synagogue in June 1938 was titled *Civilisation in Danger*:

The lamentable world happenings of the last few years have sadly disillusioned those who had formerly believed that modern civilisation was fast approaching its zenith. The utter disregard for human life and suffering, the wanton destruction of property, the unrelenting oppression of the weak and the defenceless, the unashamed violation of covenants, and the challenging demands of truculent dictators, are a mournful commentary on our aforesaid boasted civilisation...all world war may easily happen unless the present world madness soon abates.⁵⁴

More and more European refugees were arriving in St. Kilda because of persecution in Europe, yet some extremely anglicised Jewish residents were reluctant to welcome them with open arms. Smarting from the Anzac Day incident, they feared that such conspicuous non-British arrivals would breed anti-semitic feeling in the community, and jeopardise their own standing as worthy Hebrews. A sensitive observer, who later wrote an autobiography, was aware of such fears. Amirah Gutstadt was the daughter of Itzak and Manka, Polish Jews, communists and atheists who had developed a prospering handbag manufacturing business after Itzak's arrival in Melbourne in 1928. They emulated the pattern common to other successful Jews in moving from north of the Yarra to the southern suburbs, and settled in Elwood. The Gutstadts, who anglicised their surname to Gust, knew that their attachment to the history and culture of European Jewry and to Yiddish made them Jewish but Amirah sensed her difference to several Anglo-Jewish families in Elwood whom her father called more Australian than the Australians. The Gusts soon saw that they made some of their neighbours very uncomfortable by their presence:

They thought that we gave Jews (or Hebrews, as they preferred to call themselves) a bad name, that eastern European Jews, with "ghetto habits" were obvious, were disliked and therefore gave rise to antisemitism.⁵⁵

She noticed newer arrivals in European Jewish refugees in Acland Street with their "outlandishly conspicuous hand-waving gestures" and long coats. Sadly, for a time, she became more embarrassed by her mother's warm vivacious "un-Australian" ways because she thought they might attract unwelcome attention for she knew that Australians regarded refugees as alien. Her adolescent confusion about her identity, and the way she should behave to gain acceptance from Australians was compounded by her sense of Australians' vapid view of their own identity, for, as she learnt at school, Australia was, above all, a faraway part of the British Empire.

Many Jewish residents who genuinely wanted to assist the refugees faced a great dilemma in dealing with those they feared might endanger their own position in the community. They knew too, that in some cases, refugees were being portrayed by conservative Gentile sectors of society as sympathisers of communism, a creed many members of the St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation abhorred. The safest course often seemed to be a blend of compassion and caution, so some joined the Australian Jewish Welfare Society, founded in 1937 to sponsor migrants, care for them on arrival, and defuse any likelihood of anti-semitism. I.H. Boas, the President of the St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation, became President of the Society, and he maintained that the Australian Jewish community did not think a large influx of migrants was in the interests of the immigrants themselves, and that newcomers should be "Australianised" as soon as possible⁵⁶. This view was shared by the Lyons government which was represented at the Evian Conference, called by President Roosevelt to assist refugees from Nazism in April 1938, by T. W. White, as the Minister for Trade and Customs. White emphasised in strong terms that Australia would not increase the quota of refugees to its shore.

Such quotas seemed more and more heartless to Jewish families who knew time was running out for Jews in Europe. Although Senator McLeay, the Minister for External Affairs, had announced that refugees would be accepted if they had £200 landing money or £50 and a sponsor who could guarantee accommodation and employment, this was of little comfort. Mr. Holloway, the MHR for Melbourne Ports, raised the question in the House of Representatives about the manner in which Jews were being hounded in Europe, and said on 22 November 1938:

Men and women from St. Kilda come to me night and day and plead with me to urge the Minister to endeavour to get landing permits for their relatives in order to save them from the concentration camps.⁵⁷

On 1 December 1938, John McEwen, the Minister for the Interior, announced that fifteen thousand refugees would be accepted over the next three years in accordance with the government's policy against "undue aggregation of aliens in any particular towns or centres".⁵⁸

Eminent Jews tried to dampen down the possibility of increasing anti-semitism which they believed might follow the announcement. At an Australian Jewish Welfare Society dinner at St. Kilda Town Hall on 2 December 1938, where subscriptions of over £17,000 were made to assist refugees by the audience of seven hundred, Colonel Harold Cohen MLA stressed that emigration would be closely supervised and groups of Jewish migrants would not be able to settle in communities. To emphasise the breadth of his concern, Sir Isaac Isaacs expressed his horror at the cruel attacks of Nazis on Christian churches as well, said the German people were to be pitied for the atrocities of their masters, and warned that it was no part of the objects of the Jewish Welfare Society to procure the immigration of refugees or support mass immigration or group settlement of aliens. He said: "We yield to no one in the belief that no aliens whatever should be allowed to settle in Australia except on their own individual merits and qualifications for true Australian citizenship"⁵⁹. So frightened were they that refugees might aggravate anti-semitism, the Australian Jewish Welfare Society advised newcomers in May 1939:

Above all do not speak German in the streets and in the trams. Modulate your voices. Do not make yourself conspicuous anywhere by walking with a group of persons, all of whom are loudly speaking a foreign language. Remember that the welfare of the old-established Jewish communities in Australia, as well as the welfare of every migrant, depends upon your personal behaviour. Jews collectively are judged by individuals. You, personally, have a very grave responsibility.⁶⁰

Soon, such a need to submerge identity would be increasingly questioned by Jews in St. Kilda who saw Hitler's attempts to exterminate their race as good reason to express and preserve a distinctive cultural identity.

The likelihood of war seemed more and more probable as storm clouds gathered in Europe. Authorities began to make early preparations for war. Tanks, followed by howitzers and troops under the command of Colonel C. S. Steele, rolled down Fitzroy Street on Australia Day 1939. They were part of a recruiting drive conducted by the Austra-

lian Defence League to swell the ranks of volunteers for the Militia, known derisively as "chocoos" or chocolate soldiers. Colonel E.F. Harrison, the Chairman of the Australian Defence League, told the thousands of people assembled in front of Luna Park that Australia needed to be prepared for any emergency⁶¹. Billy Hughes came to St. Kilda a month later, as Minister for External Affairs and Chairman of the Cabinet sub-committee in charge of recruiting, to support the formation of a St. Kilda branch of the Australian Defence League and encourage men to enlist.⁶²

Other preparations and displays of early concern included the establishment of a Women's Voluntary National Register and State civil defence plans. The Federal Government established a register in February 1939 of women willing to provide comforts for fighting forces, and run hostels and rest homes. Over eighty St. Kilda women registered by July 1939 including conservative members of the National Council of Women, the Victoria League, the St. Kilda Branch of the Country Women's Association, the Housewives' Association, the Women's Auxiliary of the RSSILA, and the United Country Party. Other defence strategies primarily involving men were shrouded in greater secrecy for a while. Secret civil defence strategies were divulged to Town Clerks and Councillors by the State Emergency Council of Civil Defence on 17 May 1939. They were based on a British model and made municipal boundaries the sub-divisions for defence organisation⁶³. Immediately, Council swung into action. Cr. Edward C. Mitty was appointed District Warden for St. Kilda, and Brighton Road State School, the Town Hall, the St. Kilda Cricket Club buildings in Fitzroy Street, the City Baths and the Maison de Luxe were listed as buildings suitable for adaptation as First Aid Posts. This degree of cooperation was more than some other Councils displayed in May 1939, even though the Premier A.A. Dunstan called it a question of "all in" on 26 June 1939.

The response to such schemes was not as unanimous as authorities desired, partly because of some people's sad or bitter memories, or an intuitive sense that they should become not become involved in war too readily. Some in St. Kilda still remembered Hughes as the man who had split the Labor Party, or the orator who had persuaded family members or friends to go to their death over twenty years before or enlist for a war from which they returned to face ill health and unemployment, and knowledge of the fearful blood-bath which began in 1914 made it impossible for them to respond with innocent enthusiasm to the calls to arms again. Some who had fended for

themselves during the Depression had grown to distrust appeals to defend the common good or the Empire. Some who remembered Gallipoli or Sir Otto Niemeyer were reluctant to back Britain again. Nor did some of them trust Robert Menzies, the new Prime Minister after the death of Lyons. Workers had seen the pieces of scrap iron bearing anti-Japanese propaganda thrown over their fences in St. Kilda in November 1937, bearing slogans such as "Stop iron going to Japan to kill Chinese people", "Boycott Japanese goods: Stop iron going to Japan", and pictures of a Japanese aeroplane dropping bombs on people below", and asked why "Pig-Iron Bob" defended the sale of scrap iron to Japan, and whose side the government was on. Furthermore, many of the most strident proponents of war were seen to be aligned with established interests, or were regarded as class enemies who had looked after themselves in the early 1930s, so their strictures were ignored.

III. SIDE-SHOW

Most citizens of St. Kilda rolled up willingly when war was eventually declared on 3 September by Robert Menzies. In many instances, they modelled their response on that made in 1914, and complied with the special measures taken in times of war. However, living as they did in a pleasure resort, it became very obvious that many others saw no need to disrupt their fun for any far-off war in Europe, and it was not long before patriotic citizens became very concerned about this attitude. The main reason for flagging interest was the belief that Australia was in no danger. Many, uninterested in ideology, thought the war seemed like a distant side-show and saw no need to roll up unless their lives were endangered, sometimes seeing the warnings of those who urged them to fight fascism as being as exaggerated as the warnings of wowsers who would spoil their pleasure.

Many patriotic responses made in St. Kilda when war was declared in 1939 were very similar to those made in 1914. The Mayor, Cr. W. O. J. Phillips, expressed regret that the Empire was at war with Germany, and expressed Council's unfailing confidence in the British Empire, and unswerving loyalty to the King at the meeting of 11 September 1939, echoing the words of his predecessor in 1914.

The St. Kilda Football Club considered changing its colours of red, white and black, which were those of Germany, as it had done in 1915 when it used red, yellow and black. It decided against this change,

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however, wanting nothing to upset players making the club's first appearance in the finals since 1918. Nonetheless, St. Kilda's legendary losing streak continued as they were defeated by Collingwood in the preliminary final.

Coincidence reinforced the similarity of the outbreak of both wars for R. S. (Stan) Veale, a resident of Joyce Street, Elwood since 1920, and the Naval Extended Defence Officer in charge of the Bass Strait approaches to Port Phillip. He ordered Australia's first shot to be fired at 1.45 a.m. on 4 September 1939 from Fort Nepean to deter a small trading vessel which had defied attempts to prevent its entry into Port Phillip Bay. The shell fell across the bow and the vessel hove to immediately. As a young cadet, Veale had also hoisted the signal on the Examination Service vessel *Alvina* on 5 August 1914 which had caused the Empire's first shot in the First World War to be fired from Point Nepean at Port Phillip Heads preventing the German vessel *Prinz* from departing.⁶⁵

The St. Kilda Patriotic Society, first formed during the First World War, was reconvened to organise all patriotic activities in St. Kilda, including branches of the Australian Comforts Fund and the Australian Red Cross Society. Miss Bessie Swan, who had been a stalwart worker for them then, organised her work circle again and superintended the knitting of balacavas, mufflers, scarves, socks and kneecaps using the same patterns she had employed twenty five years before. By February 1940, seven hundred and sixty two hot, woolly articles, perfect in every detail due to the craft of her workers, were despatched to the sands of the Middle East by the Australian Comforts Fund. Women also rolled bandages and old linen at the Town Hall as they had done in 1915, and under the supervision of Mrs. P. Hart, they used the kitchen again to make jam for the Patriotic Shop, re-established in Carlisle Street near Balaclava Station in 1941. The Councillors' wives arranged fortnightly bridge parties to raise funds for comforts. Nonetheless, the St. Kilda Patriotic Society organisers decided not to re-establish the famous Soldier's Lounge run by Lucie Hallenstein on the Lower Esplanade in 1915. Many more women were wage-earners than had been the case then, and Patriotic Society workers realised that the necessary pool of female volunteers was no longer available in St. Kilda.

Many women sought a more active defence role rather than a domestic one. They joined organisations such as the Women's Air Training Corps which was the nucleus of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force, formed in February 1941 because of the shortage of male

wireless telegraph operators, and offering salaries of two-thirds the male rate. This was higher than normal industrial awards. There were other opportunities in the Australian Militors which provided motor cycle transport training; the Women's Auxiliary Training League which instructed tractor drivers; and the Women's Auxiliary Service Corps which conducted military and intelligence and field survey work. As well, Voluntary Aid Detachments were incorporated into the Army Medical Services, as paid workers after December 1940, supplementing the existing Australian Army Nursing Service.

The war created new employment opportunities for women, who showed how potent a contribution they could make in areas once closed to them. In light of the emergency, Federal Cabinet directed that public servants who married a member of the Forces due for overseas service could be retained as temporary employees for the duration of the war, even though Section 47 of the *Public Service Act* stipulated that married women should retire. Hence in September 1940 when "typiste" Edna Jene, married because her fiance had been granted final leave unexpectedly, she made a respectful plea to Council:

When my husband leaves I will have to board over here as my mother is in another State. I also contribute a certain amount weekly for her support and as a Private's pay is approximately £2 for his wife, I will find it impossible to live without working myself, and as I have been an employee of the St. Kilda Council for eleven years, would deem it a privilege if I be allowed to continue in my present position for the duration of the hostilities, or until such time as my husband should receive promotion.⁶⁶

After due consideration, Council decided to make the unusual concession, and retain their loyal and experienced typist, but only for the duration of the war.

Even more women were employed in industry and in government departments after Menzies returned to Australia in May 1941. He had spent four months overseas, seeing troops in the Middle East, and visiting Britain, where he had been impressed by women working in aircraft factories, and surprised by their strength:

I have seen women, some of them wearing trousers which did not suit them, strange looking women, with muscular arms whacking into metal with hammers, doing men's work, with grime on their faces and, I venture to say, with gold in their hearts...they may violate all the rules laid down by their grandmothers, but they are going to be mothers in their turn of a magnificent race of men.⁶⁷

Women, Menzies realised, already important as supporters of his

own United Australia Party, could be very useful in the war effort on the home front as well, within well prescribed boundaries.

Many men rolled up for war again as the Anzacs had done. They enlisted for various reasons: to many, it simply seemed the right thing to do; others wanted to prove themselves or their loyalty, oppose fascism, seek adventure, go overseas, or gain employment at last. Most went in the certitude that the families they left were in no immediate danger because the war was a distant show, and vast oceans protected Australia from Hitler's freakish performance. Young sportsmen, fit and entering their prime, left their clubs in St. Kilda. Many joined the RAAF, which seemed to promise as much excitement as the AIF had in 1914 and took the cream of those who queued eagerly for limited places. They included Keith Miller who played for both St. Kilda Cricket Club and St. Kilda Football Club; William Newton, St. Kilda who was a Victorian Colts cricketer and Victorian amateur footballer; and Ross Gregory whose batting had overshadowed Bradman's in the Fifth Test against England in the 1936-37 test when Neville Cardus praised his gay and handsome and cultured strokes⁶⁸, and who would not return to make any more. Reverend Danglew, who became an Army Chaplain again, saw many men he had known as lads like Trevor Rapke, and Zelman Cowen leave Australia. Entertainers, like Frank Rich, left the coffee lounges, dance saloons and orchestras, exchanging their talent and musical instruments for guns. Hundreds of other men, who just thought of themselves as ordinary blokes, left their offices, factories and shops to join up too.

Some who had no work to leave, saw an employment opportunity in the Army. Numbers on sustenance in St. Kilda dropped from 169 on 7 October 1939, to 117 on 4 November 1939, and James Pimm, of the Unemployment Organisation, attributed the continuing decline from 93 in February 1940 to 51 in February 1941 to enlistment, as well as to the greater employment opportunities in war industries such as munitions⁶⁹. Although some who had been unemployed were cynical about a Government which could finance war when it had not been able to provide work, they enlisted because the prospect of three meals a day, clothing, accommodation and a wage was more appealing than the dole of 8/6 a week. Some were farewelled at St. Kilda Town Hall on 24 February 1940 and were regaled with oysters, turkey, apple pie and cream, whisky, cigars and "Black and White" cigarettes, a gift wallet, mirror and matchbox shield

Those who remained in St. Kilda, and saw such soldiers off, were affected by various government measures to boost the war effort. These special measures included increased penalties for prostitution, restrictions on aliens, the banning of the Communist Party, the issue of war bonds, special building regulations, and the application of further civil defence strategies.

Prostitution was regarded as a threat to the health of soldiers so action was taken to increase penalties imposed on prostitutes. Some members of the St. Kilda Churches Citizens' League and the St. Kilda City Council, outraged by the evil they saw in sinful women but not in men, expressed their extreme concern about the matter to Archie Michaelis:

It is impossible for decent women to walk with any feeling of safety in certain thoroughfares, particularly St. Kilda-road and Fitzroy-street. The number of women who use those places in pursuit of their immoral business is increasing, and the presence of soldiers during the week-ends seems to have intensified the evil. Those fine young men should not be allowed to take the risk of becoming infected by disease, thus rendering them incapable of discharging their duty to their country, and perhaps ruining their future careers.⁷⁰

These citizens believed that the greater punishment of the offending women was the answer, even though existing penalties were proving to be no deterrent in St. Kilda. By July 1940, one hundred and fifty prosecutions had been made in St. Kilda since By-law 117 had been enacted, yet Councillors could see that the resulting fines meant little to the same women who kept on paying them, and, in their view, continued to undermine the war effort by spreading venereal diseases. Archie Michaelis arranged a deputation of Councillors from St. Kilda, Fitzroy and South Melbourne to the Chief Secretary which recommended amendments to the *Police Offences Act* dealing with soliciting and accosting". Michaelis believed that the health of soldiers in the city during the weekends, particularly "young boys from the country", was endangered by prostitutes in Fitzroy and St. Kilda. During a parliamentary debate, which only proceeded after the male members made sure that the female parliamentarian, Mrs. Weber MLA, was not present, and that they could speak freely, Michaelis acknowledged that while one woman brothels were common in Fitzroy, soliciting was prevalent in St. Kilda. Subsequently, the *Police Offences Act* was amended to increase police powers against prostitutes who solicited. Council expressed sincere thanks to Michaelis for his intervention in a matter "of such importance to this

municipality"⁷². The Council also repealed By-law 117 replacing it with By-law 128 on 2 December 1940, imposing more severe penalties for loitering, soliciting or accosting. They requested an increased police presence in St. Kilda as well, but the Force was understaffed and burdened with additional war time duties, and could not meet their demand.

The suspicion of enemy aliens, evident during the First World War was seen again. As was the case then, sometimes innocent people were victimised. Jewish refugees who arrived just before war was declared were declared to be enemy aliens and regarded as potential Nazi spies. Rabbi Sanger campaigned against this unfair tag, knowing that many of his congregation had more reason to hate Nazism than any one else. Nevertheless, as well as having to struggle to support themselves, learn English, and deal with the taunts of those who hated "reffos", Jewish aliens had to bear this slur, and report regularly to the Police Station in St. Kilda, surrender radios, binoculars and cameras, and seek special leave if they needed to leave the Police District in accordance with the regulations. Some were interned in special camps alongside other enemy aliens who really were Nazi sympathisers and hated Jews most of all. Refugees were in further trouble when the *National Security (Land Transfer) Regulations* of 23 July 1940 prohibited enemy aliens and subjects from occupied countries from acquiring land. Even naturalised British subjects of enemy origin had to apply to the Attorney-General to purchase property. Following their application, the Attorney-General's Investigation Branch would seek reports from the local police and Town Clerk whether there were local objections to the applicant buying land so that the rights of absent soldiers who might have had an interest in it would be protected.

After Italy entered the war on 10 June 1940, some local Italians also received unwelcome attention, though others were untroubled. Families of good standing who had lived there for a long time, like the Fontis, experienced few problems or hostility from customers at their new Robe Street milk-bar, or from a community which knew them well. Others did though. The *Age* of 2 July 1940 reported that James Gilligan of Carnegie was charged with assaulting Amada Joseph Capadona of Tennyson Street, Elwood. Capadona said that while he and his father were jacking up a car in Tennyson Street on 11 June, Gilligan called out "Why don't you get Musso to help you" and struck him on the face. Gilligan, who was described by police as a man of good character who had enlisted, was fined £1-10-0 with £1-10-0 costs by

the Magistrate, Mr. Pyvis, who added that Capadona's remarks constituted provocation, even though Capadona denied saying anything about Britannia ruling the waves.

The Communist Party was banned, then reinstated again when Stalin changed his allegiance. Prior to the war, some communists in St. Kilda found it difficult to fathom Stalin's compact with Hitler which seemed to add to the unreality and ideological muddle of the war. Amirah Gust recalled the confusion of her parents' friends in Elwood, like Jack and Leila Maughan, who bitterly discussed the Soviet-German Non Aggression Pact of 23 August 1939, at card parties. Many party members were similarly dismayed by the invasion of Finland by the USSR for which it was expelled from the League of Nations in early 1940. When Menzies banned the Communist Party in Australia in June 1940, Marxist classics were removed from the Gust family bookshelves, and friends like Jack and Audrey Blake had to "go underground" and leave their daughter in Elwood with the Gusts for a while⁷³. Local communists were relieved by Hitler's invasion of the USSR on 22 June 1941 because at least their enemy was clearly defined and they could call the Second World War a people's war rather than a phoney war, and rally against the fascists.

St. Kilda citizens were asked to contribute to war savings as a matter of national urgency. Many local firms, clubs, societies and residents of streets formed war savings groups. They contributed a fixed amount every week, and were issued with war savings certificates which could be cashed or redeemed at three and a quarter per cent interest after seven years. If householders saved enough, signs announcing "This is a War Savings Street" were nailed up on telephone poles. After Percy Spender, the Federal Treasurer, sought the Mayor's support in encouraging war savings and bringing home to Australians the seriousness of the war, a monster rally was held at the Town Hall on 26 June 1940 which combined a recruiting and war savings drive. Sir H.S. Gullett, the Vice-President of the Federal Executive Council, told the audience of seven hundred and fifty people to stiffen the national war effort by "knocking the knocker", by making more financial sacrifices, and by refusing to envisage defeat⁷⁴. Although few recruits were forthcoming, numerous promises were made to purchase certificates totalling over £3,000. Even so, at the Council meeting on 1 July 1940, Cr. Burnett Gray considered that commitment a poor one from a population of about fifty thousand people.

Building activity was restricted by the Commonwealth Government so that so that people would have more money to invest in war loans. Under the *National Security (Building Control) Regulations* which came into force on 5 December 1940, the Treasurer had to approve buildings or alterations costing more than £5,000. No buildings were to be erected without the Treasurer's approval by June 1941, nor could buildings worth £500 be demolished. These restrictions meant that the last major property development in St. Kilda during the war was the *Mittagong Estate* in Eildon Road in 1940 where Council approved subdivision of seventeen allotments less than six thousand square feet, and two over six thousand feet. Soon after, Council lost its power to make building regulations when the *Local Government (Building Regulations) Act* (1940), created the Building Regulations Commission to make standard building specifications and uniform regulations. Restrictions on the rents which could apply were also fixed by the Government.

Such building restrictions made existing housing stock in St. Kilda all the more important. It had 4,309 flats in 789 buildings, 6,980 beds in 374 boardinghouses, 7,239 private dwellings, 991 other dwellings and 601 shops and dwellings in March 1941⁷⁵, and many munitions workers sought low cost rental accommodation there.

Efforts to improve sub-standard accommodation in parts of the city were postponed. In December 1939, the Housing Commission of Victoria was granted the power, previously held by councils, to condemn houses but war made it most reluctant to demolish any buildings. For instance, when St. Kilda Council Health Inspector, George West, reported on the substandard conditions at 59a and 61a Pakington Street, the Housing Commission did agree that they were part of a "slum pocket" and should be demolished eventually but ruled that they were sound enough to afford urgently required shelter for the time being⁷⁶. Pressure on existing houses became so great that the Housing Commission declared that all demolition orders would be suspended in November 1941. Hence, repairs to premises, sometimes neglected since the Depression, were deferred due to the shortage of building materials and labour, as well as to prevent the eviction of tenants engaged in munitions production at Maribymong, for it was believed disturbance of their housing arrangements would impair their efficiency.

Civil defence strategies were implemented as soon as war was declared but it was difficult for the District Warden to sustain interest in air raid precautions. Sirens were installed throughout

Melbourne, and land lines connected air raid wardens to Police Stations by 5 September 1939. The Town Clerk, William Greaves, became the District Warden on 7 September and immediately tried to recruit the voluntary personnel as recommended for St. Kilda's defence by the State Emergency Council:

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
District Warden	1	
Sector Wardens	100	
Assistant Sector Wardens	200	
Decontamination — 4 squads of 6 Council	24	
First Aid Commandant	1	
Medical Officers	4	
Trained Nurses		4
Administrative Officers	4	
Fully trained to St. John standard	24	40
Assistants trained in elementary First Aid	40	48
Storekeepers	4	
First Aid Parties — 4 each post, 4 in each	64	
Gas Reconnaissance Officers	2	
<i>Total</i>	500	92

To his disappointment, he could not recruit such numbers, nor could any other Melbourne municipality, largely because few people believed they were in danger of any direct enemy attack, or thought the precautions overdone. W.H. Greaves reported a "woeful dearth of men volunteers" in February 1940 although there were many women who were eager to assume responsible civil defence positions. There was a quickening of interest after the collapse of France, but Greaves still only had seventy-eight male volunteers and two hundred and twenty-two females by July 1940. Although he was disappointed, he reported that satisfactory progress had been made in view of "the apathy of the citizens". To increase a sense of urgency in the community and make the war appear less of a side-show, the St. Kilda Air Raid Precautions Organisation tried to convince the Government to provide more gas masks, hood street lights and order the construction of dug-outs, but it would not take such measures.

As the months passed peacefully, the District Warden's task in eliciting interest in air-raid precautions became even more difficult. Cr. James Dargo Minty succeeded Greaves in the post in July 1940 because the Town Clerk had so many additional wartime duties to attend to. Cr. Minty was regarded as being particularly suitable for

the position because he had been awarded the Military Medal for his service as a field ambulance officer in evacuating the wounded from Passchendaele during the First World War, and because he knew how to treat gas victims for a gas attack which was considered a distinct possibility by the authorities. He tried to stimulate interest by borrowing more service respirators for volunteers to practise with, and also sought approval for the establishment of ten First Aid Posts because he was concerned about St. Kilda's high population density and the concentration of flats. He convened a mass meeting in St. Kilda on 10 September 1940 to urge people "to roll up and make St. Kilda the most perfectly organised municipality in the Commonwealth" and to "BEAT THE ENEMY AT THEIR OWN GAME!" but few volunteers were forthcoming⁷⁸. After an urgent review of the organisation in February 1941, activities were scaled down slightly, and all messages concerning Air Raid Precaution activities in St. Kilda were broadcast weekly by Michael Miles on 3XY. When Cr. Minty died in May 1941, he was succeeded by Cr. Mitty as District Warden, and by his brother, George Minty as a North Ward Councillor. Despite these set-backs, a number of committed volunteers continued their preparations even though, as the Governor, Sir Winston Dugan later remarked :

In the strange, silent months before the enemy showed any real activity, the sight of the A.R.P. workers going through their drill and air-raid rehearsals was regarded with curiosity, and even amusement by the average citizen.⁷⁹

Flagging interest in the war was a national phenomenon⁸⁰. Some people were opposed to involvement, some apathetic, some self interested, and many simply did not feel threatened. They thought the war seemed like some of the shows and games Cr. Phillips installed after Skillball was closed, which included a Hitler doll rack, Raylite Rifles, illusion and freak shows, shooting galleries, and a Giant Horoscope for each day of the year.⁸¹

Living as they did near different entertainments, patriotic St. Kilda residents saw that many people were still having fun in St. Kilda while others were dying overseas in Europe and the Middle East on their behalf. Carousing in the streets belied the seriousness of the war. The Town Clerk often received complaints like that of a citizen of 2 Fitzroy Street, who protested about drunks singing and shouting throughout the night and leaving broken beer bottles in the Catani Gardens in November 1940⁸². A number of petitioners who

lived in Wavenhoe Avenue also complained about the behaviour of patrons leaving the Alexandra Ballrooms in July 1941: "The most objectionable and disgusting aftermath in some cases is to find used contraceptives on our lawns and, in particular, in the side-walk of one house, proving definite acts of trespass there".⁸³

The Citizen's League made a last-ditch stand against the use of the Town Hall on Sundays. Commodore Snider, of the Royal St. Kilda Yacht Club and the St. Kilda Patriotic Society, had organised Sunday entertainments at the Town Hall which were approved by Council despite the protests of the St. Kilda Churches Citizens' League. Holy Trinity Church suspected a "Spiritual Fifth Column" was at work; Lionel Johnston of the Church of Christ feared that they were failing God who was the mainstay of the Empire and the Empire would be defeated because of their ungodly ways; and Reverend George Judkins, then Secretary of the Council of Churches in Victoria, thought such activities permitted under the pretext of war would become an established part of life and lower spiritual and moral standards⁸⁴. Council dismissed such arguments and supported the view of the Chief Secretary of Victoria, Mr. Bailey, who defended Sunday sport for patriotic purposes by stating that normal standards could not be applied in abnormal times; Bailey added that while he realised that certain efforts to raise funds for war purposes were not strictly within the law, little harm was being done.⁸⁵

Spectacular patriotic entertainment was organised in St. Kilda. A carnival was held at St. Moritz on 9 October 1940. The floor show included items by Nancy Lyons, Josephine Alexander, Marjory Finkelstein and Fred Olsen; a burlesque ballet by the "St. Moritz Bombing Hockey Club"; and a grand finale where H.M.S. Sydney was reconstructed on ice while the band played *Rule Britannia* and *There'll Always Be An England*. The upstairs foyer was crowded with stalls and side-shows⁸⁶. There was further fun at the week long Patriotic Carnival opened on 25 January 1941 by the Governor, Sir Winston Dugan. The Tramways Board ran peak loading night services from all parts of Melbourne to terminate at St. Kilda where visitors could see Sole's Circus, and side-shows included a headless lady, boxing and a "Robot Man". Massed bands played *Till the Lights of London Shine Again* and *Wings Over the Navy* in the Catani Gardens. Soloist Mary Lillie rendered *It's the Air Force* and *We'll Remember*. The carnival culminated with a "Pageant of Empire" procession directed by Maie Hoban who presented floats depicting "John Bull", "King John Signs the Magna Carta", "General Wolfe

Takes Quebec", "Captain Cook at Botany Bay", and the final float "The Spirit of Britannia" including local members of the Red Cross, VADs, St. Kilda Boy Scouts and Life Savers.

Despite the enthusiasm shown at such events, the national deficiency in recruiting continued. A St. Kilda sub-committee to stimulate enlistment was formed by Council on 5 May 1941 in response to a call from Lieutenant-Colonel B. Sampson, the Deputy Director of Recruiting who was openly critical of government policy, and labelled 1940 "a period of compulsory inactivity" which had been "a grievous error" creating a "complacent attitude amongst Australians"⁸⁷. Different ploys were tried. The recruiting sub-committee chose the St. Kilda versus Carlton match of 31 May 1941 to appeal for recruits. Over a public address system Chief Recruiting Officer Erskine Wyse interviewed two soldiers who had been invalided home from the Middle East. Before a crowd of thirteen thousand people, the convalescents declared they would be glad to have another shot at the "Wops"⁸⁸ and eight volunteers were forthcoming. Area Officer Captain Graham pronounced this result "a definite success", but the State Recruiting Committee recommended the abandonment of such rallies in July because they were ineffective. Instead, an illuminated tram with an accompanying band visited the municipality, and addresses were given at picture theatres. The State Recruiting Committee supplied speeches for the sub-committee's use which suggested various messages: "...women love men more for going than for staying"; "Above all, the average Australian is a good sport...No blow is too foul for Hitler to use, but the Empire carries a punch and that punch will eventually finish the fight with a knock-out"; and "...our men are fighting in the Middle East, to guard Suez and Singapore jealously and heroically and to keep the main enemy from our shores". Speakers were advised to appeal for recruits when the audience was worked up and not to "talk cold"; to avoid using boring, long-winded speakers or old-fashioned, gloomy songs; to watch for shy youths; not to discuss failures; to turn away from hecklers or drunks; to use a theme of "mateship calling"; and to always close a meeting with a uniformed speaker signalling for the National Anthem.⁸⁹

The Council Recruiting Sub-committee tried to increase community participation but became most despondent at the results. It invited three hundred representatives of all sections of the community to a meeting on 16 July 1941 to broaden its base, but only eleven responded, and the Mayor, Councillor Joseph Lynch, expressed his

keen disappointment at the apathy shown. Captain Frawley, the Secretary of the State Recruiting Committee, told the small gathering that Victoria had fallen behind its quota of three thousand men per month and the position was desperate. All present blamed the lack of success in recruitment on the Government policy of maintaining a large number of reserved occupations, and some were critical of Menzies for his "business as usual" approach. Soon after, Menzies resigned in August 1941 because of disunity within the United Australia Party. Arthur Fadden succeeded him but could not retain the support of Independents, and on 7 October 1941, John Curtin, the Labor leader, became the Prime Minister of Australia.

The Recruiting Sub-committee hoped this political change would make a difference, and organised a recruiting picture night the day after Remembrance Day in 1941. Prior to the screening, the Mayor, Councillor J.T. Berkley, referred to the remarks made by General Sir Thomas Blamey who had returned from overseas for the opening of the War Memorial in Canberra and had warned Australians of their peril, claiming he was astounded by public detachment from the war, the free spending on pleasure, and self absorbed pursuits of citizens. Australians, Blamey had complained, were "living the carnival life while people in other parts of the world were hanging on by their claws".⁹⁰

Ultimately, the Japanese spurred the war effort in ways that Generals, Councillors and patriots had been unable to do. The shocking news of the loss of the *Sydney* on 19 November 1941 was released on 1 December 1941. Then residents learned that on 7 December 1941 Japan had bombed Pearl Harbour. Melbourne could be next.

Despite deep differences in values which were discernible after the Depression, a type of unity emerged after Japan stormed the Pacific and threatened lives and cities. With the knowledge that Australia was in danger and under imminent threat of attack, everyone rolled up to face the fiery juggernaut of war, which no one could call a European side-show any more.

CHAPTER THREE

FIREWORKS December 1941 — 1948

I. Rocketing fear — Precautions against enemy attack — The Americans arrive — Gradual defusing of fear of attack by enemy planes — A season of austerity — Special wartime measures — Diverse social conditions of wartime St. Kilda — Anguish of relatives about those in service overseas — Corporal John Metson — Flight-Lieutenant William Newton V.C.

II. Impact of soldiers on leave in St. Kilda — St. Kilda one of the hottest spots in town — Abnormality of the time reflected in behaviour in St. Kilda

III. Declaration of peace does not bring an end to strain — Government controls continue — Political divisions — Conflict within the Jewish community.

I. AFLAME

The Japanese attacks on Pearl Harbour, Singapore and Darwin exploded any doubts about the need to be involved. This was no remote side-show. The enemy was very close. Lights went out in St. Kilda, and residents steeled themselves for the roar of enemy planes in the night.

A brown-out was imposed on 12 December 1941 so that black-out conditions could immediately apply to eliminate sky glow if the enemy attacked. St. Kilda became still and hushed and dark on moonless nights, or unearthly under a bright full moon. The sound of the lapping sea seemed louder from the silent black gardens where palms sulked and bristled against the stars. Trams were menacing in the gloom. Cars crept along, their masked headlamps dimly illuminating the white strips in the middle of the road or on kerbs, painted there to guide them through streets where signposts and numbers were removed. A little light fell in faint pools at the base of shrouded street lamps. Sometimes a ray or two glinted from houses through cracks of windows sealed with cardboard or fabric or wooden screens, before the gruff muted voice of a patrolling warden would say: "Put it out!".

Carnival lights went off and the scene was eerie. On a very hot evening three days after the brown-out was announced, Henrietta

Drake-Brockman saw an immense orderly crowd at St. Kilda pier and people in the tepid water. They vanished at dusk, and left: "No neons, no brilliance of Luna Park; no arcs to spot-light the infinite variety of the crowd and tease lovers; scarcely even a glimmer anywhere round the Bay"¹. In the darkness, fewer people stumbled around the merry-go-round and the electric poker games to Cr. Phillips' building, so he installed an electric anti-aircraft game to attract more custom in March 1942. Even the *Kol Nidrei* service, normally on the eve of the Day of Atonement when Jews seek peace with their fellow man, then with their maker, was held in daylight so that worshippers at the St. Kilda Synagogue did not have to walk home in the dark.²

Householders dug in because the Japanese had struck other places so suddenly. Knowing that Pearl Harbour had been hit on a quiet Sunday morning, they were determined not to be taken unawares. While some could only afford a blanket thrown over a table, or a hole in the back yard, a few households had already taken more expensive measures. An elaborate shelter at 23 Mitford Street was built of reinforced concrete with a barrel vaulted ceiling and was over ten metres long and two metres high. It included locks at each end to the main entry at the foot of the stairs and an escape hatch in the toilet compartment, three pairs of bunks, a hand-basin, two folding benches and food containers cunningly designed by the architect David Isaacs for Mrs. Sicree of Mitford Street³. Some poorer people feared for their safety because they could not construct such fancy havens. Residents near Blanche and Vale Streets asked Council for permission to shelter in the Main Drain dividing the two streets when the bombs fell:

...all our yards are too small to put in slit trenchers (sic) if you are willing would you kindly fix up fences of the drain facing the lanes and roads by making them into gates to be easily opened at a minute's notice and also to put down a few steps at each entrance so as the aged people would not fall and get hurt.⁴

The Town Clerk replied that it was a matter for the MMBW, and suggested that they might also consider other public trenches.

Extensive public trenches dug in parks and on vacant land were important in St. Kilda because there was no room to dig around multistoried flats on small blocks, or in congested areas. Premier Dunstan announced the allocation of funds for such trenches on 30 December 1941, and residents wasted no time: by 11 February 1942 nine hundred and thirty metres of trenches had been dug in St. Kilda, by 9 April, two thousand one hundred and thirty five. Often, digging

resulted after individuals took the initiative. Julia Rapke organised other residents of *Torquay* flats in Goldsmith Street to dig slit trenches at the E. C. Mitty Reserve. She was afraid, having heard about raids from her son, Trevor, by then a Naval Lieutenant, who had *been* near Darwin during the Japanese attacks. She wrote:

This building in which my daughter and I occupy a flat covers practically the whole area available, being built up to the limit leaving only a tiny concreted strip of space back and front in which it would be impossible to erect any kind of shelter...As a garden lover I should further undertake to see that the least possible damage was done to trees and shrubs whilst the digging was in progress and I can assure you that only my desire for some more adequate form of protection in such a time of grave peril could prompt such a request.⁵

Permission was granted, and the well-organised trench-diggers from *Torquay* began immediately.

Evacuation plans were made in case houses were blitzed as ferociously as they were in London. The St. Kilda Evacuation Committee, formed in February 1942, prepared for a situation where two per cent of the municipality, or about 1,100 people, were declared homeless. Lists were made in readiness if occupiers had to billet homeless people under National Security Regulations, and Rest Centres, like those in Britain, were established at the Samuel Meyer Hall in Chamwood Crescent, St. Bede's Schoolroom in Ormond Road, and at Netley College in Mitford Street. These centres were equipped with items required in an emergency including Weeties, three seventy pound bags of sugar, dried milk, jam, soup, galvanised tubs, kerosene tins, billy cans, toilet paper, Modess, Dettol, palliasses and straw, hurricane lamps, crockery and cutlery. Rest Centre supervisors could also call on volunteers who had cars packed ready with clothing, first aid equipment and food. As well, the St. Kilda Evacuation Committee registered the names of mothers and pre-school children, pregnant women, the aged and infirm in February 1942 and supplied labels for luggage, identification and medicinal details. It encouraged schools to march groups of children to the railway station for evacuation practice, and preparation of evacuation knapsacks. Patterns for these knapsacks were printed in the newspapers and some families duly prepared the little bags which remained packed for the duration of the war.

Air raid drills took on new urgency and realism. The alert was sounded by five five second blasts from the steam-driven warning siren, manned twenty-four hours a day at the garbage destructor at Greeves Street. For greater authenticity, high explosive incidents

were staged. One occurred at the corner of Inkerman and Westbury Streets at 8.30 p.m., and another at the corner of Milton and Addison Streets at 8.45 p.m. on 23 December 1941 when stretcher and sitting cases were dealt with by the District First Aid Commissioner, Dr. L.J. Middleton of 23 Balacava Road. Whenever the nerve-wracking siren sounded for drill, citizens knew what to do. St. Kilda Town Hall staff locked valuables in safes, turned off switches, drew blinds, closed doors and windows, then assembled at the south end of the passage near the entrance to the kitchen, thought to be the safest place in the building. The Assistant City and Building Surveyor, Mr. Gilbertson, also instructed everyone to guard against concussion and lung damage by carrying rubber, a rolled handkerchief or soft wood to bite, and cotton wool to place in their ears.⁶

Students were drilled at school. They were taught to lie face down under tables and desks near the inner walls of classrooms, or to take cover outside until they heard the all clear signal of a two minute blast. School buildings were furnished with shovels, hoes, sand and water buckets, axes, fire extinguishers, a stirrup hand pump and hose, hurricane lamps, electric torches and ropes, though there was barely enough equipment to go around. Students from St. Columba's, for example, would assemble in the playground, march down Normanby Street, gather in the ti-trees over Ormond Esplanade, put pencils in their mouths sometimes without really knowing why, then scurry back to school when whistles blew.⁷

Children's lives were disturbed in many other ways. War made disruption of peacetime routines inevitable, though the Federal Government advised schools and parents to adhere to routine if possible, and to avoid revealing tension to the young because it was necessary "to maintain normal and happy childhood for a generation which will certainly have to shoulder burdens which will be the aftermath of a war which was none of its making".⁸ The absence of parents was often the most disturbing loss, though other customary treats were missed as well. Empire Day celebrations were suspended in 1942 until 1946 because it was considered too dangerous for large numbers of children to assemble in a picture theatre. Infant Welfare Centre sisters also noticed that fewer local babies were being breast fed. Mr. Sydney Allen, FRACS, the new Medical Officer of Health after the death of Dr. Vance in February 1942, attributed this increase in artificially fed babies in St. Kilda in 1942 to the "war neurosis of mothers".⁹

There was no longer such a shortage of volunteers in the Air Raid

Precautions Organisation. They were ready for the emergency they had anticipated for years. All sections of the St. Kilda organisation, including wardens, auxiliary firemen, first aid trainees, stretcher parties, mobile canteen operators, ambulances, Boy Scouts, Girl Guides and Sea Scouts assembled proudly at the Blessington Street oval at the end of December 1941 where they were reviewed by the Governor, Sir Winston Dugan. After the fall of Singapore, the Town Hall, which was their HQ, became more like a fortress: the First Aid Post was extended, sandbags were piled high around the exterior, and clocks, maps and map markers were installed at the ARP control room within. In recognition of the special role Councillors played in the Air Raid Precautions Organisations, elections were postponed in 1942 so that civilian safety would not be jeopardised, and those Councillors who would have normally retired in August 1943 had their terms extended for a year.

Special films and radio programs instructed people how to prepare for bombs. Hoyts screened British ARP films at the Victory Theatre such as *Caught in an Air Raid*, *Bombs and their Effects*, *Black Out*, *Should Death Descend* and *England Prepared*. On radio, a popular series of radio plays called *ARP and You* were also presented on 3LO from 15 June to 17 August 1942, where a typical Australian family discussed different issues with their friendly warden. Colin Crane, an actor of 32 Burnett Street, St. Kilda who had performed in beach shows in the 1920s as well as at the Palais, played "Dad", Nancye Stewart was "Mum", Nola Adams was "Shirley" and William Tainsh was "Warder Williams". The actors considered matters including *How to Make Your House Blast Proof* and *Are You a Good Neighbour?*.

Feelings of insecurity increased because of fear of subversion from within the community as St. Kilda had more aliens than many other parts of Melbourne. The District Warden, Cr. Mitty, tried to ban "foreigners" from Air Raid Precautions meetings in January 1942 because the position in the Pacific warranted drastic exercise of his authority. Cr. Burnett Gray also feared the presence of quislings and fifth columnists in St. Kilda because of the number of refugees there, and thought it should be "one of the first municipalities to be raked over for enemy aliens". Cr. Phillips argued that only English should be spoken and both naturalised and unnaturalised aliens should be interned. He was appalled that in his street, Southey Street, which he described as infested with refugees, not one in five spoke English.¹⁰

In the frightening days immediately after Pearl Harbour, residents knew that neither Britain, nor the soldiers they had farewelled to fight on Britain's behalf, could defend them. Curtin had expressed their only hope, apart from their own power of resistance, when he said in December: "Without any inhibitions of any kind, I make it quite clear that Australia looks to America, free of any pangs as to our traditional links or kinship with the United Kingdom".¹¹

Within three months, people in St. Kilda knew the Americans had arrived. They rushed to the higher ground, like Mary Street in West St. Kilda, and cheered when they saw troop ships in the bay on 26 February 1942, crammed with soldiers under the banners of the Stars and Stripes. Some asleep in bed were startled by the crunch of boots along Beaconsfield Parade at night, because they thought the Japanese had struck until they realised it was the sound of Americans marching along the former military road to various camps in the city after they had arrived at Port Melbourne. Some were amazed by the sight of exotic smartly uniformed men invading Acland Street in search of salami, sticks of bread, rounds of cheese and fresh fruit, their faces very pallid after their long period at sea. The location of permanent American bases nearby, seemed to signal the gravity of Australia's position, yet they also testified to the relative security of St. Kilda compared with Australia's northern reaches for it was unlikely that Americans would be stationed permanently in a city likely to be blown up.

The emergency preparations wound down slowly. There was a gradual defusing of fear as everyone became more confident that Melbourne was safer than Darwin or London and that St. Kilda was becoming safer day by day. W.H. Greaves advised Moran and Cato not to hold further stocks for the St. Kilda Evacuation Centre in May 1943 because he judged the emergency was "growing daily less". The State Electricity Commission began restoring some public lighting in July 1943 although restrictions still applied to lights visible from the sea, or remained in force to conserve fuel. Glass protective work was removed from buildings after October 1943 and air raid shelters in a dangerous condition were filled in. Many were public risks rather than shelters by that stage because the sides of some trenches had collapsed, and others had been wilfully damaged or used as latrines and sites to dump beer bottles and household rubbish. Nonetheless, many of these dangerous pits remained unfilled until the end of 1944, even though the *Herald* of 9 October 1943 described St. Kilda

trenches as potential death traps which would entomb a company of men. St. Kilda ARP activity slowed down as well. District Warden Mitty reduced wardens' meetings to once a month in November 1943 and practices to once a week; and use of the Scout's Hall at Elwood and 77 High Street as special transport depots ceased.

Though fears of enemy air raids on Melbourne began to diminish, there was no lessening of the strain war imposed. Citizens *were* expected to stoke the war effort by working together, and making many sacrifices so Australia could defy powerful enemies *and* win the war. Curtin demanded the same sacrifice, frugality and commitment from every citizen that he gave himself, and induced residents to accept unprecedented Federal intervention in daily life. He asked them to go without every selfish, comfortable habit, every luxurious impulse, every act, word or deed which retarded the victory march, and to accept seasons of austerity¹². The Government controlled such fundamental things such as what people wore, ate, and drank, where they worked, their status if they were refugees, the condition of their housing and who should live in their homes.

The degree of control exercised by authorities had not been seen in Australia since convict days. The types of restrictions being imposed were revealed in the fines imposed at the St. Kilda Court of Petty Sessions against citizens, caught in defiance of war time regulations. They included: allowing light to shine from cafe windows (fined £5); failure to enrol for military service (£10); supply of coupon goods without the surrender of coupons (£25); the sale of bread at a price greater than that fixed (£50); theft of a gallon of petrol from the Commonwealth of Australia (£10); theft of aluminium wireless bases, nuts, bolts, fittings, tools and insulating flex which belonged to the Commonwealth (£25); failing to produce an identity card when demanded (£2); possession of another person's identity card (£3); possession of liquor at a dance (£2); manufacture of a non-essential item in a cake ornament by a pastry-cook (£3); false testimony to the Fair Rents Board (£10); receiving money other than rent in consideration of a sub-lease (£10); possession of counterfeit tickets (£20); refusal to lease a house to a woman because she had a child (£10); commencement of building alterations in Elwood without authority (£25); preparing tyres for retreading (£5); holding information likely to be useful to the enemy (£15); selling a second-hand car at an excessive price (£5); and a £5 fine against an alien for travelling outside his police district without a permit.¹³

Rationing of goods became more severe as the war continued. Queuing became a tedious part of daily life. People queued for ration books, then queued again to exchange coupons for scarce goods when they were available, such as drab Dedman suits, lumpy yellow sugar, tea, butter, meat, tobacco and bottled beer. Often, good contacts were required to obtain anything from whisky to chocolate, or silk stockings to eggs, which had all become luxuries, and a black market thrived. Boarding houses proprietors found new bedding impossible to buy. St. Kilda shopkeepers sold goods until they ran out and some complained that the large city stores were able to obtain luxury goods and open new departments when they could not, and that they were unable to obtain goods to continue business and had to cadge supplies by visiting factories themselves¹⁴. Few businessmen however, faced the range of difficulties experienced by Arthur Cumming at the funfair, who purchased the Miniature train site in March 1943:

I cannot get a new boiler and if I get a motor I cannot get Petrol to run it and if electric motor the electric people will not extend electricity till after war. managed to get some cream paint to do fence but cannot get any green. The Hoodlums pushing the trucks all over the place. I have complained to the Police but no relief I have chained and bolted them to the rails but they bring spanners and undo them. If I put it in the shed they break it open.¹⁵

Families were told to eliminate waste. The scarcity of goods often made cheerless austerity recipes a necessity as well as a patriotic duty. Hundreds of people attended a cooking demonstration at the St. Kilda Town Hall on 8 December 1942. They were addressed by Mary Grant Bruce, the author of the popular *Billabong* books, who broadcast many war time talks on the ABC between 1940 and 1942, having left Great Britain in 1939. She gave a stirring address about feminine pluck and resilience. Then Emily Noble demonstrated the preparation of an somewhat stodgy "Austerity Menu" of soup made with broad bean pods, boiled meat and macaroni roll, vegetables in paper, wholemeal pastry, rhubarb dumpling, jam tart, small apple cake, wholemeal chocolate fruit buns and cold vegetable salad¹⁶. Some of those in attendance paid special attention because, after 17 January 1943, the Manpower Authority had determined that not more than one domestic servant could be retained without approval.

Residents saved household items required by war industry. Scrap rubber in hot water bottles, tyres and tubes, garden hose, bath mats, sand shoes and galoshes, was deposited at the Municipal Depot. Aluminium, brass, copper, lead and zinc were salvaged by Boy Scouts, under the supervision of Claude Breydon. Paper, as well as

rags needed for cleaning, for making felt and fibre board, for lining aeroplanes and for upholstery were also collected by a St. Kilda District Salvage Committee.

Hoping to set an example in scrap metal salvage, Council made an unusual proposition. It offered for scrap the German 5.9 inch gun, which had been captured by Australians on the Western Front on 8 August 1918 in a victory marking the end of General Ludendorff's dreams. It had been placed in Alfred Square in 1923 after being presented by Mr. Watt, speaker in the House of Representatives and member for Balaclava, on behalf of the Commonwealth Government to the City of St. Kilda in June 1923. Then, as Mayor, Cr. Burnett Gray had expressed his hope that whenever people looked at the gun they would resolve never to enter into the terrible tortures and hell of war until every channel to peace was exhausted. Over eleven tons in weight, and said to be the largest gun conveyed by the Germans with road traction, it could hurl a 110 pound shell from St. Kilda to Mordialloc. In 1923, Council had deemed the trophy a worthy memorial to the City's service to the war effort, but by 1941 it wanted to recast it in service against the Huns, its maker, or the Jap. An earlier attempt by Council to give it to the Army for use as a weapon had already been rejected because ammunition was unobtainable. So the fearsome gun young Australians shed blood to capture in 1918, the silent gun neither Council nor Government wanted in the war which followed the "war to end all wars", still pointed out over the weary sea, a monument to war's waste and man's forgetfulness.¹⁷

Winters were darker and more cheerless as supplies of wood dwindled. Even though hundreds of tonnes of firewood had been stockpiled at country sidings, wood was not transported to Melbourne due to the lack of transport. Furthermore, there was an increasing shortage of wood-cutters and mill-hands, so some St. Kilda volunteers joined others at a Forests Commission recreation camp at Anglesea during the summer of 1942-1943, to cut wood. Despite their efforts however, by February 1943 there were only 13,350 tonnes of wood instead of the normal 89,400 tonnes in St. Kilda district wood yards.¹⁸

Modes of transport changed as petrol rationing, which Menzies had introduced in 1940, became more stringent. A fierce black market grew immediately for blank ration tickets. To avoid the need for petrol altogether, some owners fitted charcoal burning gas producers on their cars but they were cumbersome and unreliable. They were messy too, and warning signs had to be placed on the beach at

Elwood and St. Kilda to deter people from dumping charcoal on the sand. When purchase of tyres and tubes were restricted to essential users because of the shortage of rubber, many exasperated owners gave up and garaged their cars for the duration of the war.

Even horses went without their customary chaff when it was rationed in 1944 because of the drought inland. Council horses including *Cavell*, *Smiler* and *Robin* stabled at Blanche Street, and used for pulling city garbage drays, night carts, street cleaning brooms and road plant, were fed on grass cut from vacant allotments and parks in 1944 and 1945.

Public transport became very crowded. Many munitions workers used Pring's bus service from the Palais Garage at 24 Upper Esplanade to Fishermen's Bend, and the demand was so great that Mrs. Pring had to extend the buses with trailers. St. Kilda trams were crammed, and supervised for the first time by female conductors, who had to deal firmly with passengers who rode on running boards, or cheeky soldiers who crammed into the empty driver's compartment at the back of the trams. The St. Kilda-Brighton Electric Street Railway was so popular that more tram cars were built in 1942 to join the older models known as "Ricketty Kate" and "Leaping Lena". Mounted on old wheels, the three new cars were the first additions to the stock since 1916-1923, when sixteen trams from Newport replaced the open ended four wheelers which were the original "Ricketty Kates".

There was a drastic shortage of housing in St. Kilda. Reverend Alex Fraser of the St. Kilda Presbyterian Church was appalled by apartments in St. Kilda, in June 1943: "so overcrowded that munition workers on night shift occupied the beds just vacated by day workers — and the rooms were never unoccupied for airing or cleaning". Subletting and exploitation of tenants, sometimes by other tenants, became common. A St. Kilda real estate agent described cases of tenants in 1945 who had leased several rooms in apartment houses in 1942 for £2-0-0 to £2-10-0 per week, then divided them with screens or enclosed the balconies and sub-let the space for profits of up to £7-0-0 per week. Although a Tenants' Welfare League was formed by Elwood citizens in 1944 to assist tenants paying excessive rents to obtain adjustments through the Fair Rents Court, its effectiveness was limited because tenants feared eviction if they complained. By May 1945, the city was so crowded, Health Inspectors believed there were only four vacant rooms in all of St. Kilda.¹⁹

Further disruption occurred because different buildings were

seized by the Commonwealth. Brighton Road State School students had to move to the Park Street State School because girls from MacRobertson Girls' High School were shifted to Brighton Road after the military acquired their own school. Their headmistress Miss Mary Hutton, who would not brook disrespect (though her girls sometimes called her Hairy Mutton when she was out of earshot) demanded regular use of the Town Hall for assemblies. She brought all her authority to bear on the Town Clerk, Mr. Greaves, who was used to having his way as well, and the fact that he withstood her formidable attack showed how firm he was, for she marshalled support from parliamentarians, business, and the highest echelons of the Education Department.

The Army also took over St. Gabriel's House at St. Michael's Church of England Girls' Grammar School early in 1943, so groups in Kindergarten and Form I went to the homestead of the Syme family at Killara, and Forms H and Mb to the Sisters' holiday cottage at Wandin²⁰. Classes were disrupted at the Christian Brothers' College in East St. Kilda too, when the RAAF Air Training Corps, 106 Squadron, used it as Headquarters and the location for instruction and physical drill in 1943²¹. The Junction Oval was occupied by the Army, so the St. Kilda Football Club moved to Toorak Park and played home games at Prahran from 1942 to 1944. To the Phillips' Brothers dismay, the Palais de Danse was used as a base post office and storage depot from 27 April 1942, its magnificent floor damaged by army boots at a time when its owners could have made thousands of pounds if it had remained open. Similarly, the Maison de Luxe was occupied by Commonwealth Military Authorities from 19 January 1942 until re-registration in April 1945. Accommodation houses, including the *Pladda* in 16 Dickens Street, were hired by the Commonwealth, and sections of garages were also requisitioned.

The deployment of manpower was strictly controlled. As men were conscripted, the Manpower Authority found others to take their place. Young girls and boys just out of school could be sent anywhere for their first employment from jam factories to offices, from telephone exchanges to factory lathes. Some workers were ordered interstate, or had to suspend their private businesses because they were regarded as inessential. Many Council workers were directed to the wool stores, or the Angliss meatworks, and the condition of many roads, parks, drains and facilities like the Baths deteriorated as a consequence. Often trusted employees were given additional respon-

sibilities without extra pay, although a few long serving Victorian female public servants were the first of their sex to be granted permanent status in the service in 1942: hence, after fifteen years of service a woman like Catherine Kelly of West Beach Road, St. Kilda who had joined the Department of Labour and Industry in June 1927, was deemed permanent at last and requested not to enlist because her experience was required. The status of many other local women changed too as they joined the Australian Women's Armed Services, the Women's Australian Air Force, the Women's Royal Australian Nursing Service, the Women's Land Army, or replaced some of the seven out of every ten men between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five who were serving in the Armed Services. Curtin negotiated new terms for the increased temporary employment of women in industrial occupations after consultation with unions anxious to protect men's jobs; even so, their employment in industry, munitions and transport was widely regarded as a temporary expedient. Archie Michaelis expressed a common view in State Parliament on 18 November 1942:

Many tasks are being performed by women now which, in ordinary circumstances, would be done by men. In wartime we often have to be satisfied with the second best because we cannot obtain the best.²²

The abnormality of the wartime situation was highlighted by the way the U.S.S.R., and all things Russian, became very popular in St. Kilda after Stalin became "Uncle Joe" and an important ally in the war against Hitler. The USSR was such a fashionable topic of interest that Mrs. C.H. Tutton gave a travel talk at Council Chambers about it on 6 April 1942 to the Mayoress and to Gift Shop workers. Percy Laidler, who had been regarded with deep suspicion by Council during the Victorian Council Against War incident in November 1934, was invited to show slides of Kharkov, Kiev, Moscow and Leningrad at the Town Hall. The *St Kilda Press* of 12 June 1942 was very appreciative of the show, and noted that the slides depicted the suffering of the people under the Czarist regime and their peace and contentment under Soviet control. On the same evening, Sonya Winokurow, the pianist, and the Balalaika String Orchestra presented several items. Another memorable gala night was held at St. Moritz on 18 November 1942 to raise funds to provide Australian sheepskins for Russian sick and wounded. The skating rink was more crowded than ever before, and there was so little room, youngsters were asked to kneel around the edges of the ice. After the show, the

producer, Wendy Lee, was presented with a Russian fur coat as a symbol of appreciation from the Russian people. Many residents supported the establishment of a Australia-Soviet House to represent Australia and Russia's friendship in 1944 in Flinders Lane, and Rabbi Sanger became a patron, along with other respected churchmen, academics, businessmen and lawyers in Melbourne.

Many St. Kilda people were astounded by the change in attitude towards communism. Amirah Gust, who attended MacRobertson Girls' High School, smiled to hear the school choir practising *The Internationale* and her history teacher's dry comment that she never thought she would hear that there. The Gust family could read Marxist classics again, and they welcomed back old communist friends like Jack Blake who had been in hiding. Many members of the local branches of the party were extremely idealistic and optimistic about the chance of reconstructing a new order when the war ended, and welcomed the opportunity to be deeply involved in community affairs without vilification. Mrs. D. Stewart of Tennyson Avenue, the Secretary of the St. Kilda branch, organised members to assist in local schools during Education Week in 1944 which she described as a very important and progressive event. A branch of the Eureka Youth League was formed in St. Kilda. Communists such as Nattie Seeligson joined the St. Kilda Post War Reconstruction Committee and G. Edson joined the St. Kilda Community Centre Movement. Nonetheless, it would not be long before they would all again become subject to the greatest hostility.

Suspicion of aliens by Councillors was inordinate, considering the few charges laid against them in the St. Kilda Court for defying security regulations. Nonetheless, Council believed it had to keep a watchful eye on potential spies, and continued to protect the rights of men who had to leave St. Kilda by making sure that aliens did not take advantage of their absence. It asked the Federal Government to prevent any acquisition of land by aliens whether they were naturalised or not in February 1942, taking a different view to Rabbi Sanger who was instrumental in convincing the Federal Government in the same month that the legal status of refugees should be that of "refugee alien" rather than "enemy alien"²⁴. The government always gave Council the opportunity to comment on applications by aliens but Council routinely declined. For instance, in May 1944 the Attorney-General's Department asked Council if Heinz Domdorf, a naturalised British subject, could purchase property in Tennyson Street;

whether Salvatore and Terzito Taranto, naturalised British subjects and fruiterers of 225a Barkly Street, could purchase a residence in Elwood; and if Michael Newman (formerly Neumann), described as stateless, formerly Austrian, a Jew and a "refugee alien" could purchase land in Shelley Street, Elwood. Council refused to comment on individuals and reaffirmed its belief that no approvals should be given whatsoever.²⁵

Jewish refugees were subjected to intense official scrutiny. Mr. Greaves checked naturalisation notices in the daily papers, collecting them in a separate file, and noted:

A Jew who arrived in Australia, say in 1939 with a German Passport could by the production of a letter from the Rabbi (relative to his being a regular member of his Ch) say that he was "compelled" or "obliged" to become a German in order to obtain a passport and thus be a "Stateless" person and thus exempt from the necessity to obtain the A.G. consent.²⁶

He wrote to Group Captain T.W. White on 24 November 1944 about the alarming situation, concerned that his municipality should be the one where many of these potential traitors chose to live:

...Council is not so much against the acquirement of properties by people of other than British nationality, as that they should not be able to take up properties that become for sale during the absence of our own men, who are thus deprived of equal opportunity of becoming our rate-payers. The position is likely to be accentuated within the next few months as more Aliens apply for naturalisation and this Municipality seems to have been singled out by them as their place of residence, for their probationary period at any rate.²⁷

In response, White raised the matter in the House of Representatives on 30 November 1944 emphasising that he was not directing his remarks against any particular group, or raising the matter with racial bias. White acted on Council's behalf again in June 1945 to protest against any alien changing their name by deed poll, and under the *National Security (Change of Name) Regulations* of July 1945, enemy aliens were prohibited from changing their name without the approval of the Attorney-General.

Many Jews in St. Kilda tried to provide support for the so-called "friendly aliens". New schools were established. A group purchased a property at 26 Avoca Avenue in late 1942 for a *Talmud Torah* (or Sunday School) to teach Hebrew, to study Jewish law and to supplement the education pupils received at their public and state schools. However, suspicious residents protested to the Town Clerk that the school would disturb their peace with gongs, drum-beats and other strange noises, and devalue their property. As Mr. Greaves was

uncertain about the nature of the school and whether it should be exempt from rates, he sought the advice of Rabbi Danglow, and noted a response which showed the Rabbi was well aware of changes occurring in his domain:

...as Jewish people come from different parts of the world, they prefer their own form of service and possibly the St. Kilda/Elwood Talmud Torah have the same type of service as the St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation but prefer to conduct it in their own way. Believe that they have no "English" spoken at their service, whereas a certain amount of English is embraced at his service. Many of its members are members also of his congregation.²⁸

Soon the *Talmud Torah* was built and grew from strength to strength, much to the annoyance of others in well-to-do Avoca Avenue, who continued to complain to the Town Clerk, and organised several petitions against the unwanted intrusion.

Rabbi Danglow was very busy during the war because he was the Senior Hebrew Chaplain for the Australian Armed Forces. He was often away from home but managed to combine pastoral work with his additional duties in a way some members of his congregation never forgot. Louis Waller's father was conscripted to the Sixth Australian Employment Company at Tocumwal, a unit of "friendly" and "enemy" aliens working on the railway line, while his family remained in St. Kilda. Later, Waller recalled that Danglow recognised his father at a railway platform, told him the family was well, and promised to tell Mrs. Waller that he had seen him: " He did — his appearance at our door in Argyle Street quite unnerved her". Nor would the eight year old Waller ever forget the majesty of Danglow during the war:

...pre-eminent always...- dark; a sun-tanned face, an iron-grey moustache, black canonicals, relieved a little by the bands of white at his throat, and draped in a silk *tallit* with blue stripes, a tiny replica of which I and every boy in Shule [synagogue] wore in those days...I remember Rabbi Danglow in khaki — standing erectly in uniform, in the foyer after davening, a purple band about his cap and purple tabs on the reverses of his jacket. He cut a magnificent figure. We knew he was the Senior Hebrew Chaplain and considered it natural that he should be.²⁹

Despite his standing however, it would not be long before the Rabbi's authority would come under serious question.

A picture of St. Kilda as a tense, socially divided city emerged from data collected in a social survey undertaken during the war into living conditions and the domestic economy of Melbourne families³⁰.

The unique social survey undertaken from 1941 to 1943 was directed by Wilfred Prest, Senior Lecturer and Professor of Economics at the University of Melbourne. One house in thirty was selected from street directories, and over eight thousand metropolitan homes were visited by women field workers who interviewed householders and collected data about size and type of the dwelling, rent, employment and income of the occupants. Many St. Kilda homes were visited by Nancy Eccles, and Patricia Counihan, particularly acute observers who sometimes made additional comments on the back of the survey forms. Formerly from New Zealand, Patricia Counihan was a teacher married to Noel Counihan, an artist in poor health and a communist who lived in St. Kilda. The idealistic field workers weathered wet cold nights for little pay to undertake the survey because they hoped it would assist in building a new, more equitable social order after the war. Their perceptive warm notes give insight into the standards of some houses, the social divisions, hardship and strain of the time.

Some houses they visited were in magnificent order. A civil engineer with the MMBW, who probably earned £30 a week, lived in a superbly maintained home in Tiuna Grove, Elwood. This was one of Melbourne's loveliest streets when the purple jacarandas and other flowering trees were in bloom, and boasted substantial homes with manicured gardens and lawns, smart garages, and fruit trees out the back.

Other homes were not so good. Some householders who had once known great wealth, retained some of the trappings of the past but lived in extreme poverty. Patricia Counihan interviewed lodgers at Inkerman Road, in a "very ancient building" where Nellie Stewart was thought to have once lived, with coachhouses, stables and other buildings out the back. The elderly brother and sister living there survived on income from their father's estate and the financial support of their ex-servant who worked elsewhere and paid board to live in the decaying mansion with its cracked walls, leaking roof, unreliable water supply and discoloured wall-paper. They also received a tiny amount from their eighty-two year old tenant. She was an elderly painter and vegetarian who still sold the odd picture, but relied on her old age pension of £1-3-6 per week to survive.

Other concise entries revealed families' changing fortunes. The head of the household in a family home in Alexandra Street, East St. Kilda rarely came home. He was a gambler and barely survived on the sustenance of a guinea per week. His fifty-eight year old wife, once a glamorous mannequin, actress, and film extra now endured a toxic

goitre, and relied on support from her daughter who worked as a munitions overlooker in a small arms factory, and son-in-law who had a fruit barrow.

The scars of the Depression were still evident in other households. After losing their savings and home in Brighton in the early 1930s, one family was ashamed that they now lived in Marlborough Street, and that the husband had been forced to work as a bread carter. Their fortunes were improving however with the war because he was a Staff Sergeant at Royal Park, and she was a dressmaker for Shelmerdine & Company at Abbotsford, and they could afford the thirty pounds a year required to send their daughter to St. Michael's Church of England Girls Grammar School in St. Kilda.

Blocks of flats and boarding houses in St. Kilda, once splendid and fashionable, were falling into disrepair and disrepute. Patricia Counihan visited Summerland Mansions at 3 Acland Street on 10 April 1943, where twelve families were living, and noted:

A big block of flats in three linked up buildings. No laundry in any of three buildings. Once an opulent block of expensive flats — now a little run to seed. Rents once 6 guineas now — average £2-10-0 — several flats are subdivided — contain lodgers or boarders

Such an observation about the declining prestige of many accommodation houses in St. Kilda was confirmed by the reports of the Council Health Inspector, Sister Norah Lehman, who was very worried about falling standards. She submitted to the Town Clerk in July 1943:

Ten years ago St. Kilda Guest Houses were outstanding. A tariff of 3 to 4 guineas was charged — country visitors were numerous but the average tariff is today about £2 to £2-10 and the premises all not up to the standard of previous times. The buildings have become obsolete — and do not offer the facilities of more up to date premises — there are only about six modern Guest Houses in St. Kilda.

Retired people used to live in the pre war houses but now they are in up to date flats, or have gone further afield and less fastidious clientele have taken their place. At present there is such a dearth of accommodation, no opposition and there is no incentive to improve and tariffs cannot be raised. Apartment houses are a raquet (sic) — no control of rentals. Consequently it is a disgrace. Of course there are reputable Apartment House people who are a credit to St. Kilda...³¹

The war was finishing off the death blow the Depression had dealt on such housing.

The field workers came across some refugees who sometimes strove to make a living at any cost. Patricia Counihan visited a family of Russian Jews in Ormond Road, Elwood who had lived in Australia for over seventeen years. The entire family operated the Golden Glory

Clothing Company in Carlton in March 1942. The father and eldest son described themselves as the proprietors and drew £5-0-0 per week, the machinists in the mother and daughter stated that their weekly income was £2-14-3, whilst the younger son earned £1-10-0 as the message boy. They were making quarterly mortgage payments of thirteen guineas. They had managed to modernise the bathroom and kitchen, but their house was only partly furnished, and that furniture was of poor quality. Furthermore, there were no carpets and there were cracks in the walls. In another sample, Nancy Eccles spoke to tenants in Dalgety Street in January 1942, who were full of bitter complaints about their absentee German Jewish refugee landlady because she exploited them. She paid £3 per week to rent the house, and sub-let it to six families. Eccles noted that the house was filthy in its shared parts. One "kitchen" shared by two families was little more than a metre square, and was merely a recess opening onto a back yard. There was no door and rats marauded it constantly. All of the so-called kitchens had been condemned but were still in use. There was no water supply.

Not all managers of accommodation houses were so grasping. A fifty-seven year old woman from the country leased an apartment house in Selwyn Street and lived on the rent from lodgers of £2-14-0 per week and £1-10-0 savings. Counihan noted she knew no one in Melbourne, could not afford any amusements, and would have gone mad but for the wireless. The other inmates of the house snobbishly avoided her company, and she appeared to have an ingrained sense of inferiority because she had been a servant all her life. She had leased the house as an escape from domestic service, but the money taken from lodgers barely covered her rent. Although the house was spotless, it needed extensive renovation, and the back yard required concreting but the landlord would do nothing.

The interviewers were sometimes pleased to escape from some people they met. A fieldworker, met an unpleasant British woman who had fled from Hong Kong, and was living in Pollington Street. The disgruntled refugee told her she was treated disgracefully by everyone with whom she had been in contact — firstly, the Americans in Manila where they first landed, then by the Australians. The fieldworker noted wryly:

Speaks in unadulterated cockney, but feels vastly superior to Australians as husband is in the British Army. No one here is friendly or interviews her in any way, and she is badly missing her Whist Parties. (No mention made of whether she is missing her husband as well.)³²

While it became more certain that St. Kilda would not be subject to the fearsome fireworks seen in the Pacific and in Europe, the safety of those far away was never certain. Many people who remained in St. Kilda were under intense nervous strain for years because they did not know what was happening, or what might happen to family members, neighbours and friends. While the casualty lists or a telegram brought the worst possible release, people could only imagine what prisoners of war had to suffer, or what sons and daughters were enduring in action. Amongst the many St. Kilda families who received dreadful news were the Metsons and the Newtons.

Corporal John A. Metson of 2/14 Battalion, formerly a salesman of Foster Street, St. Kilda was twenty five years old when he was killed on 4 October 1942. He was a member of Captain Ben Buckler's Company which was cut off in the Owen Stanley Ranges south of Kokoda in late August 1942. Avoiding established paths, Buckler's men back tracked to elude the Japanese and carried some wounded soldiers on makeshift stretchers through the dense scrub and up steep inclines. Metson, who had been shot through the ankle, valiantly refused to be carried. He wrapped bandages around his hands and knees and crawled on all fours for twenty one days through mud and rain along the mountainous tangled ground to Sengai. There, villagers sheltered the wounded and fed them with boiled tops of sweet potatoes while the rest of the party went on. But Metson had painfully crawled so far only to be slaughtered there when Japanese raided the village. Later, his mother wrote to the Catholic Chaplain of 2/16 Battalion, Father Cunningham, who was with the patrol that found and buried the bodies, for some details of his death and personal effects, and the priest replied :

Jim was close by the stretcher cases when we found him. I can imagine your wish to receive the medal he had tied to his I Disc but I buried it with him and I think you will be consoled to know it is still with him all his other belongings were taken by the Japs and I did not find the ring you mentioned in your letter.³³

Flight-Lieutenant William Ellis Newton of Inverleith Street became St. Kilda's second Victoria Cross winner after Albert Jacka. He joined 22 Squadron when it was re-equipped with Bostons in May 1942, and was posted to New Guinea in October 1942 where he completed fifty two sorties mainly under heavy anti-aircraft fire. The tough competitive spirit he displayed at St. Kilda sporting arenas stamped his style as a pilot, and marked him as a devil in Japanese eyes as his plane always flew in lowest under the ack-ack fire and was

unrelenting in attack. After attacks on Lae, he raided Salamau three times. On the first flight, one of his engines failed over the target area and he flew back to Port Moresby using only his port motor. A few days later on 16 March 1943, he dived through intense fire to bomb his target of fuel tanks at the lowest possible altitude, and set two alight. Although his aircraft suffered four direct hits, Newton nursed it home. Ground crew at Port Moresby were astonished to see Newton and his crew, Flight-Sergeant J. Lyon, a twenty seven year old foundry moulder of Footscray, and Sergeant B.G. Eastwood, a thirty one year old clerk from Caulfield, alight from the damaged plane which it seemed only a magician could fly: a servicing party had to repair it with two new wings, two engines, two propellers, elevators, tail parts and one hundred and forty two patches. Newton had brought it over two hundred and eighty kilometres across the Owen Stanley Ranges to Port Moresby. He could have landed it at Dobodura, about sixty-five kilometres from Salamau, but he knew the plane could not be repaired there, and that there were no replacement Bostons, so despite the risks he flew it home. He would later be awarded the Victoria Cross for his feat.

Only two days after his ordeal, he donned his customary St. Kilda Cricket Club cap, and took off again. On his final flight over Salamau on 18 March, Newton destroyed his target which was a single building, but, to the joy of the Japanese, his plane was hit and burst into flames over the sea. Newton attempted to bring it nearer to shore and further from the enemy and landed on the water about 1,000 metres from shore near Laupui Point. Eastwood did not escape from the plane but Newton and Lyon swam to shore. They were posted missing and Flying Officer John Miles, a RAAF veteran, even prepared leaflets in pidgin English to drop for Newton so he would know what to say if villagers found him first:

Me Captain be long balus. He come down long soda water. Me like go long wau. Suppos you fella come along wau one time allright. You fella catchem plenty fella marks. Now kai kai. You no come; now altogether fella bilong me come how sutim you fella quicktime.

However, Newton was captured by the Japanese Sasebo 5 Special Naval Landing Party, Number One Company under the command of Sub-Lieutenant Komai Uichi, and taken to Lae for interrogation. On the orders of Rear Admiral Fujita, Commanding Officer of the Naval Forces in the area, Newton was taken back to Salamau.

He was killed as a warrior, then mutilated in a horrifying manner on 23 March 1943. In accordance with Japanese *bushido*, Komai used

his Osamune sword and severed Newton's head with one stroke. This event, and the subsequent atrocities were described in a Japanese diary. In describing the St. Kilda airman's death, the diarist revealed he was not inhuman:

The precaution is taken of surrounding him with guards with fixed bayonets. But the prisoner remains unshaken to the last. When I put myself in his place, the hate engendered by his daily bombing yields to ordinary human feelings.³⁴

Australian papers of early October 1943 announced that the beheaded body of an airman found in New Guinea was an Australian, that the story of the death was recorded in a captured Japanese diary, and that it was not government policy to release details of Japanese atrocities. Then, on 19 October 1943 the *London Gazette* announced the posthumous award of the Victoria Cross to Newton for his mission on 16 March. Newton's Victoria Cross was the third Victoria Cross to be awarded in the New Guinea campaign, the first to be won in air over Australian territory, the first to be won by a member of the RAAF while serving in a RAAF squadron, and the only such award to an Australian to have two separate citations. The nature of his death was not publicly specified in the citation in which the Governor General, Lord Gowrie, described Newton's service as being of the highest order and paid tribute to his well balanced qualities as an officer, blended with a cheerful, natural and infectious personality. John Curtin offered his condolences to Newton's half-brothers, and to his mother. Quietly, Minnie Newton replied that she was very proud of the great honour but it could never make up for the loss of her son who had lived with her in St. Kilda all of his life.³⁵

There was no measure to gauge what St. Kilda and Australia lost in every death in the fire of war. Only when they heard tales of the action war inspired, or saw the glittering eyes and shrunken bodies of once robust men at Heidelberg Hospital did some who remained behind in St. Kilda realise that many who returned could never speak truly of what they had seen or done. Nor were those who had not gone unscathed by these fearful years of austerity and anxiety.

II. HOT TIME

St. Kilda served Melbourne well again during these strained years in its trusted, traditional role as a provider of public entertainment. The war gave its amusement industry a great boost, and with petrol so

scarce it enjoyed the primacy it had known before cars had enabled visitors to travel elsewhere for recreation.

Thousands of visitors and soldiers on leave went there, simply because it was the hottest spot in town. For many people it was very important as a place to let off steam, and their normal inhibitions were cast aside. Certainly, Melbourne was thankful when the threat of enemy attack had proved to be a damp squib, yet it was immensely difficult to prepare for raids, wait anxiously for bombs to fall, then cope when nothing happened. Without the catharsis of that explosion, however dreadful its effects would have been, people had to release bottled-up tension and energy somehow. This need, as well as a sense of the abnormality of the time, the nearness of death, the *need* to live each day as if it were the last, the anonymity of the crowded city and the silence of darkened parks which bore witness to strange dealings, made it seem immaterial if rules were broken sometimes. And St. Kilda was often the place where they were.

The presence of the American forces heightened the prevailing excitement and sense of abnormality of the time, though the experience and expectations of the American visitors varied. Many of the young American servicemen sought home comforts because they were homesick and unfamiliar with city life, and had not even ridden on anything like the Big Dipper in their lives before. Geoffrey Hutton noted in March 1942: "A goodly proportion of the U-S soldiers in Australia have never seen a city the size of Melbourne before, let alone lived in one".³⁶

Many were grateful for home hospitality offered by residents in St. Kilda who did their best to satisfy their guests with entertainment and good plain food which the men loved. For example, occupants of the flats at 14 Robe Street arranged regular entertainment for soldiers on a fortnightly basis, when local pianists, violinists and vocalists would perform and supper would be served. Artists included Tony La Gruta, the violinist, and his daughter Angela, an opera singer with the National Theatre, both delighted to meet Americans who could speak Italian. Such gatherings occurred all over St. Kilda, and performances often of the highest standard, for there were many talented artists able to make a contribution". Memories of Americans' visits to their homes became part of some St. Kilda families' folklore. For example, the Barker Family of *The Gables* in Barkly Street jokingly used another name for scones ever after the visit of three American sailors. Cr. Elaine Miller (nee Barker) later recalled:

Mother had them for high tea on a Sunday night. We had cold lamb left from the roast at lunch from Smart Brothers the butchers, lettuce, tomato and beetroot. Three very young sailors came and they gave me empty Lucky Strike cigarette packets. When they left one said: "Thank you Mrs. Barker for the meal, especially your wonderful baking powder biscuits".³⁸

Other American soldiers thought Melbourne provincial and dull, with its lack of sky-scrapers, subways, a large city square, and its quiet Sundays. Jack Turcott, the War Correspondent of the New York *Daily News* wondered at the "complete subservience of its livelier residents to rules about movies and hotels and all forms of entertainment"³⁹. Many of the Commanding Officers agreed. Colonel Galloway, who was stationed in St. Kilda, defended their right to put their arms around women at the Palais Pictures. After American officials implied that Premier Dunstan was a "blue-nosed fly in the ointment"⁴⁰, the State Government permitted more Sunday entertainment: from 5 October 1942, for instance, Earls' Court opened for Sunday dances, and on occasions the First Marine Division Band played there. The building was renamed *Palm Grove* for the duration, and did particularly good business because the Palais de Danse was being used as a Post Office.

Whatever their background, most of the Americans had no prior knowledge of Melbourne and relied at first on organisations like the Hospitality Bureau at 311 Elizabeth Street which provided city maps showing St. Kilda as the equivalent of Coney Island, advice about Australian currency, and, charges for taxis and accommodation, as well as supplying Coca-Cola, doughnuts and hamburgers at a canteen. Publications like the pocket guides issued by the US War and Navy Department also offered some guidance:

Being simple, direct and tough, the Digger is often confused and nonplussed by the manners of Americans in mixed company or even in camp. To him those many "Thank yous" Americans use are a bit sissified. You might get annoyed at the blue laws which make Australian cities pretty dull on Sundays. For all their breeziness Australians do not go in for drinking or woopitching in public, especially on Sunday...You are not in Australia to save a helpless people from the savage Japanese...You will find Australians an outdoors people, breezy, very democratic, with no respect for stuffed shirts — their own or anyone else's.⁴¹

The breeziest place of all was St. Kilda, and that is where many American soldiers went.

Amusement operators made a fortune as they scrambled to cater for every taste, and the foreshore entertainments were so crowded some wished the war would never end. Scoota Boats Proprietary

Limited installed additional games of pin bowls and miniature quoits on their site. Scratchy recordings of Bing Crosby's *Mexicali Rose* were played at the merry-go-round when the operator's radio was not blaring race results. The management of the Palais de Dan se agreed to Cr. W. O. J. Phillips' request to use the Swirl building for dancing while the Palais de Danse was closed. Cr. Phillips claimed in April 1942 that he was taking a considerable gamble because he was launching a new venture in winter and: "The war may end abruptly in a few months". Furthermore, he argued that his new venture was altruistic, because with Luna Park's season over, the facility was required for patriotic reasons: "...with the ever increasing arrival of the forces from overseas, the closing of these two major attractions has contracted the facilities of providing the necessary diversion, by way of amusement for the armed forces". When Luna Park reopened for the 1942-1943 season, much to the Phillips' Brothers relief, there was barely room to move. People queued for rides on the Big Dipper as well for admission to the Penny Arcade, Carousel, Dodgems, Giggle Palace, Ha-Ha Ride, Jack and Jill, Noah's Ark, Photo Studio, River Caves, Scenic Railway, Shooting Gallery, Whip, and the Whirler; and games called the Cat, Chinese Horoscope, Clown, Darts, Disco, Fish, Poker, and Prisons.⁴²

St. Moritz was packed for every public session on Monday to Saturday from 6.30 to 8.00 p.m., and 8.00 to 10.30 p.m. for the special general session at 10 a.m. on Saturday mornings, and for sessions of private tuition. Spectacular shows of gaiety, colour and escape were produced by Wendy Lee including *Sun Valley Revs* in 1943 in aid of the Merchant Navy; *Cinderella Days* in December 1943 with Mardi Kendall and Coral Stuber; the *Mardi Gras on Ice* in February 1944, when seventy professional skaters performed in the presence of the Lord Mayor of Melbourne, and Mr. Spiker, the American Consul; and *Cinderella on Ice* in September 1944 in aid of the Business Girls Red Cross Prisoners of War Appeal, when organisers made costumes out of army disposals parachutes.⁴³

The Palais Pictures featured a women's band, which was very popular because of its excellence. It was formed by Harry Jacobs after he lost many of his regular musicians to the armed services, and because of manpower regulations. Members included Helen Stock, Poppy Olsen, the Funston Sisters of St. Kilda, who played trumpet and saxophone, Miss Veers on the double bass, Mary McLeod on piano, and Mavis Ward, who was expecting a child and had the piano moved as her pregnancy advanced, and whose husband was killed on

active service before the baby was born. They did skits sometimes, *including Dr. Whackan's College* in which Harry Jacobs would be the schoolmaster and the women would sit behind desks. Many of the versatile women were very busy, and used spare time during rehearsals to shell peas or knit comforts for soldiers overseas.⁴⁴

There were other good spots to go to. At Leonard's Cafe Cabaret by the sea, people danced to the music of Mickey Powell, the debonair bandleader. Leonards had already seen Graeme Bell there in March 1941, when *Music Maker* magazine described his band as the only group playing real jazz in Melbourne. At Earl's Court, people queued to enter the doors guarded by Joe Lapp, the muscular bouncer. They heard Pam Corrigan, who later married Bob Storey, the first sax player in Bob Gibson's band; and the Parker Sisters who sounded like the Andrews Sisters. Bob Gibson's Band would play upstairs and a jitterbug hall was set aside there so that the frenzied action of those dancers would not interfere with others. Claude Harding played old time music on another floor, and at another level, Jack Gay's Hawaiians, dressed in white suits, or black trousers, floral shirts and leis, played sixteen string steel guitars. Bob Gibson, who had played with the bands of Em Pettifer, Jay Whidden and Roy Fox, would play live on Monday nights From Earl's Court for *Star Night*, compered by Johnny McMahon, and broadcast live on 3UZ. His band included Bob Storey on reeds, Alf Warne on piano, Keith Cerchi, and Don Rankin on reeds.

Famished visitors, who were having a raging good time, could satisfy their hunger at a range of cafes and shops. Popular haunts included the Tarax Bar, Hamburger Bill's, the Katarina Cafe, and the Soho Coffee Lounge in Fitzroy Street. They could choose kosher small goods from Batagol Brothers in Barkly Street; continental cakes and pastries from H. Lopata and Sons at 190 Barkly Street; grills from the Pavilion Tea Rooms; chickens, fish and chips and late night meals from Hyland's Barbeque Cafe in Fitzroy Street; sweet and sour fish, and chicken and almonds from Lew Boar's Hong Kong Cafe in Fitzroy Street; or dim-sims at the Tientsin Cafe at 150-152 Acland Street.

The Galleon Coffee Lounge was so popular there would be long queues around the block waiting to enter. Customers would pay two shillings for all the coffee they could drink, and although consumption of liquor was officially prohibited, hip flasks could be seen in the busy, smoky lounge. Waitresses served snacks for 1/3 from Monday to Friday, 1/6 on Saturday night when the third session ended at 1

am., and 2/— on Sundays, including toasted sandwiches with melted butter on top, toasted raisin bread, welsh rarebit, baked beans and spaghetti on toast. Maurice Ress's first compere was Don Baker, one of the Americanadians who remained in St. Kilda; he crooned ballads, and told jokes, sometimes after the style of Jack Benny, and worked at 3DB as well. Another compere was Dick Cranbourne, who played the saxophone and had been a member of Jim Davidson's band; he, too, was a broadcaster and race-caller with 3DB. Many of the performers at the Galleon also broadcast *The Oxford Show* live from the Galleon with Leslie Ross and Roy Lyons. The hilarious Stan Bourne played many musical instruments, and sang and told jokes. Other comedians who brought the house down were Buster Fiddes, Jack Perry, with his George Formby imitation and riotous repertoire, and Frank Rich who returned after his release as a prisoner of war, and was still able to tell jokes. Imitations of Spike Jones and the Wacky Wacketeers by Roy Lyons and Jack Perry were very popular as well as a *Gay Nineties* segment where singers in barbershop quartets wore false moustaches and wore boaters. Maurice Ress also introduced a Talent Quest on Monday nights with the prize of a week's work at the Galleon. He sold his business to Clarrie Gange in 1946, and resumed management of the Astoria Hotel.⁴⁵

Once, there had been nothing like the Galleon in Melbourne, but, by the war, similar lounges such as the Plaza, the Kozy Kennel and the Melba opened up nearby. Many artists had seasons at them all. Roy Cowan, a former Hoyts Theatre manager married to the actress Louise Lovely, founded the Plaza Coffee Lounge in premises above Coles on the north-east corner of Barkly and Aciand Street. The lineup there was led by Don Humphries and included Jack Geoghegan, on guitar and vocals, Dorothy Caddy on vocals, Ray Watson on sax, and Alec Ferrier on trombone and drums. The ubiquitous Micky Walker also appeared. Molly Byron, a resident of Brighton Road, St. Kilda, with her short cropped curly black hair and customary trousers, would sing the blues, and played the trumpet with her all women jazz band. The Plaza was the incubator of bop in Melbourne after the war when Errol Buddle, Edwin Duff and Jack (Jazza) Brokensha had late night sessions in 1947. The Melba Coffee Lounge was about fifty metres from the Plaza and Denis Farrington sometimes played there. Farrington came to St. Kilda in 1939 from Richmond. As well as being a swimmer with eleven Victorian titles, he was a hairdresser, and his barbershop, with "three chairs no waiting", was four doors away from the Galleon. He eventually

relinquished the barbershop, to take bookings, line up musicians and play all over the State himself. He recalled that Reg Cantwell played his violin at the Melba on Wednesdays. The band played from nine to twelve, then Alf Virgona came in from Navaretti's, a night club in the basement opposite the Hotel Australia, with his band at midnight; one night Virgona's pianist was sick and Reg Cantwell played that instrument for the first time at the Melba, and subsequently, was asked to become a pianist for the Horrie Dargie Quintet. Other popular spots were Len Davis's Olde Boys Inn in Fitzroy Street and the pianist Charlie White's Kozy Kennel in Aciand Street. The latter did not have a permanent orchestra but artists, including Bob Gibson, Theo Walters, Pam Corrigan, Olive Lester and Sylvia Sefton, would gather there after they had finished engagements and give impromptu sessions before a packed smoky house. Often when the lounges closed, some customers would continue to party on the beach.

American soldiers made contributions to entertainment in St. Kilda in formal and informal ways as well. The American Red Cross arranged for Bob Lyon to play at the Palais de Danse before it was taken over. Corporal Anthony Ferrara, the American tenor, sang at the St. Kilda Town Hall on 19 June 1942, and on 11 April 1943 the seventy strong American Forces Band, under the leadership of Maj or Leon Brusiloff, gave a recital on the lawns in front of the Captain Cook monument in the Catani Gardens. Often though, such arrangements called for great secrecy. Before the Band was permitted to play, the Acting Adjutant of the U.S. Marine Corps, Major John E. Linch, stipulated to the Town Clerk that:

The use of the band is conditioned upon the requirement that no mention be made of it as a Marine Band. This is necessary for security reasons. Failure to comply with our request in this instance might seriously jeopardize this organization's usefulness.⁴⁶

One of the hottest performances of all was by Artie Shaw and his band, who came to entertain the US servicemen at Earl's Court but played for many locals as well, who cadged tickets and squeezed in through windows. The joint was jiving, and later, some of Artie Shaw's musicians sat in at sessions at the coffee lounges. Other American contributors to the lively local musical scene included a group of Army medicos who rented a flat in Westbury Street, and had rowdy jam sessions. Informal swing bands sometimes played on the foreshore as well where children waited, hoping to be given a stick of gum. And at Noble Kerby's kiosk on the pier, GIs showed women how to jitterbug.

Some feared that Americans and other soldiers on leave were targets for the unscrupulous. Councillors believed that some St. Kilda traders were exploiting them. Making another attack on aliens, Cr. Phillips claimed that St. Kilda's good name was being endangered by "foreign fruiterers" because they were taking Americans down. According to him, one had charged a US dollar, or 6/1 Australian, for a pineapple worth 1/3; another, who had charged a similar amount for three apples, three pears and three bananas, then told a soldier he could have another banana in exchange for a packet of cigarettes.⁴⁷ Americans also complained that they were charged more than locals for meals and liquor, and had to pay from thirty shillings to three pounds for a bottle of whisky valued at seventeen shillings, and that cab drivers took a different route every time they went from camp to St. Kilda. They became cautious about where they left their coats because American uniforms were highly prized: several cases were heard at the St. Kilda Court of Petty Sessions against people who stole American property including military jackets and ties. As well, the magistrate even heard of the theft of a slot machine from the US Army Officer Club in St. Kilda. Nonetheless, not only American officers were regarded as easy game: on 27 August 1942, the St. Kilda magistrate sentenced a male offender to six months imprisonment because:

Defendant at St. Kilda on 12 August 1942 did steal £64 in money, an officers identification card, an officers ration book, a cheque for £38, a pair of slacks and a khaki shirt valued in all at £70 the property of Maurice and a khaki sweater and and officers trenchcoat and a box of "My Brand" contraceptives the property of Carol valued at £10.⁴⁸

On the other hand, many Australian soldiers were displeased by the favourable treatment they thought American servicemen received. US soldiers were paid nearly twice as much as they were, they were accused of flashing their money about like show-offs, and were blamed for driving up the price of liquor and short term accommodation in St. Kilda because they were willing to pay more for it. While the US servicemen were smartly outfitted in trim, well laundered uniforms, with privates wearing a collar and tie and a well-cut coat, their digger counterparts felt dowdy in their baggy, coarse khaki. Only Australian officers were issued with better tailored tunics and trousers, but even they did not match up to their streamlined American counterparts. Furthermore, the Yanks had fancy habits like buying flowers and using sissy manners, and what was worst of all, women seemed to be mad about them.

Women who did not live in St. Kilda went there in search of Americans or other soldiers on leave because they knew they were to be found at such a popular haunt. The Australian writer, Deirdre Cash, who used the nom-de-plume of Criena Ronan, described their predatory quest in her novel *Down by the Docks*

It was a sweltering evening in February when Phyl Foley and I went down to St. Kilda to look the field over...We dressed with care and a kind of suppressed excitement, for tonight we were going hunting. Our current Yankees had gone north, and very light-hearted they had been about it. At any rate they had taken us out half a dozen times and, as we were both virgins, it was doubtful if we could have held them much longer — and remained virgins, that is...

So there we were with our hair piled high in the front and cascading down past our shoulders at the back, our uplift brassieres thrusting our breasts forward like Ack-Ack guns...rouge high on our cheek-bones and each wearing a huge Yankee graduation ring; off to St. Kilda to walk arm in arm on the Esplanade. Phyl, because she was 5ft. 8in., wore flat suede shoes which we considered looked very American and sharp, but I wore my first pair of real true high-heeled courts. What I called real, true high heels meant about five inches high. They made my long brown legs look like stilts, and my mother said her feet ached every time she looked at them.

We pushed through the crowd at Flinders Street Station. It was packed as usual. Never will I forget those wonderful wartime nights. The crowds of servicemen, their girls, tight-skirted, bare-legged, long-haired; the brownout, the noise, the couples kissing in doorways.

"I shall have lived a little while,

Before I die for ever",

I said, and Phyl laughed and said, "You're a funny girl", but she gave me a sudden look of affection to show that she knew what I meant. We ignored all would-be pick-ups on the way to the St. Kilda tram.

"I just feel like St. Kilda tonight", said Phyl, and I let her take the initiative because she was two years older than I, and a beauty.

We sighted our quarry after about five minutes, parading the Esplanade. They were standing outside the shooting gallery nearest the Scoota Boats...⁴⁹

Other wealthier woman who believed they had great style, came to St. Kilda for fancier game. Many officers from Base Section Four Headquarters at Port Melbourne, under the command of Colonel Galloway were billeted at the residential side of the Prince of Wales Hotel where an officers' club was established, and at the Gatwick Hotel in Fitzroy Street, both owned by Edwin Jewell from 1941 and highly regarded for the facilities they provided. The Gatwick Hotel lacked a dining room so officers and their female friends dined at the Prince of Wales where the freezer was stacked with ice-cream and the

pantry with full of other unprocurable goods. As well, the vacant block beside the Prince of Wales was bulldozed by the United States Military Forces and converted into a court where the officers played volley-ball, a game unknown in St. Kilda prior to their arrival. Staff noticed that even when the officers were transferred elsewhere, many of their women friends, recognisable as members of well-known Melbourne families who often featured in the social pages of the daily papers, sometimes remained and accompanied the officers' replacements. Later on, an English Naval Lieutenant, Simon Warrender, recalled that "half the married women" in the suburb of Toorak conducted "affairs with American officers".⁵⁰

The nature of relationships which developed between American soldiers and women in St. Kilda were as various as the individuals involved. In the humourless atmosphere of austerity, it was not an onerous patriotic duty to spend time with exotic well-groomed men who sounded like movie idols and were intent on having a good time; whose kitbags contained chocolates, cigarettes, silk stockings, records from the PX, and spirits; who sought female company; who seemed more chivalrous and at ease with women than many Australian men; and who had money to spend. While many women knew that they were sometimes taking risks they would normally avoid, others remembered friendships or brief liaisons as the most carefree and happy times of the war. Dangerous possibilities were evident whenever charges were laid in St. Kilda Court against women for attempting to procure miscarriage with the unlawful use of instruments, but the darkest danger seemed uncomfortably close when three women were murdered in Melbourne by Private Edward Leonski of New York City who was hanged on gallows borrowed from Pentridge on 9 November 1942. The nearly naked bruised body of the first victim, Ivy McLeod, was found in a doorway in Albert Park; she was strangled after Private Leon ski spent the morning and afternoon drinking whisky in the Bleak House Hotel in Beaconsfield Parade. On the brighter side though, new lyrics to the song *Thanks For the Man* dedicated to the First Marine Division by Diana Gibson and Audrie Gullett, circulated in Melbourne in 1944 in pamphlet form. (A sample is reproduced in the illustrations section of this book.) Copies were eagerly sought after the Americans departed, because they captured the spirit of different affairs, and evoked the varying elements of sentiment, romance, fun, manipulation, hard-headedness, experience, self-awareness, and determination to live as if every day might be the last, which figured in many liaisons. Here is one verse:

*Thanks for the memory
Of troops who'd been through strife
Kids who enjoyed life
Of love affairs
And foolish cares
And photos of your wife
How lovely it was..*

P.S. We'll get over it.⁵¹

If, at times, normal standards of behaviour were forgotten by soldiers on leave and their companions, this could be justified in some people's minds because it was an abnormal time. Sometimes brawls broke out between groups of soldiers or civilians after long bouts of drinking. Despite rationing, some people drank more than they had done before and there was an increase in convictions against women for drunk and disorderly behaviour in the St. Kilda Court. There were complaints that a shortage of beer in other suburbs brought drinkers from other suburbs to St. Kilda for a spree in 1943:

Soldiers and girls under the influence of liquor could be seen embracing in shop doorways. Women also under the influence were fighting in the street and when the hotels closed groups of drink-crazed men and women crowded the footpath, while decent people had to walk on the road.⁵²

In another incident, police drew batons outside the Village Belle Hotel in February 1944 to quell thirteen soldiers who were charged with offensive behaviour, the use of insulting words, and assault of police.⁵³

Dark streets, parks and seaside nooks became the scene of clandestine nocturnal activity for those with no more private places to go. The Premier called for police investigation in February 1943 of couples' behaviour in parks because he believed there was a "lessening of moral restraint" and that the "ethics of good conduct were being lowered, and could not be excused by wartime strain"⁵⁴. A fortnight later, Cr. Burnett Gray expressed his shock at the sight of girls of twelve and fourteen years of age on seats and rockeries in St. Kilda with men in uniform at one and two o'clock in the morning. He commented: "Such a state of affairs should not happen in Australia"⁵⁵. Some buildings on the foreshore provided limited seclusion and shelter from the wind: in October 1943, Cr. W. O. J. Phillips was annoyed by "the filthy habits of some persons and others using my stone steps (of the Swirl) for their amorous yearnings in early hours of the morning".⁵⁶

At the same time however, Councillors acknowledged the inevitability, and indeed the necessity, of sexual activity on male soldiers'

part. They granted an "urgent request" from the Commonwealth Army Hirings Service for the U.S. Army on 18 May 1942 to establish a prophylactic station, by partitioning two stalls at the far end of the men's toilets near the Luna Park entrance. This use continued until until early in 1943. Then, on 5 March 1943, Captain Nathan Spishakoff, Venereal Disease Control Officer of Base Section Four, and Lieutenant William E. Neff Jr., USNR, applied to Council for permission to re-establish what they called the blue-light station for utilization by personnel of the American armed forces. The Town Clerk made arrangements for their officer-in-charge to obtain a key every evening from the attendant when he left the toilets at 11.30 p.m.⁵⁷ From about September 1943 the US forces' use of the station was taken over by the Australian Army which terminated its hire on 31 July 1946. Although the soldiers' needs were recognised, Councillors were offended by the Army's offer to pay for the facility because they did not approve of the matter being viewed as a commercial transaction, for it was more a matter of patriotism they thought, and concern about the morale of soldiers.

Other official efforts to control venereal disease included action taken under the *National Security (Venereal Disease and Contraceptives) Regulation* of September 1942 which directed the States to search for infected women. In Victoria a squad of two police, an Army provost and a US Military Policeman were empowered to question female suspects who were named by infected men as a recent sex partner. By mid 1943 up to thirty women a week were examined at the Queen Victoria Hospital⁵⁸. Infected men who sought treatment at the Royal Melbourne Hospital, which was the US Army hospital, were attended by "dressers" or male orderlies because it was not considered proper for female nurses to do so; and, indeed, some of the young trainees from the country who boarded at *Brooklawn*, the Royal Melbourne Hospital hostel in Fitzroy Street, St. Kilda, were embarrassed and blushed at the unusual frankness of American soldiers coming into the hospital who asked them straight out for directions to the "VD Clinic". These young country nurses boarding in Fitzroy Street, who had to be sheltered at the workplace from unladylike contact with infected men, were paid 10/10 per week in their first year, plus board, and were issued with a pristine uniform of lilac, nine inches from the ground, white apron, and white pleated cap to be exchanged for a modest veil when they became a sister.

Close to *Brooklawn*, prostitutes worked. Surreptitiously in darkened parks, they were earning much more than the chaste novices on

the other side of the street. Police recognised that from 1944 Fitzroy Street was:

...the centre of activity for street prostitutes. The gardens area between the bowling green and St. Kilda Rd, and that portion of Albert Park Reserve used as a playing area for the school, has been in constant use by these women for the purpose of intercourse with their clients...the handiness of the unlighted strip of parkland adjacent to the street provides a ready made brothel for women who find it impossible to obtain rooms, or are unwilling to pay the percentage of their earnings demanded by householders willing to co-operate with them.⁵⁹

Despite the predominance of street prostitution, there were organised brothels as well which offered more than female prostitutes. More male pimps connected with brothels were charged with living wholly or partly on the earnings of prostitutes at the St. Kilda Court of Petty Sessions during the war. A bungalow at 36 Dalgety Street was found to contain one male prostitute, as well as four females who were using the premises for prostitution between 28 November 1942 and 9 January 1943; a couple of months later one of the same women was charged with possession of an unregistered pistol. Other permanent brothels operated at 48 Dalgety Street, 2 Barkly Street, and in a bungalow at 14 Loch Street during 1942 and 1943. One prostitute who made frequent appearances at the St. Kilda Court was also charged with having cocaine in her possession on 18 December 1942, and was fined £30.⁶⁰

St. Kilda had been the place where rules had been broken during the war; its notoriety would remain, as many thought dissolution, and a criminal element, was well entrenched there by the time the war ended, and that its reputation had well and truly slipped.

III. ASHES

Every step towards victory was acknowledged with thankfulness tempered by grief at the sacrifice required. After Germany surrendered on 8 May 1945 the Mayor, Cr. A.J. Stevens remembered all the families for whom victory in Europe meant inexpressibly sad memories, reflecting the sombre mood in Melbourne where quiet emotional ceremonies were held at the Shrine. There was more mourning after the death of the Prime Minister, John Curtin, on 5 July 1945 and the Mayor said: "His loss would be felt by every member of the community, but his memory would be forever green in the hearts of all"⁶¹. Curtin was succeeded by J.B. Chifley as Prime Minister.

Then the United States of America dropped the most terrific bombs of all on Hiroshima on 6 August 1945 and on Nagasaka on 8 August 1945, Japan surrendered and victory was celebrated in St. Kilda on 14 August 1945. Council gave thanks for the end of almost six years of unimaginable violence on 20 August 1945, and children were treated to a bag of sweets and pictures at the Palais. Later, Council approved the annual provision of two thirteen guinea scholarships in memory of Albert Jacka V.C. and William Newton V.C., and also presented a certificate to all loyal members of the St. Kilda Air Raid Precautions Organisation. Finally, on 24 April 1946 a civic welcome was given to one thousand one hundred returning St. Kilda servicemen at the Town Hall, who were entertained by Fred Tupper of 3AW, Ted Wilson and Norman Bland. First-aid officers were in attendance too in case any of the men broke down physically or emotionally in the excitement of the reunion. After this function, Council expressed its gratitude to W.H. Greaves for his war service by sponsoring his visit to his homeland, England.

Everyone hoped a better world would arise at last from the ashes of war. Good sprang immediately from it as former members of the Air Raid Precautions Organisation, led by Geoff Westbrook, a former Deputy Area Warden, Abe and Pearl Cohen and H. Thomas formed a St. Kilda Welfare Organisation. A St. Kilda Municipal Symphony Orchestra was also briefly established to divert people from the horrors of the war years and foster the resumption of normal peacetime pursuits, and twenty four musicians under Lawrence Marcus White presented fifteen concerts before expense led to its abandonment in 1946. Idealism was also seen in the short-lived St. Kilda Reconstruction Committee which dreamt of libraries, child-care centres, home-help, better schooling and housing for all, and contained a number of Marxists who championed such ideas.

Life, it was hoped, would return to normal at last. It was comforting to see ordinary hum-drum activities resume in the city streets. Council employees resumed normal duties, for instance. Workmen removed rotting poplar trees from St. Kilda Road in late 1945 replacing them with desert ash, and began the progressive removal from 1948 of eight hundred Phoenix and Cocos Yatay palms which were fifteen to twenty-five years old. The community began to adjust to the long-awaited return of their sons and daughters from the war.

Residents were also pleased to receive a free newspaper to chronicle community life, called the *News* which circulated in St. Kilda and other southern suburbs in 1947, and was produced and distributed by

Peter Isaacson of 1 Horne Street, Elsternwick. Isaacson, who attended Temple Beth Israel as a youth, had served during the war as a Squadron Leader in Bomber Command with sixteen of his forty-five missions with the Pathfinder Force, and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Australian Flying Cross and the Distinguished Flying Medal to be one of Australia's most highly decorated airmen. His mother, Caroline, was editor of the women's section of the *Argus* and he had worked with that paper before developing the *News* and gradually acquiring other suburban newspapers such as the *Caulfield-Elsternwick Advertiser*; and the *Carnegie Courier*.

To residents' dismay however, regulations endured during wartime still prevailed. Rationing of tea, butter, sugar and petrol continued, and householders were not permitted to stock-pile wood during the summer months. Long queues formed in Aciand Street in 1947 as people waited to buy unrationed supplies of wine sold on Saturday mornings from the Prince of Wales Hotel. The scarcity of primary produce, including potatoes and meat, encouraged the continuance of a black market in ordinary goods. Although prices of scarce commodities were pegged, many cases of overcharging were heard in the St. Kilda Court. They included a charge against a St. Kilda butcher who ignored the set price for silverside; and against a garage proprietor in Brighton Road, St. Kilda who sold a 1928 model Chevrolet tourer above the fixed price.⁶²

The accommodation crisis in the crowded city continued, breeding a climate of rivalry, suspicion and resentment. People scanned death notices, offered rewards for information, listened to rumours and kept buildings under surveillance in order to gain an advantage in applying for accommodation as soon as it fell vacant⁶³. Often, Magistrates had to discriminate between testy applicants for accommodation, and determine tenancy rights: in a case heard on 27 January 1947, for instance, Police Magistrate Meehan awarded tenancy of a flat at Banff Flats, Fitzroy Street to an applicant who was designated a protected person because he was a returned soldier with greater rights than the man to whom the owner had assigned the flat the day before⁶⁴. Proprietors were sometimes charged with abuse of regulations: in July 1947, for example, the Court fined the owner of a property in Aciand Street for infringing *National Security (Landlord and Tenant) Regulations* by receiving £300 in consideration of a lease⁶⁵; another woman was charged with demanding that prospective tenants buy her furniture or forfeit the chance of leasing her property in Hughendale Road.⁶⁶

Property owners resented such control of the market place. They protested about rent pegging regulations and were displeased when the Federal Government extended its control of the rental market and the steps landlords could take to recover properties from tenants, and increased the rights of returned soldiers or protected persons under the *Landlord and Tenant* Act(1948). Because rents still remained fixed at their level of 31 December 1940, property owners argued that they had little incentive to improve their assets. Government control of housing development also increased with the introduction of uniform building regulations in Victoria in 1945, the imposition of maximum prices for dwellings in May 1948, and the prohibition of building until the Deputy Prices Commissioner determined the maximum price which could be charged. Nor could houses be demolished without the consent of the Minister. Hence, shabby buildings, which would have been wrecked years before if there had been no war, still stood in St. Kilda.

Manpower and materials remained in short supply, so essential works were deferred. A permit to build a garbage disposal system was withheld by the State Building Directorate in 1947 even though Health Officers feared an outbreak of an epidemic in St. Kilda because of sewer rats near drains and under floor boards. Rats were in plague like proportions because, according to the City Engineer, forty per cent of garbage tins were oil drums and kerosine tins without lids, there were rubbish heaps at the back of homes, and refuse blew from the back of open garbage drays°. The destructor could not dispose of the four hundred tons of rubbish accumulated every fortnight, and one section was so undermined by rats, Council employees had to work knee deep in filth. At last, after repeated applications, Council was authorised to order two American Monohearth destructor units in late 1948, but it would be years before the garbage destructor would be replaced.

The Baths were in a dreadful state of disrepair after years of wartime neglect. The south side was silted up. Debris was washed up against the concrete dividing walls. Pickets on the north side had been destroyed. Concrete was crumbling. Paint was peeling. Diving platforms were unsafe and divers were in danger in cracking their heads in four feet of water. As if this ruination were not enough, there was moral decadence as well. Police urged Council to make a by-law controlling the behaviour of men at the Baths, who, as a Constable reported, could be seen by everyone as they sunbaked and disported themselves in the nude:

Many of the sights have been and continue to be definitely obscene and disgusting, with some of the men, particularly the older ones as well as many young men lying on their backs on the floor, with their legs wide apart and their persons completely exposed to view of all, amongst whom there are many boys of tender age...[The manager suspects] men in the baths were wilfully and obscenely exposing their person to boys, but owing to the fact that so many are in the nude within the precincts...he is unable to detect any offence. He further states that on numerous occasions he has had to ask men to keep away from the Western fence forming the enclosure on that side as he has suspected these men of exposing themselves to the people on the beach and in the water outside the baths...[Nudism at St. Kilda Baths] which has existed for years... undoubtably offers an excellent opportunity for perverts to wilfully and obscenely expose their person within the baths with a degree of impunity.⁶⁸

Nor did other sorts of unruly behaviour seen during the war suddenly cease, but seemed to be increasing instead. Shady operators had found that the war had masked their identity very well, while the scarcity of liquor, government limitations on gambling, and diverse demands for sex had given them great scope for businesses based on bootlegging, gambling, and prostitution operations in a crowded city. Freddie (the Frog) Harrison had begun to stand over baccarat schools in St. Kilda and elsewhere during the war, and continued such operations after it. He had been educated and brought up in St. Kilda and returned there after deserting from the Navy in 1942, and becoming a painter and docker. His brand of protection became notorious in St. Kilda as he worked for a South Yarra sly grog dealer, and an SP bookmaker who operated a betting stand at the Peanut Farm Reserve near Luna Park, so-called because residents had gambled there for peanuts for as long as many remembered. He took over protection rackets of baccarat schools around Lonsdale, Russell and Swanston Streets, and was suspected to be the gunman in a fawn gabardine overcoat who shoot down the gangster James (Mark Foy) Coates at the corner of Punt Road and Union Street on 19 July 1947.⁶⁹

Instances of thuggery, vandalism and prostitution were often publicised in *the News*. Two "pushes" were known in St. Kilda in 1947 and reports of gangs with bludgeons in St. Kilda parks were made in May 1948⁷⁰. Vandalism was particularly prevalent on the seafront but the police could not act quickly enough: according to the Town Clerk, when reports of damages to trees, light-globes and buildings were made, Constables had to travel by bicycle or train sometimes over half a mile from St. Kilda Station and the vandals would be gone before they arrived". Residents near the Village Belle often com-

plained to him about intoxicated men and women yelling and fighting; of loud juke-boxes in coffee lounges; the use of lanes, doorways, private gardens and telephones as urinals; and men selling wine wrapped in paper bags from cars."

Female prostitution however was St. Kilda's most infamous feature by 1946. Several correspondents registered their concern about the situation in Fitzroy Street in the *News* in January 1947: "Social Worker" wondered if "poor women" who could not help themselves could be saved by being placed in institutions, while "Modern Woman" argued that if men did not patronise such women there would be no need to clean up Fitzroy Street". Council requested additional attention from the Vice Squad in St. Kilda in June 1948 because "of the increasing number of prostitutes frequenting Fitzroy Street in recent weeks" and "the undesirable elements associated with them"⁴. Subsequently police reported that men seeking prostitutes "had got in the habit of going to Fitzroy Street": from January 1948 to 6 August 1948 ninety-two charges were laid against prostitutes in Fitzroy Street and St. Kilda Road to Lorne Street; two charges against males for living on the earnings of women working in Fitzroy Street; thirty-three charges against men found having sexual intercourse in the gardens; and six against women for having unlawful means of support". However the police were unable to provide the constant surveillance the Council requested because the Force was understaffed. They recommended installation of brighter lights as a deterrent; but Council's repeated efforts to improve lighting were hindered by the shortage of globes, light fittings, vandalism and industrial disputes; and many streets remained darker than they had been before the war.

Strikes caused further disruption to the supply of goods and services such as public transport, gas and electricity. The management of Luna Park attributed an enormous decline in profit from £21,507 in the 1945-1946 season to £1266 in the 1946-1947 season to transport stoppages, lighting restrictions and industrial strife". Sometimes editions of the *News* were reduced to four pages because of industrial disputes.

Strikers were often called communists, and as relations between the USSR and its former allies froze into a cold war, and Stalin was not Uncle Joe any more, this became a damning tag in Australia. When some in St. Kilda heard J.J. (Jack) Brown of the Railways Union address unionists and their supporters on the subject "Why

Are Workers Locked Out?", and saw the film, *Wald of Plenty* at the Aciand Street Parish Hall in January 1947, Archie Michaelis criticised the meeting and claimed that J. J. Brown was "largely responsible for the distress" and that communists were infiltrating unions and disregarding the processes of the law.⁷⁷

The political situation was very volatile in St. Kilda. Robert Menzies formed a new party in 1945 which was called the Liberal Party of Australia, and many returned servicemen, including Peter Isaacson, who spoke in the Southern suburbs in its support, Councillors, and the Women's National League, which formed a new women's Liberal branch in St. Kilda, affirmed their faith in it. Although the party did not win the State seat of St. Kilda in 1945, after nominating a candidate to oppose Archie Michaelis, it enjoyed strong support at the municipal level. A number of members like Lieutenant-Colonel John Talbot gained representation on the St. Kilda City Council, and this infusion of new blood, coupled with the retirement or defeat of long-serving Councillors like Burnett Gray, and Frank Dawkins, made some think that Council was on the threshold of a new era.

At the same time, Communist Party branches in St. Kilda had gained strength during the war. Members attempted to gain positions on Council but they gained little support at the polls. Gustaf Briggs Sherlock unsuccessfully contested Central Ward on behalf of the Communist Party from 1946 to 1948. Sherlock based his campaign in 1946 on the housing crisis in St. Kilda:

BIG HOUSES in Dickens St..

BIG HOUSES in Aciand St..

BIG HOUSES in St. Kilda Road..

WHILE MOST OF ST. KILDA'S RESIDENTS ARE CROWDED IN FLATS, COTTAGES, APARTMENTS, AND CUBICLES, OTHERS MONOPOLISE MANSIONS..

In St. Kilda there are many posh homes. A typical example is the Michaelis estate's house at 26 Aciand Street, where a household of three presides over 15 rooms. At 10 Aciand street, another spacious home, crowned with 8 chimney-pots is partially occupied. There are dozens of homes of seven, eight and nine rooms housing not more than 3 occupants, while scores of families in the older parts of St. Kilda are crowded into slums and hovels. At 414 St. Kilda Road, a large house stands empty. WHY?⁷⁸

When he campaigned the following year, he argued against American millionaires penetrating the Australian economy, sub-standard housing, and property qualifications for municipal electors in a

pamphlet entitled *Behind St. Kilda's Iron Curtain*, which was endorsed by Patricia Counihan, who knew a great deal about insupportable housing conditions in St. Kilda. However, Liberal Councillors were gleeful when Sherlock lost his deposit in 1948, polling only one hundred and seventy votes to the two thousand two hundred and seventy eight secured by Cr. Ernest Allen, a Barrister and Solicitor and another member of the Liberal Party.

By this time, Council was more fervently anti-communist than it had been in the early 1930s. Local communists' advocacy of social services, such as a Municipal Library and Home-Help, discredited such causes in its eyes, and added to Councillors' arguments that they were too expensive. Proposals of the Free Library Board for the establishment of a library in St. Kilda in 1947, for instance, were rejected. Instead Robertson and Mullens Booksellers were asked to sort out the books which had been removed to the Town Hall from the old public library in 1910, and permitted to purchase about 2,000 to 2,500 of the volumes, or 3% of the total stock, which they regarded as being of any value⁷⁹. So some of the leather-bound tomes, once earnestly read, or donated by some of the most learned in the land in the nineteenth century, left the City.

Only after persistent requests from the Housewives' Association did Council agree to the employment of one home-help in 1948 to help mothers with infants, or the sick who required assistance in their homes, but thought it a dangerous precedent for they did not see local government as a vehicle for social services.

The visibility of communists also destabilised the Labor Party as some branches in St. Kilda tried to disassociate themselves from communists so that their opponents would be unable to suggest that they were unduly influenced by them. When Sherlock was defeated in 1947 by Cr. Mitty, the St. Kilda branch of the ALP congratulated the latter in his victory against their "common enemy", concluding that communists had little hope of success in elections run by independent returning officers, and that they all looked forward to the day "when their tyrannical control over the ballot boxes in the union elections will be broken altogether"⁸⁰. In the West Ward elections of 1947, A. King, the Secretary of the West St. Kilda Branch of the ALP, blamed the defeat of their candidate, Samuel Goldbloom, on the "scurrilous accusations" made prior to the election that Goldbloom was a communist; and denied the ALP would endorse anyone with "past or present associations" with the Communist Party.⁸¹

Local Labor Party branches were becoming hopelessly divided. Some Catholic members followed the lead of Archbishop Mannix and supported the formation of industrial groups by B. A. Santamaria to oppose communists within unions. Other members opposed communism but endorsed the socialist platform of their own party and feared that such "Catholic Action" groups might be aiming to undermine that philosophy. Those further to the left attended the St. Kilda Town Hall on 17 March 1947 to hear Bert Flanagan, an ironworker, and Humphry Davy of the St. Kilda Branch of the Communist Party criticise the economic policy of the Chifley government, demand a "New Social Order Now", and screen a Russian film.

While Prime Minister Chifley was criticised by the far left, he was also regarded as a dangerous radical by the right because of his determination to nationalise the banks. Councillors were outraged when Chifley advised W.H. Greaves that from 1 August 1947, under the *Commonwealth Banking Act*, St. Kilda was one of the twenty two Victorian, and one hundred and ninety named Australian municipalities, which could not deal with a private bank. However at noon on 1 August 1947 the Commonwealth had to revoke the order which was issued in the *Commonwealth Gazette* at 9.30 a.m. because the High Court endorsed the arguments of Garfield Barwick KC that sections of the Act were unconstitutional. Following this setback, Chifley resolved not to capitulate, and a Banking Bill was passed in December 1947. The High Court ruled it invalid in August 1948 but Chifley's memory of the Depression made him determined to continue with the measure, while St. Kilda City Council was just as determined that no Labour Prime Minister would tell it where to bank.

The bank nationalisation issue made political debate more heated in St. Kilda and affected the outcome of the State elections in November 1947, held after the Legislative Council withheld Supply from the Cain Labor Government. Archie Michaelis, by then the endorsed Liberal candidate, argued that the election was about one issue:

Do the people of Victoria approve of the closing down of all the private banks or not? If they do not...they can show the Socialists and Communists who are supporting the move, where they get off.⁸²

On the other hand, his Labor opponent, William Meskill Bourke, who would later be driven from the party in the great split of the 1950s, campaigned defensively against "Australia's fifth column, the alien foreign controlled Communist Party" which "worked in the

interests of a foreign power, and aimed at the destruction of our democratic Australian way of life"⁸³. The seat of Albert Park was also in jeopardy because of the issue. Frank Crean who had held the seat for the Labor Party since 1945, after working as an income tax assessor for the Victorian Taxation Department from 1933 to 1945, was opposed by Roy Schilling, a returned soldier and solicitor. Schilling claimed:

The conscription of wealth and savings — as proposed by the Labor Party — would inevitably be followed by conscription of labor, with our destinies increasingly subject to Canberra control and direction and compulsion the ultimate end. The movement for setting up a Totalitarian State has begun. The dictatorship threatens.

In reply, Crean based his campaign on reform of the undemocratic Legislative Council which he described as being elected "on a landlord basis by the squattocracy and monied interests"⁸⁴. However, the Liberal candidates were successful in both seats, Cain lost the election, a Liberal-Country Party coalition was formed with T. T. Hollway as Premier, and Menzies saw that communism could be the powder-keg which would blow the Labor Party apart.

Political volatility and tension also raged within the Jewish community in St. Kilda after the Second World War. Flickering black and white newsreels of limp stick-like cadavers tossed and crumpled in pits, the gaping ashen ovens of the concentration camps, and the Nuremburg trials showed them all that Europe had not merely been aflame, it had been a holocaust. At the same time, the struggle for a Jewish State in Palestine erupted into a struggle against Britain, the mandatory power. Most now believed genteel, anglicised rituals which had evolved in St. Kilda since the nineteenth century were irrelevant now that there were over six million fewer Jews in the world; many also believed that Israel, and the nurturing of a distinctive Jewish culture in St. Kilda, simply had to be. The cause was so important, it seemed immaterial if Rabbi Danglow argued that a strong affirmation of Jewish identity would be seen as alien, anti-British, and anti-Australian, or, at the other extreme, if some Jewish Marxists argued against nationalism as the scourge of mankind.

All Jews in St. Kilda welcomed the announcement by the Immigration Minister, A. A. Calwell, in August 1945 that close relatives of people living in Australia would be admitted, providing they spent war years in Europe in concentration or forced labour camps, or had spent a clandestine existence in occupied Europe. Huddled and segregated on the cold shelter decks and holds of crowded ships, Jews

began arriving in September 1946 as the first group of post-war migrants to Australia, and in November, Calwell told Australians: "The days of our isolation are over"⁸⁵. St. Kilda offered support for them, many needing more than material comforts, for their minds were tortured by the hell-fire they had seen and their bodies branded by more than the tattoos of the concentration camps. Amongst the agencies which helped them in St. Kilda were the Shelter and Aid Company, which educated and housed Jewish immigrants until employment was found for them in 1947, and the Australian Jewish Welfare and Relief Society, which was registered as a company in 1948, and purchased property at 29 Herbert Street, St. Kilda as "a clearing house for the new arrivals". The latter Society was specially formed to promote the economic, social and cultural absorption in Victoria of Jewish migrants, assist them with donations, gifts and loans, and instruct them in trades and professions". Its subscribers included Jewel Onko, Alec Masel, Leo Fink, Charles Slonim, a director of East St. Kilda, and Jacob Ber Lederman, a manufacturer of 37 Balacava Road, East St. Kilda. As well, Yiddish Sunday courses with an emphasis on Jewish language, history and literature began at the ANA Hall at 49 Blanche Street where numbers grew so rapidly parents purchased property at 52 Alma Road in 1948 to provide children with supplementary religious education in the afternoons, and to establish a creche and kindergarten for parents who worked. The congregation of the Temple Beth Israel also increased to such an extent that a building appeal was launched to build a larger temple.

The arrival of the refugees provoked wide-spread anti-semitism which eventually led to the Government restricting the proportion of Jews to twenty-five percent of any boat load by the end of 1947. Rabbi Sanger, their great champion, came to refugees' defence after a racist outburst in February 1947 by the Liberal MHR, H. B. Gullett. Gullett claimed the refugees were eastern people with no allegiance to anyone, but were violently anti-British, had strangled the German economy prior to the war, and practically owned New York; and he was supported by a number of hospitalised returned soldiers who argued that the refugees had everything but a country to live in, and that well-established Jewish financiers and industrialists gave them preferential treatment in establishing homes and businesses. Sanger could not let such remarks pass, and he said of Gullett:

..he has slandered a group of unfortunates who have just arrived here with the marks of the concentration camps still upon their bodies..Even before they arrive the new migrants are greeted by the same abuse and



Photo: Luna Park

Luna Park, which opened nearly twenty years before the beginning of the period covered in this book. The Scenic Railway was to be one of the longest-surviving structures in the foreshore area. (Below) Luna Park at night. The date is the 1940s, but it has hardly changed in nearly eighty years.

Photo: Luna Park





Photo: Luna Park

Out for a good time at Luna Park. The dress is rather more formal than we are accustomed to today.

(Below) The 1937 St. Kilda carnival: the sand-castle competition finals.

Photo: Town Hall archives





Photo: Luna Park

Thirties contrasts: The Palais de Danse (*above*) attracted large crowds throughout the 1930s, yet, well after the Great Depression had eased, there were others in St. Kilda whose entertainments *[below]* were more modest.

Town Hall archives

Town Hall archives

ST. KILDA UNEMPLOYED ORGANISATION.

ANNUAL PICNIC AT WATTLE PARK.

WEDNESDAY, 14th DECEMBER, 1938.

Made possible by the generosity of the St. Kilda City Council, the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramway Board, Mr. Archie Michaelis, M.L.A., and other generous supporters.

TRAM TICKET to WATTLE PARK and Return. Trams leave corner of Brighton Road and Chapel Street at 9 a.m., and leave on the Return Trip at 7 p.m.

DINNER


ICE-CREAM

DRINKS

LOLLIES

TOYS

TEA

 Please bring your own Tea, Sugar, Cups and Teapots. We will supply Milk and Hot Water, and Meals, Ice-Cream & Drinks.
J. PIMM Secretary

To Aid
Local
Distress !

**ST. KILDA
TOWN HALL**

Under the Patronage of the Mayor and Councillors of St. Kilda.

Community Singing

Every Sunday Evening

at 8.30

Paul Jeagle and His Sax Conducting

Prof. Fred Ireland at the Piano

Leading Artists

Collection at Door

J. Pimm, Sec.



Photo: Paul Saega

The original *Wattle Path* is transformed yet again. Having already served as Efftee Studios, then the *Streets of Paris*, it here has the coolant pipes laid ready for its re-opening as an ice rink, the *St Moritz*, in March 1939. Below: Ray Dean and his Orchestra at the *St Moritz*.

Photo: Paul Saega



Keep this in a prominent place for reference.

State Emergency Council (Victoria) for Civil Defence
CITY OF ST. KILDA



AIR RAID PRECAUTIONS ORGANISATION

(Established by Authority of the St. Kilda City Council).

IN THE EVENT OF AN AIR RAID — which is not probable, but which may, at some time, become possible — **EVERYONE IN THE HOUSEHOLD SHOULD KNOW :**

1. THAT the chief purpose of Air Raids on civilian centres is to cause PANIC; **THEREFORE ; KEEP COOL ; REMEMBER** that the possibilities have been foreseen and as far as possible provided against.
2. THAT a secondary purpose is to cause damage and personal injury; **THEREFORE ; NOTE CAREFULLY** what follows below; **REMEMBER** that some knowledge is valuable in time of emergency.
3. THAT Air Raid attacks may take **THREE** main forms:—
 - (a) **HIGH EXPLOSIVE BOMBS**, the direct hits of which are of a proved very low percentage owing to various factors, especially in fairly open areas.
 - (b) **INCENDIARY BOMBS** (Burning Bombs) which have penetrative qualities and engender great heat, and which, when burning, must be approached with great care and dealt with in specific ways. Percentage of effective hits in a suburban area is also comparatively low.
 - (c) **GAS ; LIQUIDS, VAPOURS or SPRAYS** of various kinds, which may have very serious physical effects upon the human body, but for which means of prevention or mitigation have been devised.
4. THAT the recognised siren signals in connection with AN AIR RAID are:—
PREPARE FOR AIR RAID ; Alternate long and short blasts _____
RAID IMPENDING ; Short blasts of five seconds with two seconds interval _____
ALL CLEAR ; Continuous blast of two minutes _____
 (In addition, there may be Warden's local signals:—**SHARP WHISTLE BLASTS** — Take Shelter; **RATTLES** — Gas present; **HAND BELLS** — All clear.)
 On the **PREPARE SIGNAL ;** Proceed to homes. At night dim motor lights, close doors and windows, turn off all gas and electricity supply unless urgently required for official purposes.
 On the **IMPENDING SIGNAL ;** Vehicles park by roadside. **ALL** lights out. Assemble in shelter and keep as quiet as possible — remember that action, even talking, uses up good air unnecessarily.
5. THAT you should determine which is the safest place in your house — an inner passage or the like — in case of unexpected emergency attack. Your Warden will advise you on this.
6. THAT if out in the open you should not **RUN**, but proceed **AT ONCE** to shelter, taking care, in a gas attack, to keep on the windward side of the gas area, even though it be a longer or more circuitous route.
7. THAT, under war conditions, you will be advised specifically as to effective shelters and other precautions of a more detailed nature in respect of dangers involved.
8. THAT your certified Sector Warden has the area in which you live under his special care; his name, address and telephone number and those of the Senior Warden for the Zone are given below
9. THAT if damage or injury occurs, you should communicate with the nearest "Post" (below) and give a clear statement of name and address so that he may promptly summon such assistance — First Aid; Fire Brigade; Gas Decontamination, Rescue or Demolition — as is required.
10. THAT, under war conditions lights at night will require to be extinguished and other action taken of which you will be duly advised beforehand.
11. THAT the A.R.P. Municipal Organisation has been established under the authority of the State Emergency Council for Civil Defence and the St. Kilda City Council, which, with the full approval of the Commonwealth and State Governments, invite the loyal co-operation of all bodies and citizens by co-operating in ensuring preparedness.
12. THAT, under war conditions, during an air raid period, the District Warden, or his Deputy, is in executive charge of the State Emergency Civil Defence Services of the Municipality under powers provided for enforcing any measures which may become necessary.

The above is a general outline for your information. Details, further advice and equipment, etc., will be given if and when necessary.

REMEMBER ABOVE ALL : DON'T GIVE WAY TO PANIC — TAKE IT QUIETLY.

DISTRICT WARDEN'S OFFICE,
TOWN HALL, ST. KILDA, September, 1940.

Cr. J. D. MINTY, District Warden,
76 Milton Street, St. Kilda, S3. L.F. 6318.
Cr. E. C. MITTY, J.P., Deputy District Warden,
71 Ruskin Street, Elwood, S3. L.F. 2769.

The above is issued by the authority and with the approval of the St. Kilda City Council.

W. H. GREAVES,
Town Clerk.

IMPORTANT — All Communications must be Addressed to your SECTOR WARDEN.

Your Area Warden is:—GEO. T. WEST, 324a Inkerman Street, St. Kilda. Telephone: Windsor 2114.

Your Senior Warden is: Tel. :

Your Sector Warden is: Tel. :

Your nearest "Post" is: Tel. :

You live in Sector No.

Whitland & Mackell, Printers, 221 High St., Melbourne.

Town Hall archives

Air Raid Precautions, 1941. The original is printed on card, hole punched ready to hang on a nail on the wall.



The Americans came and went, 1942-1944. St. Kilda's beaches, amusements and notoriety attracted many payloaded American soldiers -on leave and eager for female company. After the Yanks had gone, many women were left





FOR MANY'S THE TIME THAT WE'VE FLIRTED
I DON'T THINK WE'LL EVER REGRET IT
I KNOW I SHALL NEVER FORGET IT
- I LOVED YOU SO
BUT THERE I GO
SO THANKS FOR THE MEMORY
OF REALLY GOOD SWING BANDS
SHAKING FAMOUS HANDS

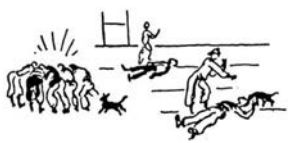


with sentimental memories of deep friendships or brief escapades. Copies of this parody of 'Thanks for the Memory' were eagerly sought when it circulated in Melbourne in 1944. Eight of the twelve pages are reproduced here.

C. Kelly



KIDS WHO ENJOYED LIFE
OF LOVE AFFAIRS
AND FOOLISH CARES
AND PHOTOS OF YOUR WIFE!
HOW LOVELY IT WAS.



I WAS SO SAD, WHEN WE PARTED
ALTHOUGH I KNEW YOU DIDN'T CARE
I'D HOPED ALL OUR DREAMS WE MIGHT SHARE
BUT NOW I KNOW
I WAS JUST SNOWED

THANKS FOR THE MEMORY
OF SERENADE IN BLUE
THAT LITTLE BEARD YOU GREW
(WHILE OUT ON BOONDOCKS.)
I'M AWFULLY GLAD I MET YOU
AND ALL THE OTHERS TOO!
I KNOW I NEVER SHOULD HAVE HOPED
THAT YOU COULD LOVE ME TOO
YET ALL THE SAME DARLING
THANK YOU SO MUCH.



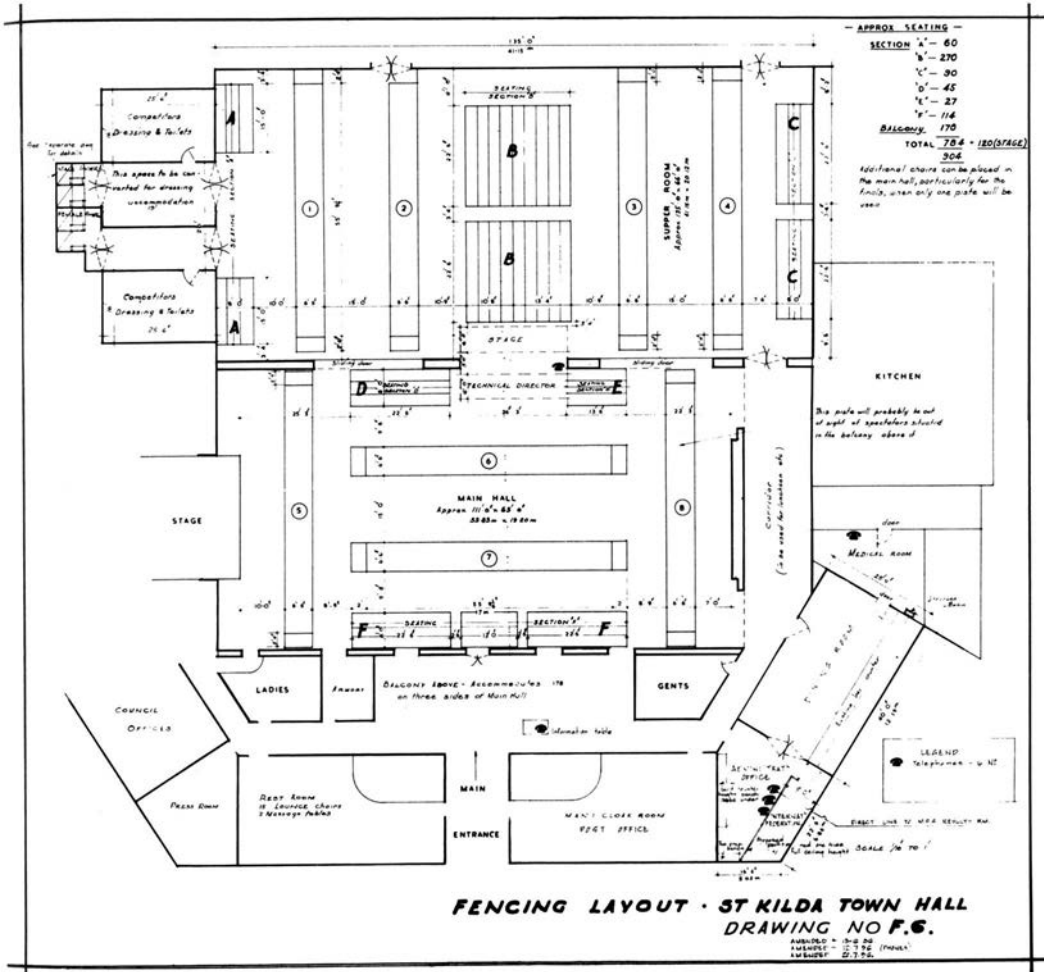
BUT P.S. WE'LL GET OVER IT



Photo: RAAF, in the St. Kilda Historical Society collection St. Kilda as it was immediately after the Second World War, with the pre-war facilities more or less intact, albeit in a run-down state. The main items visible in the photograph are identified in the key below.



- 1 Catani Gardens
- 2 The Yacht Club
- 3 The Pier
- 4 Municipal Baths
- 5 The Catani clock tower
- 6 St. Moritz (alias *Wattle Path*, the *Efftee* film studio and *The Streets of Paris*)
- 7 Earl's Court
- 8 'Little Luna Park'
- 9 The Palais de Dance
- 10 The Palais Theatre
- 11 Luna Park



Town Hall archives

Original plans for the arrangements at St. Kilda Town Hall for the Fencing events in the 1956 Olympic Games.



Town Hall archives

1964 The developers at work: St. Margaret's, Barkly Street (*above*) just before it was demolished to make way for three blocks of flats (*below*).


Town Hall archives



Melbourne's Finest Home and Investment Project

Fabulous

MANHATTAN LIVING COMES TO MELBOURNE



dgewater TOWERS
12 MARINE PARADE, ST. KILDA, Melbourne, Victoria

Town Hall archives

Winning cause in the 1960s: Manhattanisation.

Losing cause: A public library. Cr. Mitty was among several Councillors elected or re-elected on an anti-Library ticket in 1962, despite the determined efforts of the Library Committee. Within five years, however, the library was won.

Town Hall archives

Town Hall archives

PUT ST. KILDA ON THE MAP



ST. KILDA & CAULFIELD ARE COMPLETELY SURROUNDED BY MUNICIPALITIES WITH COUNCIL OPERATED FREE LIBRARY SERVICE SUBSIDISED BY THE FREE LIBRARY SERVICE BOARD OF VICTORIA

ASK FOR A FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY FOR ST. KILDA

**St. Kilda Council Elections
CENTRAL WARD**

A "FREE LIBRARY" MEANS

Increased RATES and RENTS

AVOID THIS VOTE

Councillor E. C. MITTY 

Thursday, 23rd August, 1962

Polling Booths:

ST. KILDA TOWN HALL and NETLEY HALL (near South St. Kilda P.O.)

(Authorised by FRANK MULCAHY, 11 Fomer Street, St. Kilda.)



Town Hall archives

Another winning cause: The St. Kilda Marina, opened in 1969.



Photo: Town Hall archives



Photo: Town Hall archives

Left: The scheme for two freeways to cut through the heart of St. Kilda caused a public outcry and was finally dropped in 1973; meanwhile, the rebuilding of St. Kilda Junction and the widening of High Street went ahead. *Right:* St. Kilda Junction at the turn of the century, with a complex layout of cable trams. The Junction Hotel, which dominated the junction for a century, was still standing in the photo below, which shows large scale demolition to make way for the underpass.

Photo: Town Hall archives





Photo: The Age

When a 'Clean up St. Kilda' campaign concentrated on the prostitutes, the prostitutes responded with a leaflet of their own.

Town Hall archives

CLEAN UP ST. KILDA? - WHO'D BE LEFT!



ST.KILDA
art
BANK

This simple announcement marked the opening of The Art Bank, a highly successful Council innovation of 1970.

Town Hall archives

St. Kilda City Council invites
 • artists to exhibit and
 sell their:

Paintings, drawings and
 pieces of free standing
 sculpture (size permitting)

• **EVERY SUNDAY**
 from Nov. 1st, 1970
 between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m.
 on the footpath of the Upper Esplanade between
 Fitzroy St. and Luna Park (beach side)



- ARTISTS TO PROVIDE THEIR OWN DISPLAY EQUIPMENT, INSURANCES, ETC.
- FREE — NO FEES, NO CHARGES
- Consult the St. Kilda Council Tourist Promotions Office at 639076 for further details

The Art Bank in operation.

Photo: Town Hall





Albert Jacka, V.C. (Mayor, 1930-31) Elaine Miller (1982-3)

Above: Mayors at the beginning and end of the period covered by this book. *Below:* Long serving Council officials. *Photos:* Town Hall archives

William Greaves
(Town Clerk, 1934-1964)

Maurice O. Moran
(City Engineer, 1949-1973)



vilification that has become loathsomely familiar to them since the Nazis seized power in 1933 in Europe!⁸⁷

Sanger knew the war would never be over while such abuse continued, while Danglow still believed from past experience that the only answer for the Jew was to suppress distinctive non-British characteristics and assimilate.

The war made Jews in St. Kilda radically reassess their identity. Hitler had annihilated so many Jews, their Jewishness had to be proudly expressed, not denied, and this would be ensured by the creation of Israel and cultivation of the very culture once scorned by the St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation as the province of working-class European Jews who lived north of the Yarra. The transformation was of momentous consequence to individuals, and some made it more readily than others. Before the war I. H. Boas had described himself "as a Jew from 10 to 12 on a Saturday morning", and had urged refugees to submerge their identity. By 1947 however, he stated: "The argument that we are Jews only by religion is not true...we are in fact an ethnic group or people"⁸⁸. On the other hand, some like Rabbi Danglow were frightened and anguished and found it impossible to cast off lightly the ideals they had espoused all their lives of being British Jews first and foremost. There were fears that the congregation would split. Louis Waller recalled Danglow's change of heart:

I remember the special thanksgiving service held in Shule after the establishment of *Medīnat Yisrael* [the state of Israel]. It was, I think, some time in the latter part of 1948. I remember *that* sermon — it was on the theme that Israel should be a Jewish state. When the choir, which throughout the war had sung the National Anthem to end the service, sang *Ha tikvah* [Hope], I knew that the world had changed.⁸⁹

The Rabbi had not made his decision lightly. His life, and the life of many other Jews in St. Kilda, was now bound to the survival of the state of Israel. The holocaust had wrought an enormous change on the attitude of St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation.

War, then, had inflicted different damage in St. Kilda. Some thought the city well and truly spent by the end of the 1940s, and wondered whether it was well poised to go ahead in the 1950s, or whether its fortunes would plummet further.

Before moving forward to that time, however, let the curtain fall for a brief interval when we can judge the performance of some artists, just as the patrons used to do when the first features ended at the Palais Pictures, and they strolled out to hear the pianos and violins playing in the foyer at intermission.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTERVAL

Artists capture the searing effects of the 1930s and the 1940s, and the ambiguity of St. Kilda - Sidney Nolan - Albert Tucker - Joy Hester - Noel Counihan - Dark and light sides of the city - John Perceval - Arthur Boyd - Rupert Bunny - Tucker, a refuge from Australian culture

The troubled threads of two fiery decades meshed in the canvases of artists, who painted St. Kilda, and were reviled, ridiculed or ignored by all but a few at the time. Brief consideration of their lives in the 1930s and 1940s allows us to review St. Kilda's progress. Their lives told of the legacy of Depression, of the trauma of war, of good and evil, of creation and destruction. The St. Kilda works of Albert Tucker and Sidney Nolan would show these contrasting faces of the city, and, with other artists variously connected with St. Kilda, including Noel Counihan, Joy Hester, Rupert Bunny, John Perceval and Arthur Boyd, their painting told the truth about the time in a way no historian can do by angling in time and casting frail lines in the ocean of the past.

Sidney Nolan was born in Carlton on 22 April 1917, the eldest of four children of Dora Irene Sutherland and Sidney Henry Nolan who lived in Nagambie. Soon after his birth, the family left Nagambie, moving to Pakington Street, St. Kilda. His father worked for the Tramways Board, and Nolan *attended* Brighton Road State School, St. Kilda and then Brighton Technical School. St. Kilda was heaven for a boy and he spent a happy childhood near the football ground, Luna Park, the pier, the Catani Gardens, the shops and the cinemas. His father was a lifesaver at St. Kilda, and he remembered the beach there as "university, gymnasium, everything combined". He left school at the age of fourteen and enrolled for a design course at Prahran Technical College where he was instructed by William Dargie, a former pupil of St. Kilda Park State School.

He worked with Fayrfield Hats in Abbotsford for over six years. Before catching an early morning tram for work from St. Kilda, he would draw abstract patterns on the sand which would be washed

away long before he arrived back home. His eagerness to learn of the world beyond his Australian shore was only partly satisfied by visits to the State Library, by spasmodic attendance of classes at the Gallery School (an annexe to the Art Gallery and National Museum in La Trobe Street), by magazines displaying the work of Paul Klee, and by the sight Colonel de Basil's famous Russian Ballet which visited Melbourne in 1936 and 1938. He left home in 1936, becoming part of the inner-city fringe of artists who lived in studios and crowded rooms around Little Collins Street, and were generally regarded as ratbags. He took rooms above a shop on the corner of Russell and Lonsdale Streets, a building where the artist, Noel Counihan, lived too; but expense forced him to return to St. Kilda to live with his family until he married Elizabeth Paterson, of Mary Street, St. Kilda in 1938 and moved to Ocean Grove.²

John and Sunday Reed took an interest in Nolan's original work. They had both the financial means and the inclination to encourage artists trying to break new ground: he was a lawyer, and she was a member of the Baillieu family who knew the power of her nurturing eye. The handsome pair lived in a house called *Háde* on fifteen acres near Heidelberg, the place where painters had established a tradition in the nineteenth century. Theirs was a welcoming house where rebels, free thinkers, poets, lovers, intellectuals, and artists came for warmth, food and drink, good books and company, and wild talk and action. Reed became the first "lay" vice-president of the Contemporary Art Society founded in July 1938 by George Bell to unite supporters of modernism. Nolan joined, as did Noel Counihan and Albert Tucker.

Noel Counihan was born in Albert Park on 4 October 1913 to parents, he later observed, who had "typical lower middle-class aspirations". He decided to be an artist at the age of fifteen, and enrolled at the Gallery School. He met Marxist intellectuals, including Jack Maughan of St. Kilda, and as the Depression deepened, he became a deeply committed communist, never to forget the dole queues, the evictions, the hopelessness and the suffering; and was jailed after participating in protests against police suppression of free speech. Earning a meagre income from caricatures and freelance illustrative work for the press, he was part of the anti-war movement, and knew Nattie Seeligson of St. Kilda, later the Secretary of the Victorian Council Against War, who lent him a remarkable collection of French post-impressionist painting which excited him greatly.

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Albert Tucker lived in a primitive upstairs loft at 26 Little Collins Street. Tucker was self-educated as an artist because he lacked the means or opportunity to become a student, and he remembered the Depression as a "dreadful scramble for survival which traumatised a lot of people". He worked as a house-painter and commercial artist before earning a small irregular income as a freelance illustrator and cartoonist, and relied on the Public Library for the knowledge of a European culture for which he hungered. His world was one where poverty was real, exploitation was known and ideas mattered, and he sought new ways to express shock about social injustice and moral dishonesty because his anger could not be rendered in ways the conservative art establishment endorsed. He admired the approach to art of newcomers to Melbourne in Danilo Vassilief, a Russian, and Yosl Bergner, a Polish Jew and refugee. Vassilief argued for a direct, unschooled approach and rejected the hide-bound conventions of the Gallery School, while Bergner painted the suffering and dispossession of Aborigines and the poor he saw outcast in Melbourne streets.

Joy Hester strayed into Albert Tucker's world in 1938. She was a seventeen year old of great physical beauty from 28 Dawson Street, Elwood, where the view of the bay and sedate gentility befitted her late father's former position as a bank manager. She had enrolled at St. Michael's Church of England Girls' Grammar School in Redan Street, St. Kilda in 1933 where she bridled at the discipline, but was encouraged to draw by her aunt, Rhoda Hester, who was an art teacher there. She enrolled at the Gallery School in 1937, and as an impressionable student was overawed and excited to meet a real artist like Albert Tucker, an intellectual leader of Melbourne's avant-garde, to be introduced to the Cafe Petruschka and Gino Nibbi's Leonardo Bookshop, where the police once even seized Modigliani prints. After Tucker painted her, she moved into his room, and into a world which made Elwood seem dreary, bourgeois and smug.⁵

Separate shores and separate lives came together at the great *Herald* Art Exhibition of October 1939. Tucker took Hester, and they stood before the Europe of Picasso, Braque, Matisse, Modigliani, Van Gogh, Dali and others from whom Melbourne was isolated. The Reeds were there, and Sidney Nolan came as well. While esteemed figures in the Australian art establishment, like Lionel Lindsay, denounced such art as addled decadent madness or a sinister Jewish conspiracy, members of the Contemporary Art Society were all moved by their

first sight of modern art, which spoke of the turmoil of the twentieth century. They were all excited too by the freedom and release it signalled from the stifling inhibited cultural milieu in which they lived.

Nolan was productive after seeing the Exhibition. He drew on St. Kilda for inspiration, and remembered the Big Dipper when he composed *Tat in* 1940. When Serge Lifar, the choreographer and leading dancer in de Basil's Company, saw the picture, he invited Nolan to design the set and costume for the ballet *Icare* which was being prepared in Sydney to open in February 1940. Memories of the line of the St. Kilda Pier helped Nolan design the ballet set which was acclaimed. Then, in June 1940 he opened his own exhibition in a studio in a condemned building in Russell Street. There, on walls painted shocking pink, hung works that baffled critics. He shared a studio at 5 Smith Street, St. Kilda with John Sinclair, and at the second Contemporary Art Society Show in August 1940 he exhibited a radical painting which was called *Portrait of John Sinclair at St. Kilda* or *Moonboy*, executed after he saw his friend silhouetted against a full moon rising from the bay. The artist and critic, Adrian Lawlor, removed his own work from the Exhibition as a protest against the abstract yellow disc with a stalk like neck against a blue-black background, and George Bell objected as well. Soon after, at the 1941 CAS exhibition, held at the Hotel Australia, which *Truth* described as attracting "Long haired intellectuals, swing fiends, hot mommas and truckin' jazz boys"⁶, Nolan exhibited *Luna Park* where the moon shone through the grid of the big dipper.

Tucker experimented more widely with surrealism, and explored ways to convey his sense of the city as a hellish place, after the *Haakl* exhibition. He also explored the theme of sexuality and moral decay: for instance, in his work *Pickup in the Dark* (1941) a spiv cast a crescent shaped shadow in a dimly lit street and leered with his mate at two women, whose red lips grinned as they stood with their legs apart, their breasts and bellies protruding through filmy dresses. At the same time, Joy Hester exhibited some raw tentative drawing, including nude studies of women whose powerful bodies were offset by tiny heads.

A coterie coalesced at Heide. Tucker married Hester on 1 January 1941, to her mother's horror, and at the end of the year they moved from Little Collins Street to a tin shed near Heide, though Tucker would never become as entangled a part of the Reed menage as Joy Hester and Sidney Nolan would be. Nolan moved there soon after

separating from his wife. He even painted the yellow form of *Moonboy* on the roof but military authorities ordered its removal because it made the house a target.

Among the many visitors whom they met was Max Harris, who had founded the magazine *Angry Penguins* in Adelaide in 1940. Harris formed a publishing firm with John Reed, and Nolan became closely associated with the production of the magazine, while Tucker contributed articles which rejected the subordination of art to ideology, and showed why the *Háide* group was beginning to clash with other artists in the Contemporary Art Society such as Noel Counihan and Vic O'Connor. Another Society member, Ailsa O'Connor, whose story in St. Kilda will be taken up later on, described the ideological differences between the social realist group, of which she was a "slightly invisible" member, which emphasised communal agony; and the Reed group, where Joy Hester was similarly "invisible", which stressed private and personal trauma.⁷

Their debate came to a head in 1943 when the social realists failed to gain control of the Society, and Tucker argued fiercely for "full creative freedom...essential for the reciprocal growth of the individual and society".⁸

Counihan lived in East St. Kilda by the latter years of the war, and at that time his art underwent a change in direction. He turned to "very local subject matter, rich in human and social content"⁹. There were many sights in St. Kilda which moved him. He painted a thin, sunken-cheeked old woman who waited stoically for a doctor in *In the Waiting Room* (1943), and a pregnant woman with two children, chatting with an old couple in *At the Corner of Nightingale Street* (1944). However his warm treatment of the working class of St. Kilda ended in 1944 when his health deteriorated; and he turned to passionate memories of the Depression for inspiration. These paintings of the East St. Kilda period represented a major breakthrough for him, and Counihan remembered the excitement of Judah Waten and Yosl Bergner when they visited his home there. Seeing Counihan's work called *At the Start of the March*, Bergner exclaimed: "He's through!"¹⁰

Tucker too, moved to St. Kilda during the war, but his vision was not tempered by any warmth or optimism about humanity. Themes he would explore there were foreshadowed in works of 1943 including *Memory of Leonski* where a large sexually ambiguous body with a tiny mad head crushed a dove; and *Victory Girls*, where two bare-breasted girls in skirts of red, white and blue, were clasped like

puppets by soldiers. Then, between 1943 and 1946 he produced over thirty-five works called *Images of Modern Evil*. Tucker believed that cultural achievement was a product of the particular man and his particular context and for many of his *Images of Modern Evil*, his context was St. Kilda as he moved to 47 Robe Street prior to the birth of their son Sweeney on 5 February 1945. In seeing the dark side of St. Kilda, Tucker reflected his sense of turmoil, fear, rejection and isolation and outrage, which was heightened by a war sanctioned as a battle against evil, but which he could not face in such terms because he knew that his immediate locality harboured evil which was not admitted. The only solution for him was to identify that evil: in doing so he blazed a mighty trail which marked a new direction in Australian art. The crescent and stalk eye became key forms in his work; and later his red crescent was recognised as the first appearance of a true symbolic form in Australian painting.¹¹

Tucker recalled:

At the time the crescent appeared in my work, we were bombarded by news of war and horrors through the papers, newsreels and radio. It was quite impossible to get away from war...

(Images of Modern Evil)...came directly out of wartime Melbourne. I remember a newspaper story about girls in a back alley, with some diggers doing a strip tease for them — great old fun and games. This was part of the image stock-piled in my mind. Beer and sexual contests along Swanston Street, all along St. Kilda Road from Princes Bridge, down to Luna Park at St. Kilda. The GI, the digger, the schoolgirl tarts, Victory Girls. All these schoolgirls from fourteen to fifteen would rush home after school and put on short skirts made out of flags — red, white and blue — and go tarting along St. Kilda Road with the GIs, and of course, diggers — when the diggers could get a look in, because they were all poor men compared with the Americans. I was still the outraged Edwardian puritan; and the crescent seemed to embody the virulent and primal sexuality which had been released in the blackout.¹²

St. Kilda proved to be potent ground to feed his rage about the moral decay of a sleazy carnal city. The hypocrisy and strain of the age became intolerable, and in the inferno of his mind he fired images of his anger. Maddened by war, he was threatened by the familiar and saw disorder behind apparent order as images crowded in on him: the jellyfish he saw while he walked along St. Kilda beach became a sexual form to work with the crescent; the iron lace of his balcony in Robe Street reflected a curious greenish-yellow light from the street; ordinary movie screens took on an ominous stark white aspect in darkened theatres where voyeurs groped; a figure near the entrance of Luna Park screamed with mechanical laughter; trams became

blunt sinister forms clanking in the night; and stalk eyes and crescents loomed in the dark Catani Gardens. He was maddened by such images until 1946 when Tucker, Hester and Sweeney moved to Martin Street, Elwood, only a few streets away from Joy's childhood home. He had largely exhausted his *Images of Modern Evil*, and he turned to portraits to convey his state of mind. His *Portrait of Martin Smith* conveyed the awful knowledge of a soldier who had walked away from rotting corpses in New Guinea; whilst *Sweeney and Tricycle* (1946), *Sweeney in High Chair* (1946) and *Portrait of Joy Hester* (1946) reflected his love. In February 1947 he visited Japan with the occupying forces.

Joy Hester produced many sheets of rapid, spontaneous and rapidly executed work which she scattered about the floor of the crowded rooms where they lived. Tucker, the great recorder, saved many pieces, perhaps seeing in them, the "vital impulse" he feared he weakened in himself by his own "conscious and unconscious pedantry"¹³. She was twenty-four years old when their son was born and her *Birth of Sweeney* (c.1945) expressed detachment from fecundity. Her work revealed how her depression about the meaning of feminine creation coalesced with the shock engendered by newsreels of gas chambers. *Mother and Child* (1945) showed two hanging carcasses, and the ghastly visage of *A Human Being* (1945) may have been inspired by the victims of Belsen, but it was also a portrait of her own mother.¹⁴

After moving to Elwood, Hester began her series *From An Incredible Night Dream* and *Gethsemane* which were drawings inspired by the childless Sunday Reed's faceless doll. Using a device Tucker had explored before, eyes became a feature in her work as she expressed states of anguish, suffering, loss, and fear. The extent of her self-knowledge was revealed in *Fun-Fair* (c.1946) where an exhausted woman was prostrate before Luna Park, which was transformed into a mask like that of Nolan's Kelly with a little scaffolding above. On the day of Tucker's return from Japan, she left him and fled to Sydney with Gray Smith, another artist, assigning her son Sweeney to the care of Sunday Reed. Almost immediately after making those decisions, she learnt she had Hodgkin's Disease and perhaps three years to live. She began her *Facæ* series in Sydney.

Sidney Nolan often leant on his memory of the light side of St. Kilda to maintain his stability during the war, rather than on the dark side of the city seen by Tucker. Nolan was conscripted into the Army on

15 April 1942 and stationed in the Wimmera. He was dispirited at first and wrote to John Reed from Dimboola that he could see: "nothing but destruction coming out of the army and the war. Spender and Communism and my own painting do not seem to belong anywhere"¹⁵, and his *Head of Soldier* (1942) powerfully conveyed the idea of mental disorder. However memories of St. Kilda helped him accept and understand the war and Dimboola, where, from the higher ground, the distant blue haze of the Little Desert resembled the fused ocean of his boyhood, and vulgar pink sunsets shone as garishly as fair ground lights. He was buoyed by landscape which scarified conventional notions of beauty and intimidated other visitors from the city. He wrote to Sunday Reed:

Memory is I am sure one of the main factors in my particular way of looking at things. In some ways it seems to sharpen the magic in a way that cannot be achieved by direct means.¹⁶

In the searing summer heat of Dimboola, he thought of the St. Kilda Baths where he had dived before and been cool. He had read about ships burning after an unsuccessful allied naval engagement with the Japanese at Macassar; and in his work *Bathers* (1943) two ships burnt in the Bay before chilled, grey bathers with the green hill of Point Ormond in the background. Disorder and disaster recurred in *Icarus*, where a diver plunged near the flames of a burning ship. In *Bathers* of April 1943, some sun-bathers were partially covered by the black costumes they had taken off; other swimmers prepared to dive into dark blue water which held a lonely swimmer.

He drew on St. Kilda again to strengthen his wounded sense of ego and self-esteem after the "Ern Malley" affair. He had received a package of poems by a dead poet called Ern Malley from Max Harris in late 1943, and, in the Wimmera he painted *The Sole Arabian Tree* for the cover of the Autumn number of *Angy Penguins* which commemorated Malley's work. Posted to Watsonia barracks, he left bushfires in Dimboola in February 1944, but by June the work of "Ern Malley" was exposed as a hoax perpetrated by James McCauley and Harold Stewart, and the *Angy Penguins* circle was ridiculed and made a laughing stock throughout Australia. Nolan took absence without leave from his unit in July and assumed the name of "Robin Murray". He lived in a number of locations including *The Loft* at 32 Gatehouse Street and at *Heide*. At this time a number of St. Kilda subjects were painted, and he used St. Kilda again to sustain his sense of identity and worth, and boost his self-confidence.

Nolan's memory was augmented by visits to the Baths and to a world in St. Kilda which was described later by Max Harris:

... we would walk the bleak St. Kilda water front and the streets, in this seedy world of fly-by-night flat life we numbered amongst our acquaintance a notorious sly-grogger, the boss-cocky of one of the gambling schools that flourished at the top end of Bourke Street, and, to our secret terror, a trigger-man from a Sydney underworld gang, sweating off in Melbourne while the heat was on. In the midst of this world of black marketeers, struggling "reffos", and solid citizenry were the garish beauties of Luna Park, the desolate child at the end of the lane, the burst and spatter of Saturday night lights and laughter.¹⁷

Nolan's St. Kilda paintings were not all innocent but showed his experience and knowledge that St. Kilda itself was not innocent. His evocation of childhood made his sense of loss, vulnerability and dislocation, which had been sharpened by the war and the "Malley" affair, sometimes seem even greater. In *Brighton Road State School* (5 December 1944), which was also called *Paspative Lovesong* from the title of a "Malley" poem, the shadows of the Wimmera, and thoughts of "Malley" impinged on Nolan's schoolyard where boys did handstands in the yard. In a small, then larger, version of *Ferris Wheel* (1945), riders, exposed and seeking pleasure in the mechanical, were suspended against a clear sky and sea. In *Bather (At Sunset)* 1945 he recalled "blisters as big as oranges"¹⁸ and sunburn which the bather only noticed at the end of the day. Nolan also presented a distorted image in *Giggle Palace* (24 January 1945). Later he reflected about its meaning:

...Luna Park in Melbourne was part of my kitsch heaven as a boy. After I left the army...I tried to recapture things again, to re-experience them. I guess it's about reorientation, and soldiers know how impossible it becomes: it's all distorted. So this mirror at Luna Park has a double, distorted image and double meaning. Maybe the world when you try to look at it exactly, comes out distorted...¹⁹

A larger *Giggle Palace* was completed in 24 February 1945, where, in the artifice of the fun fair, the real sea was replaced by a painted backdrop where Nolan and his mother and father were photographed. He also completed *Fire Palais de Danse, St. Kilda* which he had seen burning in 1926. He recalled that fire again in 1962:

I can remember that the people climbed up on the white girders of the Luna Park fun-fair at the side to get a bird's-eye view of the fire, that the policemen on white horses nudged back the crowd with their horses' behinds and that the firemen were given free ice-cream. At the back, as always at St. Kilda's beach, was the opalescent, uptilted plain of the sea.²⁰

His sisters Marjorie and Lorna were painted on the verandah at Pakington Street in *The Sisters* (1946), while *Esplanade St. Kilda* (1946) showed figures sitting in nooks with the Catani Clocktower on the horizon; his doll-like couples far removed from what Tucker saw on the grass there. The red, white, yellow and black colours, reminiscent of those St. Kilda adopted during World War One, featured in *Fullback* (1946). As a boy, Nolan knew how solid and heroic the fullback needed to be against a full-forward like Bill Mohr, or how confident a full-back could be with Bill Mohr at the other end of the ground, and may have fancied himself in the role. Later on, he recalled his own efforts from the full back line where he ran the whole length of the ground :

I was just full of myself. I didn't see anything else. People were widdling themselves, a woman was carried away in hysterics screaming, "It's not true, it's not true, make him do it again".²¹

St. Kilda had helped Nolan become poised, and ready to dive into the complicated events of his personal life, explored in the Kelly series which he completed at Heide. He had been mulling over ideas about the bushranger, and when he visited Robe Street in late 1945 with John and Sunday Reed, he was startled by the use of symbols in an *Image of Modern Evil* Tucker showed them, which Sweeney Tucker later called *Watcher on the Balcony*. Nolan sat bolt upright and stared for a long time at the work Tucker held before him: its crescent and eye growing from a stalk, charging Robe Street with menace. For Nolan, the box on the stalk, or the black mask of Kelly, would become a point of entry into the legend of the bushranger, and would, in time, become one of the most acclaimed symbols of twentieth century art.

St. Kilda also figured in the work of two other original members of the Contemporary Art Society, John Perceval and Arthur Boyd. John Perceval met Arthur and Guy Boyd in the Army Survey Corps. He married Mary Boyd, their sister, in 1944 at *Open Country*, the Boyd home at Murrumbidgee. Sidney Nolan was present — at the wedding of the woman he himself would marry in 1978. Perceval, influenced by the energetic work and independent convictions of Albert Tucker, was also haunted by images of St. Kilda. Palm trees, merry-go-rounds and trumpet players featured in a number of his works. His *Soldiers at Luna Park* (1944) depicted brightly lit menace as soldiers walked about with women, and in the frenzy of *Negroes at Night*, he

portrayed Melbourne as a city where dark energy was released during what he termed "the American occupation of Australia".²²

The thoughts of Arthur Boyd, also turned to the shoreline familiar to the Boyd family, for he was the son of Merric Boyd, the ceramic artist born in St. Kilda in 1888. His scorching works *The Mokas* and *Melbourne Burning* portrayed moral degradation and the horror of war. Along a barren shore, a mob revelled near the crucifixion in *The Mokas* (1945), and in *Melbourne Burning* (1946-47), the city was as doomed as Hiroshima.

Such artists were dismissed as cranks or no-hopers in Australia.

One of the few people to encourage Nolan and Tucker was Rupert Bunny, one of St. Kilda's greatest sons, who lived there the nineteenth century. Born at *Eckatbegin* Inkerman Street on 29 September 1864, his father Brice was St. Kilda's first Mayor, a barrister and a judge. His mother Marie Wulsten was the daughter of a Prussian Reichs Counsellor. He was educated at the Alma Road Grammar School as well as being given art lessons by William Ford of Inkerm an Street, who painted *Picnic at Hanging Rok*. He lived in France from 1886 and was the first Australian artist to receive a *mention honorable* from the Salon de la Societe des Artistes Francais for his painting *The Titans*. He knew how hard it was for an artist to make a living in Australia, for since his return from France in 1932 after his wife's death, he lived in poverty himself, with canvases, unwanted by galleries, stacked around him. A forward looking man, he became an inaugural member of the Contemporary Art Society. He told Sidney Nolan tales of France; and unlike those who dismissed Albert Tucker as a madman in the early 1940s, Bunny cared to listen to him, invite him to dine at the *Latin*, and show him his studio in the early 1940s²³. He died on 25 May 1947, a penniless man and a great artist. On his death, critics like George Bell of the *Sun*, who was revolted by Tucker's work, praised Bunny to the sky, and when an exhibition of Bunny's work was opened by Professor Joseph Burke at Georges Gallery in September 1947, Bell wrote of Bunny:

His design, his lovely sense of colour, his artistic integrity all combine to make his pictures endure irrespective of changes in the world's outlook because they are authentic as works of art and like old masters, time does not alter their value except to enhance it. The opening brings home to us once more the magnitude of the loss Australia has suffered by his death.

Albert Tucker left Australia for Europe in September 1947, as Bunny had done in his youth. In Tucker's case he was disgusted by the

philistinism, the conservatism, the smugness and complacency of what he left, and tormented by the catastrophe of his personal life. Prior to his departure from Elwood to take a boat from Sydney for Europe, he was interviewed by *Sun Women's Magazine* journalist, Lucy Gough about the sort of women artists like to paint. To that question he replied that since visiting Japan, he found Japanese women "far more appealing and feminine than Australians. Their faces completely lack the neurotic quality that is only too evident in most American and Australian women's faces". He also took the opportunity to voice his opinion of Australia. He had heard people in Elwood use the term *Ref Jew* as a derisive description of some of the refugees he had seen, with numbers tattooed on their wrists, so he chose the word *refugee* to indicate his contempt for Australians:

"I am a refugee from Australian culture", he said. "A painter can't make a decent living here unless willing to conform to rigid standards".

Other painters, he says, regard him as "an eccentric and radical halfwit, whom it is safe to keep away from"...

He considers himself lucky if he is able to sell two paintings a year in Australia. Commercial art and house-painting have tided him over bad spells, but he abandoned these "out of sheer revulsion".²⁴

Joy Hester returned to Melbourne in 1948. The world she had left Elwood for as a defiant girl had disappeared. The final issue of *Argy Penguins* had appeared in 1946. Tucker had gone. Bergner had gone to Paris in 1947 and remained in Israel after 1949. John and Sunday Reed, the linchpins of her Melbourne world, took Sweeney, the infant, to France and remained there for a year. Counihan would go in 1949 to work in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and England. Nolan married Cynthia, the widowed sister of John Reed in 1948, and would leave Australia in 1951. Hester wrote to Barrett Reid:

I think that people who go to another land — that it seems an awfully long way to realize that "the end is where we start from" — both inside and out — but, then, I am quite reactionary about Aussies travelling. Why we've only been here a hundred years. What can be added by going before we are here? — that is not right, for we are here, but only just here. If we don't hold what we have we may never find it again, so delicate a thing it is...I don't think a change of location can change or answer our questions²⁵

Although the protagonists had scattered, for a time they had held that delicate thing, of which she wrote, in a vision grounded in their immediate locality which was often St. Kilda: a new vision, of the city, authentically Australian, and expressing universal truths.

After this brief interval, let us continue with the main show.

CHAPTER FIVE

VARIETY 1949-1959

I. Imitation a keynote of entertainment - Adopting American and British attitudes - Impact of Menzies' performance on St. Kilda - Michaelis loses St. Kilda to J. P. Bourke - Korean War - Demonstrations of loyalty to the new Queen, Elizabeth II - Liberal victories - Boundless optimism - Olympic Games - Television - St. Kilda's Centenary 1957

II. European migrants in St. Kilda - Confusing questions about assimilation and identity for new and old Australians

III. Declining prestige of St. Kilda - The George Hotel and St. Kilda likened to a sinking ship - St. Kilda out of step with suburban aspirations of many city-dwellers - Fears of social deviance - Misplaced complacency of a Council out of tune with the variety of St. Kilda.

I. MIME ARTISTS

The Americans had gone, but the sound lingered on. Stan Bourne sang verses of his own to the tune of *Rum and Coca-Cola*, the American hit by the Andrews Sisters:

*There was a girl from Eksternwick, Drank a dose
of arsenic,
Husband said call a doctor quick, Doctor said
you do look sick.
Of all the fishes in the sea,
I'd rather be a bass,
I'd climb up all the seaweed trees,
And slide down on my...hands and knees!*

Also at the Galleon, Lennie Holmes, the drummer, presented "Platter Chatter" in 1952, playing overseas hits on the ten-inch microgroove records which had just been released in Australia, providing a running commentary and miming the singing.

The audiences, too, copied Americans, dressing up like them to go square dancing in St. Kilda. Women in dirndl skirts, blouses and flat shoes, and men in trousers and checked shirts with string ties, would bow and promenade to the singing calls and distinctive laugh of Jim Vickers-Willis, broadcast simultaneously on radio from Earl's Court, or to the American drawl of Charlie Bassett at the Palais de Danse.

The dancers kept on sashaying and dosy-doeing at a frenetic pace until the craze died down in 1953.

Big bands were dead and teenagers found new American idols. Girls in re-bob sweaters, skirts and bobby-sox, screamed hysterically like their American counterparts did when Johnny Ray burst into tears on stage at the Palais and sang his hits *Cry* and *The Little White Cloud That Cried*. The promoter Lee Gordon had brought him there in 1952, the theatre having become a venue for full live shows as well as the pictures in 1951 after Harry Jacobs retired. St. Kilda fans could also turn up the radio for the latest hits, and rock to Bill Haley and the Comets' *See You Later Alligator*, Elvis Presley's *Heartbreak Hotel*, Little Richard's *Long Tall Sally*, and Gene Vincent and the Bluecaps *Be-Bop a Lula*. Their own Radio 3SA, the only PMG approved landline radio station in Australia, established at Grosvenor Street, St. Kilda in March 1954 by Clark Sinclair, was often the first with the latest because Sinclair was the first disc jockey in Melbourne to introduce the top forty record listings like American DJs did.

Before long, Rock and Roll took precedence over waltz music at St. Moritz, and skaters, flashy in purple lurex, with Presley-like sideboards and greasy duck's tails, or Brando style leather jackets, were seen gliding round the rink to the sound of *Blue Suede Shoes* or *Hound Dog*.

Imitation went beyond the coffee lounges, the dance-halls, the theatres and the skating rink, though. American attitudes influenced political action, while British traditions remained the cornerstone of Australians' identity. Menzies offered the best of both worlds. He promised that St. Kilda could bask in the dim glow of Empire and still shelter under an American umbrella. A local idiom was as unthinkable in politics as it was in popular music.

Menzies' timing was perfect. In the lead up to the elections in 1949, he waged an unrelenting campaign against communists, cleverly taking his cue from the American Senator Joseph McCarthy, who was beginning his hysterical campaign to alert the Western world of subversion. Accordingly, tolerance of those thought to be communists or fellow-travellers diminished in St. Kilda. Police kept a watchful eye on street meetings, like those of the Eureka Youth League around Smith Street, St. Kilda, sometimes attended by Audrey Blake. Cyril Heitsch, an organiser of the Builders Labourers' Federation, was arrested for obstruction when he spoke to a rowdy

crowd in a St. Kilda street on 26 February 1949 about the ACTU case for an improved basic wage. Council played its role by not permitting Patricia Counihan, the Chairman of the St. Kilda Central Branch of the Communist Party, to hold a meeting on "Peace" on 27 July 1949 in Council Chambers because its own regulations prohibited "disloyal utterances" within the precincts.

W. E. Haworth, the Liberal candidate for Isaacs made an issue of the coal strikes, electricity strikes, and transport strikes, which made annoying restrictions like petrol rationing even worse. As well, local traders and bank employees mounted a strong campaign against back-sliding Labor plans to nationalise the banks, and strongly supported Haworth's platform against communism. Against him stood John Peter Bourke, LLB, a resident of Elwood for twenty years, widely known for his defence in the notorious pyjama girl case during the war. Bourke promised increased Federal powers, integration of migrants, protection against racial and religious discrimination, taxation reform, and extended use of the Commonwealth Bank to assist lower wage earners. Menzies was victorious but St. Kilda remained divided: Haworth won Isaacs while E. J. Holloway retained the Labor stronghold of Melbourne Ports.

Menzies began his second act as Prime Minister again when the curtain was iron and the villains were reds. With the communists victorious in China in 1949 Americans went to Korea in 1950 to stop them going further, so, automatically, men from St. Kilda went too. Flight-Lieutenant Frederick William Barnes of St. Kilda, a Mustang pilot in the RAAF 77 squadron stationed in Japan, for instance, was soon awarded an American Air Medal for his effort in Korea.

Peace activists were singled out as potential traitors and surveillance of their activities increased. Plain-clothed detectives mingled in the crowd of about two hundred and fifty people on the Carlisle Street footpath and St. Kilda Town Hall lawns on 30 November 1950, where they listened to the amplified words of speakers on the Town Hall steps who protested about Menzies' intervention in Korea, and St. Kilda City Council's refusal to allow them to meet inside the Hall. The Chairman of the meeting, Norman Rothfield, also President of the Jewish Council to Combat Fascism and Anti-Semitism, founded in 1942, commanded the microphone and introduced the main speaker as Wilfred Burchett, the first journalist to enter Hiroshima after the dropping of the atomic bomb. Immediately, uniformed police stepped forward. A police officer informed Burchett he was breaching St. Kilda City by-laws by broadcasting through speakers without

permission, while Rothfield shouted that the crowd was now witnessing yet another attempt to stifle free speech. A Senior Detective from the Criminal Investigation Bureau Special Branch subsequently reported that: "This announcement was greeted by a general movement of persons towards the police party with some cries of "Gestapo", "Fascist spies", "Shame" and some booing". Sergeant Guider of St. Kilda Police Station, also noted that: "Many of the members of the audience were New Australians and when the insulting remarks were being called out I could distinguish a foreign accent in many of those calling out".² Eventually a compromise was reached and Burchett spoke for twenty minutes about Korea, Maurice Williams of Carnegie sang a peace song, and Bernard Heinze of the Builders Workers' Industrial Union attacked St. Kilda City Councillors as reactionaries and threatened industrial reprisals if the Town Hall were not made open to all-comers. A deputation from the meeting waited on the Mayor, Cr. John Talbot, to protest against Council's hall hire policy but such a rabble was firmly rebuffed.

Menzies' efforts to ban the Communist Party altogether caused deeper rifts within local branches of the Labor Party, for not all members believed such action was inimical to democracy, fearing as they did that there were traitors within their own ranks. They were outraged when their Federal Deputy Leader, Dr. H. V. Evatt, appealed on behalf of the Communist Party of Australia, and the High Court ruled that Menzies' efforts to ban the Communist Party were unconstitutional. When elections were held in May 1951, it was easy for Haworth to argue that Evatt and the Labor Party were resisting Menzies' attempts "to smash the Reds"³ and he defeated J. P. Bourke again in Isaacs. In the neighbouring Melbourne Ports, Frank Crean took the Labor helm from E. J. Holloway.

When Chifley died in June 1951, H.V. Evatt became Leader of the Labor Party. The suspicion of some zealots was confirmed as Evatt spearheaded a passionate campaign in defence of the Communist Party's right to exist in a democracy when a referendum was held on that question in September 1952. Menzies failed narrowly in that referendum to secure the power to outlaw the Party, for there were many voters who still could not vote for Menzies' extreme measure though they hated communists fiercely.

Fear, recriminations and hatred within the Labor Party not only involved Catholics. Jews were divided too. The right wing Central Executive of the Victorian Labor Party, for instance, banned members of the Jewish Council to Combat Fascism and Anti-Semitism,

who were not ALP members, from addressing branch meetings because the Council was commonly regarded as a communist front by prominent Jewish Labor supporters such as Maurice Ashkanasy.

The Liberal Party's influence in St. Kilda was far from absolute in the early 1950s, as events showed on the rickety stage of State politics, where antics were often of the cloak and dagger variety. The Labor Party regained Albert Park after Keith Sutton, a journalist, defeated Roy Schilling in April 1950. Archie Michaelis successfully defended the seat of St. Kilda against J. P. Bourke in 1950, becoming Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and receiving a knighthood. But he was defeated in October 1952 by J. P. Bourke, who had triumphed at last in a different arena after his repeated failure to wrest Isaacs from Haworth. A hung Parliament resulted, but in fresh elections in December, Bourke retained St. Kilda, Labor won in a landslide and John Cain had an absolute majority in the Legislative Assembly. Soldiers began returning to St. Kilda from Korea in 1953 when an uneasy truce made the 38th parallel the line between North and South Korea. The war was ending with a whimper, and some did not welcome its conclusion in May 1953. Corporal Jack Philpot of Carlisle Street, St. Kilda had served there once, then rejoined the 2nd Battalion to serve there again only to find that the war was winding up. He unashamedly revealed his love of soldiering in May 1953 when he was interviewed in Korea by Hal Richardson, a war correspondent for the *Argus*:

...we stood in a shallow forward trench. The soil, ochre red beneath us, shook as a tank 10 yards away hammered shell after shell into the Chinese positions half a mile across the valley.

He chatted as though the noise was the door of the Village Belle Hotel in St. Kilda slamming shut at closing time.

"You see that bit of a rise out there? The other evening we were out there having a bit of a roam around when we saw some Chinese standing there about 200 yards from us. They were looking at us, hands on hips".

"We stood up, hands on hips, and beckoned them across, but they wouldn't be in it. We were overdue on patrol, so we had to go back without mixing it with them".

That's the way many of our soldiers chat up there. There are so many like Philpot. They agree with him when he says, "This is the way I like my soldiering. Always a chance of a bit of fun out there".

A machinegun opens up. "The blokes are screaming to have a go. They'll be hostile if the blue finishes before they get into it."

"Yeah", says Philpot. "A bloke thinks about the old St. Kilda now and then, but its nice up here."⁴

Soon Philpot was on his way home, the war a stalemate. No official Army welcome was organised for such soldiers, and when some arrived at Spencer Street Station in May 1953, they described their reception as "colder than Korea"⁵.

If foreign policy was to be American, sentiment remained British. St. Kilda was reminded that being British was the quintessence of being Australian as Menzies declared his adoration for the new Queen. There was a great outpouring of love for her in St. Kilda. She had already visited as the Duchess of Edinburgh in 1952, prior to the death of her father, and her coronation in 1953 was marked by special celebrations and rejoicing in St. Kilda. Hugh Styne, a former member of the Serenaders who had given open air shows on the Esplanade, organised a special display on 30 May 1953 which attracted over one hundred thousand people to the Foreshore. They saw a ceremony of loyal expression, skyrockets, searchlights over the bay and coronation portraits etched by fireworks. As well, the Phillips Brothers directed their scenic artist, Rupert Browne, to decorate the face of Luna Park with a crown, and the front of the floodlit Palais Theatre with illustrations of Yeoman of the Guard, flags, the Royal coat of arms and the Queen in her royal coach. When she returned to Melbourne as Queen Elizabeth II in March 1954, she attended a luncheon at the St. Kilda Town Hall organised by Victorian Women's Auxiliaries. A happy orderly crowd waited patiently behind barriers. Little children waved their Union Jacks and asked their daddy to hold them higher so they could see her, and noticed even his eyes were moist as she passed by. They all felt very close to her for their daily papers were full of human detail and warm sentiment for Lilibet and her dashing consort, and described the youthful Queen as the symbol of selflessness, service, and a new era.

A month later, in April 1954, the Petrov spy scandal broke. Not even an experienced stage manager could have wished for better timing. The Queen had just visited St. Kilda and this beautiful occasion, which had reminded residents of the meaning of loyalty and the integrity of the Empire, was fresh in their minds when suddenly a poisonous nest of vipers nestling in Canberra was unmasked by a defector. Vladimir Petrov had flown the coop of the Russian Embassy and was ready to sing about the involvement of Evatt's staff with Russian spies, only a month before Federal elections were due. Passion raged in St. Kilda when Dr. Evatt made his first election campaign appearance in Melbourne at the St. Kilda Town Hall on 11

May 1954, accompanied on stage by Mrs. Evatt, John Cain, and Maurice Ashkanasy. Both Dr. and Mrs. Evatt spoke to an excited crowd of over three thousand which was right behind them both. When an interjector yelled "what about communism?", the impassioned audience cried "Throw him out". Evatt was applauded tumultuously when he thundered that Menzies and Fadden were the vilest liars in the world if they imputed he had any sympathy with communism, and said that the people which the Government wanted to protect were those who financed their party funds — the big combines.⁶

Beyond the ringing walls of the Hall, however, ears were deaf. Menzies won the election, his performance consummate. The promised disclosures of the involvement of Evatt's staff never materialised, but the affair sealed the Liberal Party's grip of Federal power, hastened the Labor split, and enabled the State Liberal-Country Party to grab St. Kilda back from Bourke.

Cain's Government was wrecked. Dr. Evatt attacked right-wing industrial groups (the "Groupers"), and the Catholic Action inspired "Movement" of B. A. Santamaria, which dominated the Victorian ALP, pointing an accusing finger at members like William Meskill Bourke, the former candidate for St. Kilda, for disloyalty to the Labor movement. Neighbour villified neighbour in St. Kilda streets and lifelong friendships ended, so great was the hatred. The local party branches were rent as furious words were spoken, fists shaken, meeting rooms ransacked and membership cards torn up. Subsequently, over one hundred Victorian ALP members were expelled from the party and former Labor Party parliamentarians angrily crossed the floor in April 1955 to bring the Cain Government down with them.

The treacherous stage of state politics was clear and Henry Bolte was pushed out from the wings to become Premier in May 1955, though few thought that the "bumpkin from the bush" would last very long before he was knifed too.

Baron Snider, the new member for St. Kilda, looked far more suave and at ease in the spotlight. He defeated J. P. Bourke to become the Liberal-Country Party MLA for St. Kilda after Bourke was subjected to bitter attacks by Movement members within his own parish and outside it. Born in Caulfield in 1919, Snider was a choirboy at the St. Kilda Synagogue under the watchful eye of Rabbi Danglow, and a member of the Australian Military Forces from 1939-1940 before joining the Henry Kaiser Corporation in the United

States as an executive from 1940 to 1941, and organising industrial safety in shipbuilding. He studied industrial relations at Stanford University and the University of California and returned to Australia in 1951 to direct a training in industry program for the Victorian Institute of Industrial Management. He was founding President of the Elwood High School School Council, Chairman of the Jewish National Fund and a member of the Albert Park Management Committee which St. Kilda City Council had rejoined in 1947.⁷

It soon became clear that Bolte stood on a more firmly buttressed stage than any Premier had done for decades. Those purged from the Labor Party formed the Australian Labor Party (Anti-Communist) in 1955 which became the Democratic Labour Party in 1957. The "Movement" became the National Civic Council in 1957, and Arthur Moloney, of Sacred Heart Parish, St. Kilda, chaired its inaugural meeting which was attended by about four thousand people at the Palais Theatre⁸. Some former members of the Australian Labor Party in St. Kilda like the metal worker, Jack Hughes, joined the Democratic Labour Party and made sure their opponents would not hold St. Kilda again. Hughes, the former Secretary of the St. Kilda West branch, would contest St. Kilda on behalf of the DLP for the next sixteen years. He always directed preferences away from the ALP in St. Kilda, and made this seat secure for Snider and his successor, Brian Dixon, though it was resembling a Labor seat more and more in its social and economic composition.

Though the hatred remained, the public drama of such bitter political strife died down as Bolte and Menzies settled in for a long seasons. The outlook appeared rosy at last. Different events reinforced this self-satisfied impression. The economy was booming; Olympic Games in 1956 made them the centre of the universe; the introduction of television signalled progress, and the ingenuity of scientists seemed infinite. St. Kilda's Centenary celebrations in 1957 were another cause for celebration and congratulation, and a proud Council was ready to take a bow because there were signs of progress all around, and they thought they deserved an ovation.

The Olympic Games in Melbourne in November 1956 made the city centre stage of the world. St. Kilda had been represented in the 1948 Olympics by the wrestler Bruce Arthur of Chapel Street, and by Marjorie McQuade the swimmer who was a student at St. Michael's Church of England Girls' Grammar School; and in 1956 residents closely followed the fortunes of fifteen year old Faith Leech, who also

attended St. Michael's, and did them proud. She won a bronze medal in the one hundred metres women's freestyle for her swim of 65.1 seconds, and a gold medal in the one hundred metres women's relay with Dawn Fraser, Sandra Morgan and Lorraine Crapp. Some Olympic competitions occurred in St. Kilda. Fencing strips were set down in the Town Hall for the women's foil, men's foil, épée and sabre. Commodore Alick Rose of the Royal St. Kilda Yacht Club supervised the quartering of about one hundred yachtsmen in the International Star Class, and a breakwater was built at West Beach extending from the pier for the boats. The Elwood Sailing Club hosted competitors in the International Twelve Square Metre Class. The Marathon ran two and a half miles within St. Kilda boundaries along St. Kilda Road, Wellington Street and Dandenong Road (all marked with a line of red paint to East Oakleigh and back), and was labelled "the poor man's Olympic Games" by organisers because it permitted thousands to see an event free of charge⁹. Some hockey matches were also played at Elwood.

The city was abuzz with related functions as well. A noisy celebratory Australian Grand Prix motor race was run at Albert Park. A civic reception, hosted by Geoff Raymond, for fencers and yachtsmen was held at the Town Hall on 16 November 1956. There were balls aplenty, including one for amateur sporting men and women at the Palais de Danse on 15 November, another for US sailors at the Palais organised by the Australian-American Association on 26 November, an Amateur Sports Club Ball on 29 November at the Palais, a Legacy Club Ball on 30 November, and a Sinter Klaas Ball at Earl's Court for the Netherlands-Australian Association. As well, Councillors and local dignitaries enjoyed a head-spinning round of cocktail parties, receptions, press conferences, and gala performances.

Television also brought the world to St. Kilda, and reinforced a sense of heady well being. Many excited residents prepared for it well in advance. Some families drove around city streets on the weekends, spotting new aerials and noting their position¹⁰. The St. Kilda City Council was so concerned about the aesthetic effects of the aerials, it sought urgent advice from the London County Council whether it should require a building permit for them, and reminded flat dwellers that only one would be necessary on every building. Mothers were warned to protect their children from undesirable viewing habits, and women's magazines gave handy hints about preparing for tele-

vision by rearranging furniture and household routines, preparing television dinners which could be eaten in semi-darkness, and dressing specially for TV viewing. The *Woman's Day*, for instance, recommended crisp cool dresses for summer viewing, as well as "casual but imaginative separates".¹¹

St. Kilda's shopping centres were crowded at night as people stood outside Radio Shops or crammed into milk bars with new sets, to see the magical transmission. Over one thousand five hundred people gathered in Fitzroy Street on a chilly night to watch the official opening of HSV7 on 4 November 1956 through shop windows. Some stood on chairs, or boxes, or on the tops of cars, and the littlest tots were wrapped in blankets. Others sat more comfortably inside stores at the invitation of retailers, while wealthier people, who already owned sets held private TV parties at home.

St. Kilda spawned many different stars: Frank Rich, Buster Fiddes, Jack Peny and Roy Lyons, who had performed at the Galleon quickly made the transition to television. St. Kilda was also the home of the "king" of Melbourne television, Graham Kennedy. Graham Kennedy was born in Camden Street, St. Kilda on 15 February 1934. He lived at 32 Nelson Street and attended Euston College at the corner of Chapel Street and Carlisle Street, and remained in St. Kilda until he was twenty-four. During his final year at Melbourne High School, he was a news runner for Radio Australia. He joined the 3UZ program department, and in 1951 partnered Clifford "Nicky" Nicholls for the *Nicky and Graham Show*. Studio windows were often left open and listeners sometimes heard the barking of a dog in the yard behind 3UZ, as well as the sound of the performers eating and drinking as they chatted. Impromptu humour was often at the expense of advertisers and some of their phrases like "She's a lush drop, Tintara", became popular sayings. He appeared with other 3UZ announcers on GTV9 for the annual Red Cross Appeal which had been a radio presentation until then, and the station's production director, Norman Spencer, earmarked him as a potential star. He was engaged for £30 a week to host *In Melbourne Tonight* which began in May 1957. Lines were learnt in the morning, rehearsals conducted in the afternoon, then the show was presented live at night five nights a week. The quick wit of Kennedy, which had been honed by radio, made him the "King" of Melbourne television at a time when indigenous talent was often swamped by overseas offerings.

The St. Kilda City Councillors were as confident as a row of swaggering song and dance men that St. Kilda's performance deserved a big hand by the late 1950s. They celebrated Council's one hundredth year of existence in 1957 when they not only praised the past achievements of the pioneers, but displayed great faith in the future because of the signs of progress all around and their growing confidence in the Bolte government. The achievements were proudly recorded in an official centenary publication entitled "A Century of Progress and Development" which summarised points made by the historian John Butler Cooper, who had died in Elsternwick in March 1951, as well as noting recent developments in the municipality. The proud Mayor, Cr. Percy Stynes, asked everyone to reflect on the miraculous changes in St. Kilda, since Council's first meeting in 1857:

... vast changes ... have occurred in our Municipal District, giving us, in place of what was originally a swampy, desolate wilderness, a City teeming with life, served by modern transport facilities and communications, evidencing a solid and progressive commercial growth side by side with an effective development of the standards of housing, public health, social amenities, community services and the like and offering ample scope for successful careers by those with vision, discernment and a faith in our future.¹²

Medical breakthroughs, improving educational opportunities, property and commercial development visible around him boosted the Mayor's faith and Council's complacent confidence. An improvement in health care, particularly welcomed by Elwood citizens, was the establishment of the nearby Southern Memorial Hospital opposite the Elsternwick Golf Links; and citizens such as Miss Victoria Buntine, who had been Lady Mayoress of St. Kilda during the term of Cr. F. W. Binns, led energetic fund-raising efforts in its support.

Education was seen as the key to the future, and children had greater opportunities to continue their schooling. Elwood citizens welcomed progress they had sought for years in the establishment of a new high school. Elwood High School was opened in 1957 after thirty years of community action following the failure to secure the establishment there of MacRobertson Girls High School as had been expected in 1927. Archie Michaelis had worked doggedly for its foundation, and plans had been released in February 1950, so up-to-date they even included a special cookery demonstration room "where girls could follow clearly what the demonstrator was doing", for it was believed that education should enhance their domestic capability. Nonetheless, the plans were shelved and tireless lobbying

by J. P. Bourke, then by Baron Snider, was required before building commenced. Finally, the school opened in February 1957 with four hundred pupils in Forms II and III; and enrolment doubled by 1959 with increasing student numbers reflecting the increasing opportunities for secondary education that generation enjoyed.

In another important development for Elwood, work was undertaken on the troublesome canal. The Cain Government allocated the first funds of £150,000 for the underground diversion of floodwaters from the Elwood Canal by the MMBW in December 1954. This allocation followed repeated deluges in Elwood when water about a metre deep flooded into hundreds of homes, and over three thousand residents signed a petition calling for flood relief. Subsequently the Elwood Citizens' Vigilance Committee was formed to oversee the progress of canal work, and organised the opening of the diversion canal through Elsternwick Park, underground to the bay at Elwood in April 1958.

Other work in parks and streets continued to alter the appearance of St. Kilda. Changes in the city's landscape included the establishment of the Alister Clark Rose Garden in the Blessington Street Gardens in 1949 by the National Rose Society of Victoria, in memory of the rosarian who produced varieties like "Lorraine Lee" and "Sunny South" and was the President of the Moonee Valley Racing Club for thirty-one years. Cypress trees in Shakespeare Grove were replaced with desert ash in 1952 because it was feared that the decaying resinous timber constituted a fire risk to Luna Park, and removal of palms in the West Ward was almost completed by February 1954. Verandahs over public footways were removed in 1954 even though shopkeepers in Fitzroy Street protested that perishable shop goods would be unprotected and that the new cantilevers spoilt the appearance of the street. Other old landmarks were felled, like the pair of fifty feet high Moreton Bay Fig trees which had stood for over one hundred years at the front of Chamwood House, Chamwood Grove, and were chopped down in 1957, the house itself having previously been converted into eight flats.

Councillors confidently claimed that the city was becoming more and more attractive, though their description of the landscape as a desolate wilderness prior to the arrival of European settlers, would hardly have been endorsed by the tribes who once roamed there, had they survived. Indeed, the old red gum, *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*, which stood northward of the St. Kilda Junction and adjoined the approach of Queen's Road South, known as the Corroboree Tree

because that was where blacks had met long ago, had barely escaped destruction itself. It was saved by action of the Victorian Field Naturalists' Club in the early 1950s determined to preserve it, and make Melbourne aware of its significance. Subsequently in July 1952 Council had placed a plaque there which read: "Aborigines of early settlement days congregated and held their ceremonies under and in the vicinity of this tree".

Councillors were also delighted to see increasing property development by 1959. Development had been very slow to begin with in the 1950s, partly because of the unavailability of building materials: in 1949-50 for instance, only six houses were built in St. Kilda, and forty-seven flats in four buildings. Nonetheless, the potential for subdivisions of large estates, held in some cases by families since the nineteenth century, and a new interest in strata titling, spurred development in the 1950s.

The first major subdivision since the establishment of the Mittagong Estate in 1941 was permitted in 1949 following the death of Reuben Hallenstein, who had succeeded his cousin, Frederick Michaelis, as the director of Michaelis Hallenstein and Company in 1935; then the death of his wife, Lucie, shortly after. Their large estate, "Woonsocket", between Barkly and Pattison Street on parts of Crown Allotments 43 and 44, was subdivided into twelve allotments fronting a new street called Woonsocket Court. Another old estate was developed in 1954 when land in Brunning Street, once owned by Herbert John Brunning the seed merchant who died in May 1949, was subdivided.

As well, a new opportunity for profit from established housing stock appeared in the idea of stratum titles when the Registrar of Titles ruled in 1954 that the *Transfer of Land Act* permitted the issue of a title to a flat even though it was above ground level, and that each of the owners would have a right in common with others to use the whole of the land. Hence, Coronation Court Proprietary Limited, which owned eight flats in Woonsocket Court, were submitted to subdivide the flats so that the owner of each could obtain a title for their flat in May 1954. Council sought legal advice before granting the concession, and was advised by its lawyers in July 1954 that although the idea of stratum titles was not new, it appeared it may become the fashion¹³. The following year, Council adopted standards for subdivision of multi-storied flats into stratum titles, which permitted the conversion of many old properties.

After initial doubts whether the new Premier, Henry Bolte would have the interests of the city at heart because he was a country man, Councillors became more confident that his government would smooth the way for untrammelled private enterprise and growth in the city, which would in turn boost rate revenue. Many had been pleased to see the end of the Cain government because they did not trust the Labor Party. They jealously guarded Council's power, and still remembered the horrifying Greater Melbourne Bill of 1951, which had threatened their very existence. Introduced in the Legislative Assembly on 5 September 1951, it had proposed the elimination of metropolitan councils, and their replacement by a Greater Melbourne Council which would incorporate the MMBW as well, and be responsible for metropolitan roads, lighting, drainage and sewerage. Although St. Kilda City Council conceded at the time that Melbourne was governed in a piece-meal manner and that an overall planning authority was needed to coordinate major projects, it campaigned strongly against the radical proposal which was only defeated in the Legislative Council after aged and sick conservative members were carried into the Chamber to vote.

Councillors conceded some rationalisation was necessary, and endorsed the Bolte government's plans for urban development. The MMBW had already released a master plan for the development of the metropolis in 1954, planning for a population of 2.5 million, and prescribing urban limits which it expected to ensure sufficient land for fifty years, and its power was increased by Bolte. Legislation in 1956 enabled the MMBW to deal with municipal functions which transcended local boundaries, including control of parts of the metropolitan foreshore, metropolitan highways, and subdivision of allotments abutting metropolitan highways. Soon after the legislation was passed, the MMBW approved the rezoning of a major portion of St. Kilda Road, still largely residential, to permit the establishment of administrative offices there.

Councillors happily endorsed plans for high-density housing in the municipality when it became clear by 1958 that the MMBW plan of 1954 had grossly underestimated the rate of metropolitan growth. Not only was intensive development in St. Kilda expected to curb expensive outward metropolitan growth as the government hoped, but it would boost rate revenue enormously. The MMBW adopted a report called *The Problem of Urban Expansion in the Melbourne Metropolitan Area* in August 1959 which found that the rate of growth had accelerated so much that Melbourne could expect a

population of 2.5 million by 1975, much sooner than it had expected in 1954. Councillors rubbed their hands with glee at the thought of fat coffers when the MMBW re-zoned parts of St. Kilda and Prahran to allow higher density development. By December 1959, Murray Porter had approved Amendment Number 3 to the Uniform Building Regulations which reduced minimum site areas for flats and open spaces surrounding them, and St. Kilda was poised for the development of the 1960s which would gut parts of it beyond recognition.

Councillors were delighted to see other progressive signs of commercial development all around them. New marketing trends were further testimony to the influence of American ideas. The first Supermarket in St. Kilda was opened in Fitzroy Street in 1957 by McEwans. The novel store allowed customers to fill their car boots with a week's supply of groceries, including new products such as frozen food, which could be stored in the refrigerators which were replacing ice-chests in many homes. It was opened on 12 December 1957 by the Mayor, Cr. A. C. Watson, who welcomed the first customer in the American entertainer, Larry Griswold, who was appearing at the Tivoli. The management explained that the term supermarket represented a new concept in one-stop shopping, and the store boasted that it provided "the American way of shopping with the accent on service and convenience". Despite the enthusiasm for the supermarket at the time, however, the store was not the success McEwans hoped and on 9 July 1959, it was transformed into the eighth of a chain of Rockman's Self Selection Stores.

Amidst all this progress and mimicry of American ideas, continuing loyal allegiance to the British throne provided a thread of stability and tradition. Further visits to St. Kilda by members of the Royal Family continued and enthusiasm for the British monarchy remained undimmed in people of all classes and different political allegiances.

A memorable Royal visit to St. Kilda occurred in March 1958 when the Queen Mother came to the Town Hall for morning tea with one thousand representatives of two hundred women's organisations. The visit was organised with military like precision for months before by a Reception Committee headed by Mrs. Bolte, and including Mrs. A. C. Watson, the Mayoress of St. Kilda, Julia Rapke, of the Women's International Zionist Organisation, who died later in the year; Lady Paton, representing the Women of Melbourne University; Gladys Hain of the Housewives' Association; and members of the ALP, the DLP, the CWA, the Red Cross, and the Temperance Union. The

committee met several times in the Mayoress's room, and left no detail to chance. They tested whether the scent of lilliums in the bouquet of gum blossom and malacca balm to be presented to the Queen Mother, might be too strong and overpower her. They prepared notes for members of the Official Party on the timing of their curtseys, the correct way to curtsey, and the niceties of other protocol. They decorated the hall beautifully with thirty large white urns of fan-shaped arrangements of gladioli, dahlias, delphiniums and hydrangeas, and five floral pictures in six by four feet frames, filling the room with scent and colour. Happily for the Committee, the visit exceeded all expectations. The Queen Mother mingled and chatted with the guests, all lovely in their carefully-chosen hats, gloves, pearls and colourful floral dresses, and so excited they could barely touch the salmon sandwiches and petit-fours. Social columnists noted how much the Queen Mother enjoyed the informality of the morning.¹⁴

To those present on this pleasant, meticulously prepared occasion, all was well in St. Kilda. Others, however, were not so sure, believing that Councillors were completely out of step with the changes occurring there.

II. NEW ACTORS

Migrants of a host of different cultures and classes left the Displaced Persons camps, ancient cities, villages, and farms of Europe and came to St. Kilda, making it the most cosmopolitan part of Melbourne. While some remained there permanently, many others made it their first temporary foothold until they established themselves elsewhere. Often, those who did not live there permanently visited for enjoyment and pleasure as generations of poorer people with no car and little money had done before them.

St. Kilda was more than a mere convenience though. It warmed their hearts. Its domes and palms, its beach, its expansive boulevards and gardens, its gaggle of flats and boarding houses, its ferris wheel brought from Manly Pier in 1954 and its merry-go-round so suggestive of imported European traditions, all reminded them more of what they had left than other parts of Victoria, where space accentuated the reserve of Australians.

Few of the older Australian residents in St. Kilda saw any inconsistency in aping American fashions themselves or defining

their own nationality within a British framework, while asking European migrants to abandon their own distinctive cultures to become like them. Hence, migrants were expected to assimilate and merge in to become New Australians, for although the "old" were descendants of migrants themselves who had come only a few generations before, they were conscious that they were not at all like this newest wave of live performers appearing in St. Kilda. In response, many of the migrants did try desperately to become absorbed into the community, and adopt the customs of Australians, though many were confused about the model they should copy in such a derivative culture. In turn, native Australians were such great mime artists themselves, they could not help noticing that some European customs might even be worth imitating as well, however reluctant they were to admit it.

Many migrants came with little baggage but with great hopes of freedom and a better life. Some, who had fled, or been driven, through various European countries before arriving, soon sensed a greater degree of tolerance than alien hosts had ever shown them before. Nonetheless, those who were not embraced at the Port Melbourne wharf; those who gasped in the stifling heat, those who flinched at the sight of drab streets, those who were perplexed by the laconic indifference or hostility of Australians, and those left alone in a poky room to unpack and clasp to their breast some salvaged part of their former life like a tiny decorative teaspoon or a Bible, soon wept for Europe. Then, when they could only find jobs Australians would not take, they soon realised that this strange land would be no stage of instant opportunity. Many knew that whatever they achieved would be of their own making and they would have to endure hardship for some time yet.

Housing was an immediate need. Luckier ones were reunited with relatives who knew St. Kilda and helped them find a decent place to live. Others found rooms or board for themselves, and as the housing shortage continued, they were prepared to endure poorer standards of accommodation until they could afford to move somewhere better. A few could only find caravans in the back yards of private homes and boardinghouses in St. Kilda. Even though police described more than a dozen trailer caravans with shanties attached behind 22 Fitzroy Street as a "menace and a danger" in 1949, the Housing Commission recommended that they remain because the occupants had nowhere else to go¹⁵. When campers there defied a Council eviction order in April 1951, a couple with a twelve month old child, claimed that they

had tried two hundred and eighty one guest-houses, houses and flats before finding a caravan in St. Kilda¹⁶. Living conditions in such caravans were described by an Irishman who leased a site at 41 Chapel Street:

There are two families on this site, living in caravans, the Turner family, consisting of 2 adults and 3 small children in one caravan, and my wife and myself and our three tiny children in our caravan. We pay £1.0.0. per caravan per week to the Landlord for the use of electricity, hot water, the lavatory and washhouse (sic). The premises has changed hands in the last few months and the new landlord, while accepting the rent, has refused to allow us to enter the house to use the bathroom to wash (1) or to use the washhouse to wash the clothes (2) or to use any hot water.

This means that with the summer coming and the consequent high temperatures we will have no hot water to wash in, or to wash children's napkins or dishes etc. etc, and that all clothes will have to be washed inside the caravan. Yet we pay for these facilities and have done so before this new land-lord took over.

Our light for which we pay 10/- a week is cut off until mid-day and threats have been made to cut it off altogether if we stand up for our rights..¹⁷

The Irishman resisted the owner's attempts to dislodge him and his family for a while longer, then found a better place.

Sometimes new arrivals crowded into substandard houses. The Medical Officer of Health, Mr. Sydney Allen, reported that twenty-six people, he described as "New Australians mostly Italians", were crammed into a squalid house in Blessington Street in April 1952. There was only one toilet, no canopy over the stove and some floorboards were rotting, no proper garbage bins were used, and rooms used as bedrooms included: "One room devoid of window, ventilation or lighting; another lighted from small fixed skylight in roof, no ventilation or other light. Neither suitable as bedrooms"¹⁸. In the face of such exploitation of desperate migrants, Irene Williams, the Secretary of the St. Kilda Ladies' Benevolent Society, noted despondently in its *Annual Report* in 1953:

It makes one very sad to see these (in most cases) highly educated and qualified people have to depend on benevolent help for their sustenance, also to see how they are exploited by having to pay exorbitant prices for rooms or bed-and-breakfast.

Health problems were sometimes acute. Some refugees were still suffering from the effects of malnutrition, and contagious diseases. Furthermore, fears of contamination bred suspicion of them. St. Kilda became the Health Department's metropolitan target for Tuberculosis detection because of the concentration of migrants

there: in 1950 over fifteen thousand people were x-rayed at the Town Hall but Health Department officials believed that "people were shy of presenting themselves for TB tests. They thought, wrongly, that there was some disgrace attached to the disease"¹⁹. When vaccines against smallpox were administered in April 1951, Mr. Sydney Allen attributed increased cooperation from parents to their fears arising from "immigration at its peak", in his *Health Report* of 1951. The health of some migrants was also threatened by the menial, physically debilitating work they did; and often, if they could not speak English well enough to describe their problems, or were too daunted by local doctors, they relied on old remedies instead.

Nonetheless, others adapted very quickly to Australian practices in regard to health and found it useful to establish rapport with their General Practitioner as soon as possible. Dr. Lawrence Shnookal, encouraged to be a doctor by his mother when he was a young Jewish boy in Carlton, established a practice in Grey Street, St. Kilda, and later became the Medical Officer of Health for the City of St. Kilda in 1959. He issued many Worker's Compensation certificates and sometimes noticed terrific epidemics of gastric upsets when ships arrived in port. Even one of his most scrupulous patients who refused to take a day off work despite pleurisy, injuries and sutures, finally succumbed and asked for a certificate when there was nothing wrong, explaining that he had been in Australia for three years and he had learnt at last about the native custom of taking a "sickie".²⁰

Many could not speak English, or found the little they had learnt prior to their arrival was useless. Their halting, earnest attempts to converse confirmed the prejudice of some Australian listeners that the speakers were silly dagoes, krauts, wops, or wogs, and amused others who had never needed to learn another language. Native speakers were cautioned to be tolerant, and Peter Isaacson's newspapers sometimes included such reminders written by Immigration officials. As one such article condescendingly argued in the *News* of 1 February 1951, New Australians might make even some contribution to culture and the arts if they were given the opportunity:

...before we can condemn them out of hand, let us at least offer them our friendship, and not impatiently shrug our shoulders when a New Australian seeks in his halting, often laughable English, our help or advice.

Some migrants attended night-classes after exhausting hours of work. Others gave up ideas of learning properly themselves, and relied on their children, on whom all their hope now rested, to deal with institutions, officials and baffling forms.

Victoria's first special class "for school-age pupils of foreign birth" was established at St. Kilda Park State School in 1949. Numbers varied from nine to fourteen and most remained for three to nine months in a class described as tutorial and remedial in character, which emphasised the rapid learning of spoken English, reading and composition, social studies, civics and health, weights and measures, Australian tables of money — all "matters essential to normal life in Australia. However, teachers throughout the municipality, such as Leigh Pentreath who supervised migrant education at Brighton Road State School, and Sister Collette at St. Columba's at Elwood soon noticed that children learnt most from other children in the playground; and that some learned so quickly of the culture, they asked their mothers to make them Vegemite sandwiches, or preferred not to eat anything at all rather than let Australian children see their lunches of rye bread and herring, or bratwurst and pickle.

Newcomers, who wanted to assimilate by copying the customs of the "old", saw the peculiar brand of football played in St. Kilda as one of the few expressions of indigenous culture which locals were mad about, so they identified themselves with the St. Kilda football team. They stood at the Junction Oval and learnt what it meant to "barack". They saw how passionate Australians could be when they watched the emotion of Alan Killigrew, the coach from 1956, who gesticulated, pleaded, raged and wept, and redesigned the guernsey to replace the white back and sleeves, so his men would look more menacing. They learnt what adulation meant in St. Kilda when the ruckman Brian Gleeson won the Brownlow Medal in 1957, and again, when Neil Roberts won the year after. And they soon understood that belief was a prerequisite for any Saints supporter as the club retained its lowly position on the ladder throughout the 1950s, and the new President Graham Huggins and Secretary Ian Drake promised that St. Kilda was on the threshold of a new era in 1959 when it ended the season on the lowly eighth rung.

Others, however, did not abandon their own football. Soccer had been played in Melbourne since the 1880s though it was derided by many Australian Rules supporters as a sissy game. Hakoah (meaning *strength* in Hebrew) had been based in Albert Park since the 1920s, and it, and other older clubs, were joined by more new clubs in the 1950s. Slavia, a Czechoslovakian team, was formed in 1951, and played at Elwood Reserve. Many Greeks in St. Kilda followed Hellas, while Yugoslavians supported JUST. After the Olympic Games in 1956, a number of Hungarian athletes and resistance

fighters remained in Australia, living in Wilgah Street; St. Kilda and formed the Melbourne Soccer Club in 1956, playing at the Murphy Reserve at Port Melbourne. Interest in the game was growing so strongly that a State League was introduced with twelve clubs in 1958.

Other familiar religions provided great solace for migrants. Different St. Kilda congregations were augmented, even though many newcomers only remained for a short time. Italians were the largest migrant group to attend the Sacred Heart Church in the 1950s, with about half of them from Lipari and Trieste. They, like other arrivals in central and eastern Europeans, Irish, Scottish and English people, found great comfort in the familiar Latin mass, even though many parish activities were unfamiliar. Fr Gorry, the parish priest since 1949, was wont to say "...the parish is not what it was" as his congregation seemed to change almost daily, and lacked the solid core he had remembered as a boy.²²

In comparison, new members of the Temple Beth Israel were more permanent settlers, and that congregation grew strongly to become the largest single Jewish congregation in Australia by the late 1950s. Rabbi Sanger dedicated a new Temple, War Memorial Sanctuary, and religious school building for the congregation in June 1959, and expressed great optimism about the future of a congregation he had watched grow strongly since those fearful days when he arrived in St. Kilda as a refugee. He said at the dedication: "This building built at a time of great confidence and vigour in the growth of the Australian Nation, must ever strive to promote social responsibility and good citizenship". The St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation was in transition too, for Rabbi Danglow retired in July 1957 after fifty-two years of ministry. Universally praised by politicians, churchmen and Councillors for fostering better understanding between Jew and Gentile, he was moved when St. Kilda City Council paid him homage at a Council meeting and presented him with an illuminated scroll.

Some migrants sought political affiliations, for they were accustomed to European notions of class and ideology, and aligned themselves with the politics of the left or the right. Many opposed communism because they had known Stalin as a tyrant, then were outraged by the invasion of countries such as Hungary by Soviet forces. On the other hand, others who were penniless, or consciously defined themselves as proletarians in a way many Australians were reluctant to do, joined the Communist Party, while others thought the Labor Party would be the champion of the worker. Many Jews

admired the work of H. V. Evatt, who had championed the cause of Israel at the United Nations, and Arthur Calwell who had enabled them to come to Australia in the first place, and supported Labor; others feared too though, that both Liberal and Labor politicians were careless about the entry of former Nazis to Australia from Displaced Persons Camps in Europe, and saw other migrants as their greatest enemies and as fascists who had slipped through the net. A number joined the Jewish Council to Combat Fascism and Anti-Semitism, and supported Samuel Goldbloom of St. Kilda, the former candidate for St. Kilda City Council, who stood for Isaacs as an Independent Labor candidate in 1953, and campaigned against the arrival of German migrants believed to be former Nazis. His stance was not approved of by some members of the St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation including Sir Archie Michaelis, and Newman Rosenthal, the President of the Jewish Ex-Servicemen's Organisation.

It was naturalisation however, which was taken to signify an official public desire on the part of migrants to be assimilated. The St. Kilda Committee of the Australia Day Council, formed in 1951 with Julia Rapke as a foundation member, directed a great deal of its attention to migrants as well as to children, and promoted the idea of naturalisation. The Minister of Immigration urged the St. Kilda City Council to promote naturalisation in 1952 with "appropriate pageantry and ceremonial" because too few migrants were applying for citizenship. St. Kilda's first naturalisation ceremony was held on 18 November 1953 when residents took oaths of renunciation, oaths of allegiance, surrendered their Alien's Registration Certificate required by the *Aliens Act* (1947), received certificates, a bible from the British and Foreign Bible Society and afternoon tea supplied by the Good Neighbour Council. The Prime Minister, R. G. Menzies, attended his first naturalisation ceremony in July 1955, belatedly, as he admitted, and saw one hundred and thirty seven residents of St. Kilda, formerly of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, Russia, Greece, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Germany, Latvia, Estonia, Italy and Holland, become Australian citizens at the St. Kilda Town Hall.

Nevertheless, migrants, who did not discard their own customs altogether, set new patterns which other Australians would not resist mimicking in time, no matter how foreign they were regarded at first. For example, some Europeans thought many locals looked drab, dowdy, or even slatternly in their disregard for costume, coiffure and the elegance of their appearance. Although many Australian men, in particular, thought the clothing of "Continental" was

as effete as their football, they became more conscious of style even if they did not admit it, and reconsidered the attractiveness of their conservative serge suits, plain shirts, felt hats and heavy shoes. This process took time though, and migrants sometimes caused unintended offence and suspicion because they were regarded as flash or different. One was prevented from entering the St. Kilda Town Hall because he wore two-tone shoes. Another said he was refused entry to Luna Park because of his colourful clothes. Garnett Curwen, the manager, admitted the complainant had been mistaken for the bodge because of his dress, but the management had only acted in accordance with Melbourne dance and fun-fair proprietors' decision to ban boddies "until they learn to behave", and said: "You can pick the boddies only by the clothes, haircuts and general attitude, and you're bound to pick one who is not this type"²³. However, even the Australian boddies seen in St. Kilda did not earn the admiration of some similarly rebellious young English migrants, who called themselves Teddy-Boys, and wore black tight pegged pants, lacey shirts, knee-length coats with velvet collars and cuffs, and Italian shoes.

Through European eyes, many Australians did seem inhibited even in their leisure. Many migrants from suburbs like Brunswick, Carlton, Coburg, Northcote, Richmond and Collingwood regarded a day-trip by tram to St. Kilda beach as a special outing, and would picnic there, relax on the beach, and watch their children ride on the miniature railway or the merry-go-round.

Amongst those who visited St. Kilda were Georges and Mirka Mora who lived in Little Collins Street. They soon showed that Europeans could indeed make a contribution to Australian culture as immigration officials suspected. They had arrived in Melbourne from Paris in 1951 to live at 9 Collins Street where they established the Mirka Gallery. They soon met John and Sunday Reed, John Perceval, Barrett Reid, Barbara and Charles Blackman, and Joy Hester who occasionally looked after their children, and became involved with the revival of the Contemporary Art Society in 1953, and the Museum of Modern Art, founded by John and Sunday Reed. After they established the Mirka Cafe in Exhibition Street near Her Majesty's Theatre in 1955, they invited Joy Hester to show some of the intense black and white work she had produced after leaving Albert Tucker, and remained friends with her until her death in December 1960. Mirka regarded St. Kilda as a seaside paradise when she first arrived

in Melbourne, and one of the liveliest places to visit. Later, she recalled:

When we were living at 9 Collins Street we often went to St. Kilda with a lot of painters because it was very European to go to the seaside. Charles and Barbara Blackman, Lawrence Hope, Joy Hester and Gray Smith used to come to St. Kilda Beach with us for relaxation, to look at the sea, and picnic. I remember feeding Tiriell from the breast at the beach there. My son Phillippe had a ride on the miniature railway and we all loved the merry-go-round.

I used the merry-go-round a lot for my own self. I loved it, it was nostalgic, so symbolic, so dramatic — a symbol of life. It is lovely to enter a symbol, to become a symbol. That is what I call art. Children dream of a merry-go-round. It is like looking at your own youth.²⁴

As her eldest sons Phillippe and William grew old enough to care about what others thought, they did worry about their mother's uninhibited ways and even bought her a twin-set so that she would be more like an Australian mum rather than an eccentric Frenchwoman who sat with the children on the merry-go-round.

Sometimes European day-trippers were bewildered, amused or annoyed by the restrictions which applied to behaviour on St. Kilda beaches. The Council requested that more police patrol the beach in November 1951 because they feared standards of behaviour were declining. In turn, the police found New Australians guilty of most misdemeanours. The Sergeant in charge reported that on 24 November he warned some Hungarians for kicking soccer balls on the lawns. Behaviour was even worse on the next day, which was very hot:

Persons were warned for their attitude in cuddling reclining girls in bathing suits on the lawns...this form of beach behaviour is not in the best interest of young boys and girls who see what is going on by lustful men and women, who take advantage of a pair of shorts and a brassier (sic) to be as close to each other as possible. New Australians have a habit of indulging in this practice and they are in the majority.

When New Australians are spoken to the Police invariably receive the same reply, "We did not know that you could not do this in Australia, you can in Europe".

As well, he seized three soccer balls from Greeks, Italians and Czechoslovakians despite their excuses that they could play in their own countries on the beaches²⁵. Subsequently, the *Argus* of 3 December 1951 reported that an all-out morals war had been launched at St. Kilda beach to return the place to decency, that police had warned nearly one hundred people about their behaviour and that seventy per cent of the people they had to speak to were New Australians. In response, W. H. Greaves advised that St. Kilda would not wage

a "letter of the law" bathing dress blitz or enforce By-law 112, which prohibited people leaving the beach without being covered from shoulders to hips, and stated that: "We do not discriminate between old and new Australians. Our beach is open to all nationalities".²⁶

Other annoying restrictions applied to shopping hours. Many missed the animation of market places and streets they had known in Europe where they not only shopped, but met friends; where they could gossip and argue, and eat and drink together indoors and outdoors; and where they could read newspapers, smoke, sip coffee and drink wine every day of the week. While Victorian liquor laws which prescribed the closure of hotels at 6 p.m. from Monday to Saturday seemed uncivilised, restrictive shopping hours were plainly inconvenient, particularly if migrants had more than one job, worked in shifts, or regarded Saturday as their Sabbath. There was simply no time to shop: in Barkly Street and Acland Streets in 1951, for instance, there were forty-seven shops but the eight grocers closed at 5.30 p.m. on weekdays, 12.00 p.m. and Saturdays and did not open on Sundays; and the eight butchers were open until 5 p.m. on weekdays. In response to demand, a number of businesses remained open longer than the law prescribed. However prosecutions followed complaints from the Melbourne and Metropolitan Fruiterers Association, and rival traders, including S. Goldfine of the Middlesex Kosher Grocery and Delicatessen at 140 Acland Street, who reported that Sincere & Company Delicatessen in Acland Street sold sausages, two of the seven cake shops in Acland Street sold groceries, and Giller's Continental Grocery at 143 Acland Street sold groceries and sausages on Sundays²⁷. Despite such setbacks, rebellious shopkeepers tried to respond to customers' demands for greater flexibility, and authorities often turned a blind eye to breaches of the law.

Many Europeans longed for cafes where they could relax comfortably and eat food other than the fried steak, fried eggs, fried onions, beetroot, lettuce, tomato sauce, white bread and butter, and tea, which many Australians seemed to favour. Hence, new cafes opened in St. Kilda which offered alternatives to the normal fare, and cooked the food Europeans missed. Leo Mastrototara, who had lived in Australia since 1928 and was interned during the war, established a cafe with laminex tables and about twenty-three chairs, called *Leo's*, in Fitzroy Street in 1956. His Spaghetti Bolognese and Cotolette Milanese became a favourite with the visiting Italian Olympic team, even though many Australians avoided the cafe with its "greasy wog food" and looked for a cafe with fried chops.

Another new café called *Scheherazade* opened at 99 Acland Street in 1958. It was established by Masha and Avram Zeleznikow, who, respectively, had studied medicine, and taught in Poland before the war. She was in Siberia and Southern Russia during the war with other Jews, while Avram fought with the Jewish resistance until the Vilna ghetto was destroyed. They met in 1945 and came to Melbourne in 1951, living poorly in Brunswick, and taking many different jobs before they borrowed enough money to move to St. Kilda in 1958. They turned O'Shea's milkbar into a restaurant named after a Persian Queen, redecorating it with bright wall-paper of Toulouse-Lautrec illustrations, black and white marbled laminex tables and orange chairs. As well as offering the usual mixed grills or omelettes Australians preferred, the Zeleznikow's first menu listed "Tasty Quick Snacks" including Roll-mops, yoghurt, and frankfurts and potato salad; "Dinner" including Goulash, Russian Cutlet and Calves' Liver; Italian Cassata, Gelati and Tartufo; and Capuccino, Espresso and Vienna Coffee. About forty single Jewish men who had lost their families during the war became the first regular customers, eating Masha Zeleznikow's dishes of chopped chicken liver, Winches, calf's foot jelly, gefilte fish, and chulent. However, when orders for T-Bone steak reached the kitchen, Masha knew it would be from Australians who were usually excellent customers from a cook's point of view, because they rarely complained.²⁸

Gradually more and more Australians would begin to be more adventurous. Some of Masha's customers would even try her latkes when they found out they were potato cakes, and they also began to explore other possibilities beyond food, for in the longer term, the new European actors in St. Kilda would make locals who had lived there longer assess their own identity more closely, and modify elements of their own behaviour again, for Australians are very clever mimics. However, the cosmopolitan face St. Kilda was presenting in the 1950s, also repelled other native mime artists who sought the standard suburban comforts of similar streets and spurned St. Kilda's variety.

III. OUT OF STEP

The self-satisfied impressions of St. Kilda which Councillors displayed were not shared by everyone. St. Kilda's reputation was sinking fast. Hal Porter, the novelist, likened its most famous hotel,

and the city itself, to a sinking ship in his autobiographical work *The Paper Chase*. He described his brief stint as the assistant manager of the George Hotel in 1949, undertaken with "not an inkling how the intricate machinery of a hotel, famous since the eighteen-seventies, works". Porter soon understood why the George was known affectionately in hotel circles as "Wimpole's circus" when he saw that the manager, Frederick Wimpole, and the permanent guests, who were mainly elderly women, lived as if two world wars had not occurred. The Wimpoles dined "in pre-*Titanic* solitude, Edwardianly, sacrosanct as royalty, at a table at the head of the dining-room", and the permanent upstairs guests took tiffin as they had done all century, and demanded the lavish table and hierarchic quality of service to which they were accustomed. Nonetheless, in Porter's view the hotel was "the *Titanic* that missed the iceberg", shabby and patched, its linen darned, and its store-rooms filled with cruets, Venetian glass finger-bowls, bouillon cups, gas shades, coal-scuttles, candlesticks, marble clocks, cut glass water carafes, chamber-pots, and washstand sets. As well, the hotel had coming-and-going guests as lively as the cockroaches behind every *bain marie* in the kitchen, a shady clientele who frequented the garish bars, and in the kitchen, a little Europe of a dozen or so men in whom seethed eight national animosities. For Porter, a hundred one-act plays a day kept him agog. In retrospect he judged that the hotel reflected what St. Kilda had become:

St Kilda, once a fashionable and grandiose seaside suburb, a sort of Aussie Cannes with a better beach, has become tawdry, its One-guinea waves now cheap at a penny. Its mansions along the Esplanade — Belgian Gothic, Greek Revival, Florentine Renaissance, Moorish, even Spanish Mission — have become boarding-houses, or have been subdivided into flats, flatettes, and hives of bed-sitter cells smelling of gas rings. In 1949, its drain-edges, and front steps, and the stairways descending to the beach zigzag through lawns and palms and gazania-covered rockeries, are still painted with blackout white, and the suburb has become a postwar working-class playground providing all the shoddy and instant pleasures the working-class go in for — a Luna Park, a Palais de Danse, a skating rink, fish-and-chip shops, hamburger shops, ice-cream kiosks, soft-drink stalls, pie-and-tea restaurants, milk bars, penny-in-the-slot machines. In the back streets, blocks away from the sea, are the houses of rag-trade Jews and fish-shop Greeks and fruit-shop Italians. Nearer the sea are several night-clubs haunted by car salesmen, petty criminals, Albanians and their factory-hand pick-ups, confidence men and their moles.

When the wind flings the seagulls about like handbills, and the sea is frothing at the mouth and ejecting corks from fishermen's nets, and rotten oranges from P. and O. liners on to the beach, the spivs and

gamblers and pickpockets make for the bars. The bars include those of the George Hotel.²⁹

To other observers, St. Kilda was like an old trouper, creaking at the joints, who had performed far too long, then too hard during the war, and now could only rely on seamy routines to attract an unsavoury audience. On the other hand, those with a different view, who loved St. Kilda and still saw great energy and heart there, had fears of their own because Council's old routines were not keeping up with the changing pace of a city which demanded new acts to do justice to its variety.

St. Kilda was well out of step with younger suburbs which displayed the rows of spanking new brick veneer homes and Hill's Hoists clothes-lines many city-dwellers coveted in the 1950s. Melbourne, it was noted in 1952, by Desmond Fennessy in the *Port Phillip Gazette* was "breeding a race of harassed, ulcerated commuters" who left the city daily at five for their "ugly raw suburbs", "each house on its little oblong of land, sans plumbing, sans streets, sans transport, sans everything":

Meanwhile the inner suburbs decay, and to replace these slums the erection of blocks of flats in garden surroundings is frequently mooted. This results invariably in pious raising of hands and cries of horror, for flats are considered in Melbourne to be strangely immoral. The suburban house with its patches of garden fore and aft, and even without plumbing and on some quagmire of an unmade road, is the dream of everyman.³⁰

For those with that dream, old St. Kilda did not offer the homogeneity, privacy, space and newness which outlying suburbs offered. They wanted to fill brand new houses with products like those displayed at the *Modern Times* exhibition at the St. Kilda Town Hall between 27 February and 3 March 1956, which claimed to show "how life can be lived to the full, thanks to the inventive brain and technical achievement of man in this second half of the twentieth century", and displayed Laminex and Formica tables, triple plated chrome chairs, refrigerators, Elna sewing machines, floor polishers, electric mixers, rotary clotheslines, gas hot water systems, Wing Lee Snap Frozen Chinese Food, aluminium windows and rotary clotheslines³¹. And they wanted new houses like those forty-five displayed at the "Parade of Homes" at the Hepburn Estate at the corner of Blackburn and Highbury Roads in March 1959, built of brick veneer and Mount Gambier stone, and offering fibre-glass swimming pools, barbecues, car-ports, and stone garden settings.³²

In the light of such suburban dreams, many observers were

scornful of the opportunities St. Kilda provided, associating it with features

they wished to avoid, such as outdated amusements, traffic jams, decrepit buildings, vice, migrants, tenancy rather than home ownership, the elderly, the single, the divorced and the poor.

Though old attractions still attracted substantial crowds and were enjoyed by new generations, others thought many St. Kilda amusements were old-fashioned and in poor order.

Admittedly, there was still nothing in Melbourne to match Luna Park, and its innocent amusements had great popular appeal in the 1950s. The Phillips Brothers revitalised their creation by importing new machinery and rides, which were available in 1951 after the long interruption to supply caused by the war. A British Ruston-Hornsby diesel generating plant was installed in September 1951 at a cost of £40,000 as a safeguard against further electricity shortages and strikes for according to Garnett Curwen: "without light (and plenty of it) — the Park became less attractive to the Public"³³. Another new imported amusement was the *Rotor* introduced in 1951 which, in Garnett Curwen's words consisted of "a circular drum which, when it revolves, holds patrons in a fixed position by centrifugal force. The attitudes and postures in which the riders find themselves create much hilarity". The hilarity often arose as the Rotor spun because more was revealed than usual of the anatomy of riders, customarily draped in baggy trousers or prim, full dresses. As usual, other new amusements aped contemporary weaponry or foreshadowed future trends: *Bazooka* or *Atom Guns* were introduced in January 1952, which fired rubber balls; and the *Moon Rocket* was introduced in October 1952, with cars set at an angle of forty-five degrees on a circular track. Another winning attraction was the *Blue Train* in April 1953:

...this ride consists of cars with a square base and having on top of this base a quasi-spherical erection in which people sit. This car proceeds on a flat but winding track through passages, in which, due to the movement of the barrel on top of the car and objects placed along the track, many laugh making thrills are given.³⁴

As well as acknowledging Luna Park's preeminence, it was clear that new generations continued to enjoy forms of entertainment which had been established in St. Kilda for years. However some of these very attractions which new generations were enjoying, were falling into disrepair. St. Moritz itself was showing the effects of age and poor ventilation. The Kleiners sold it to Jack Gordon and Ted

Molony in late 1952, but even before their departure, the condition of the building was deteriorating. Wendy Lee Selover recalled:

After several years, the building became very damp. When the weather was hot there was a fog in the rink from the moisture, and some wood was beginning to rot. The Efftee sound-proofing of chicken wire and hessian with sawdust inside still remained in the roof and as the years passed the hessian started to rot and small piles of sawdust fell on the rink. One night an aeroplane fell off the roof.³⁵

Earl's Court had not been as well constructed as the St. Moritz building in the first place, and was in poor condition by 1959 with old furnishings and rubbish on the upper balcony, loose and springy upper floors, and large holes in the lino on the ground floor all testimony to the wear and tear wrought by dancing feet, and was ordered to close until repairs were undertaken³⁶. The Maison de Luxe had already closed down permanently earlier in the 1950s.

The safety, taste and profitability of some features of the "Little Luna Park" fun-fair were also uncertain. The Health Department inspected all the foreshore entertainment sites in 1952, and ordered the provision of safety rails and the rewiring of several rides after Val Langmead of the *Flying Barolas* died on Foster's site when her motorcycle crashed from the *Wall of Death*³⁷. Foster also installed garish waxworks in 1955 which were replaced by sixty slot machines in November 1959 following a complaint from Mrs. R. H. P. Smith of the Principal's House, Scotch College, about the "dark passage with illuminated life-size scenes of revolting tortures on either side, quite unfit for any child to see, and most unwholesome altogether"³⁸. Cr. W. O. J. Phillips' Swirl Building was infested with rats, and in 1952 he complained that the path in front of the building was a mass of rat holes as rats went into the building at night when the doors were open, then burrowed out underneath the footpath.³⁹

Nonetheless, as the smaller operators faltered, larger interests stepped in. The large carnival operators, Green and Thomas, took over Phillips' lease in 1955; and another new leaseholder was Harry Hall-Kenney of MacDonald's Carnival Amusements which bought the merry-go-round in February 1957. MacDonald's Carnival Amusements had the largest carnival plant in Australia dealing in merry-go-rounds, Chairoplanes, Ocean Waves, Miniature Trains, Punch and Judy Sideshows and public address systems. The riding gallery was painted and a new set of laughing clowns was installed on that site, while Hall-Kenny took over the miniature train and Scoota Boats sites as well. Scoota Boats Limited's net profit had fallen

from £511 in 1955 to £228 in 1956, which was a decline proprietors attributed to television in September 1958: "...television is causing this fall away of business and despite all our endeavours St. Kilda is not attracting the crowds it did years ago".⁴⁰

Many customers who used to come to St. Kilda now preferred to stay home and swallow television programmes as passively as the laughing clowns took the balls they had once dropped in them at the St. Kilda funfair. Few bothered with a place like the Galleon when they could see many of the artists who used to perform there on television. It closed in 1956. Its last proprietors were the musicians Al Redding and Roy Lyons, who had formed the company Thurval, named after their wives Thurlie and Val, and had taken over the business in 1953, presenting artists including Jack (Smiler) Doheny, Betty Bertram, Evelyn Wilson and Laurie Wilson.

Even the most substantial businesses faltered because of television. Picture theatres were badly affected, and the Palais was rarely packed unless it featured live artists of the renown of Louis Armstrong, Bob Hope, and Abbott and Costello who all appeared there during the 1950s. The Palais de Danse never fully recovered from its requisition during the war, because it did not reopen until 1953, and the Phillips Brothers had had to spend over £70,000 repairing the Coral Room which was damaged by fire, and replacing its floor which had been ruined by soldiers' hobnail boots and the wheel marks of postal carts.

An era ended too at the Palais and surrounding amusements, in that St. Kilda lost the pioneers who had shaped its face of entertainment. Harold Phillips died in April 1957, then Leon Phillips died in September 1957. Their heiresses overseas sold their share of the Palais to the Australian United Development Company, who held it with the other original shareholders, Emanuel and Alfred Abrahams. Later, Les, Louis and Phillip Hyams, who were related to the Abrahams, bought out the Australian United Development Company; and Maurice Sloman, who had connections with Hoyts and was a friend of Leon Phillips, became Chairman of Directors. Esther Wyatt, the former ticket-seller, still remained as private secretary though, and ensured such transitions were smooth.

Some of the beaches, that other mainstay of popular recreation in St. Kilda, were run-down, because as the funfair declined so did they. The Foreshore Committee had less money for beach cleaning as its revenue from leases shrank. The President of the West St. Kilda Lifesaving and Swimming Club, H. E. Thwaites, noted in 1955 that:

...unless once popular beaches are given a blood transfusion we can only see an added exodus of the younger generation to the more easily accessible surf beaches which are at the present time much more inviting than what Melbourne is providing.⁴¹

Fibre-glass and foam surf boards were introduced in Australia in the late 1950s, and many holiday makers drove away from Melbourne to stay in holiday homes along the coast, or spent weekends in their cars in search of high surf, clean sand and open space, rather than go to West Beach, St. Kilda, for instance, where the shore was dirty. Harold Ellis of 89 Fitzroy Street complained to the Foreshore Committee in 1953 that even during the war years the beachfront was "never so neglected"; and expressed particular concern because "our beloved Queen will be passing this way very soon"⁴². The West St. Kilda Life Saving and Swimming Club also deplored "the dirty, dangerous and uninviting condition of our inner bayside beaches" in July 1955 and described West Beach as littered with debris, mussel shells, sea weed, dead dogs and rats, old tins and broken glass⁴³. The Foreshore Committee also complained to the MMBW in January 1955 about the discharge of oil into West Beach possibly from military garages in Albert Park but no action was taken. The MMBW denied that it was responsible for the removal of seaweed which had accumulated near the drain in April 1955, and attributed the nuisance to the St. Kilda Pier breakwater. After the MMBW's power was extended in 1956, and it was responsible for protecting and improving the metropolitan foreshore between the low and high water marks, it disagreed with the contention of the Foreshore Committee that the Cowderoy Street drain was a major contributor to the filthy condition of the beach.

The Baths had declined to such an extent that Council found them unmanageable. Repairs were undertaken in 1949 after a boy was caught in the pickets and drowned, and swimmers were injured by falling concrete as sections of the walls collapsed because of the corrosion by sea water of the reinforcing steel. A month later the Baths were closed after the timber sections collapsed. Having expended £104,320 in twenty-one years and received rentals of £43,134, the Council asked the Minister of Public Works and Lands to take over the Baths in April 1951, but their request was refused. When their lease expired on 31 May 1953, the Council did not renew it and the property reverted to the Crown. The Government granted a lease to a private consortium in September 1953, but no work was under-

taken and the Baths were derelict by October 1954 as the *Herald* of 21 October 1954 noted:

Seas have almost battered away the sides of the shark barricades. The fourth boundary is a concrete wall which is falling into ruins..Plaster is falling from the walls and the high-diving tower has collapsed. Shops which have done a brisk trade near the baths selling ice-cream, soft drinks and hot water now close on off days.

A *Herald* Special correspondent, John Keating, noted that Melbourne had "looked on unmoved while a unique institution decays before its eyes". He mourned the loss of the Baths which had provided men with an "atmosphere of democratic companionship" where they had enjoyed the old-established privilege of nudity and where they "could read, or play cards, practise water-polo or gymnastics — or merely natter, as they pleased"". Council sold its interest in the structure in August 1955 to Nathan Splatt and N. Baron of South Pacific Holdings and in September 1955, the Department of Crown Lands and Survey leased the Baths to this company which proposed to restore the women's baths, the hot-sea baths, the cafe, build a still water pool and remove the remains of the men's baths. They opened the pool in October 1956.

Many who did not live in St. Kilda, associated it with the unpleasant traffic jams they experienced there as they drove though on the way to work in the Central Business District. The situation at the notorious St. Kilda Junction became farcical in 1955 because Council and the State Government differed about their relative responsibilities.

The farce began when the Country Roads Board experimented by installing a temporary roundabout at the Junction in April 1955 of low yellow and black striped island barriers, small circular signs with black arrows, and sandbags and timber marked traffic lanes. It was an immediate success, for, as the *Herald* of 19 April reported, on the day of its opening, peak traffic flowed through much more quickly and there was only one accident "when two cars driven by New Australians collided". However the makeshift roundabout was soon damaged, with the timber marking the traffic lanes splintered and flattened, and the sandbags burst but neither the State Government nor the St. Kilda City Council would finance its repair. The *Argus* of 6 January 1956 labelled the problem "Merry-go-round Breakdown", and the *Age* claimed it showed "the folly of allowing divided control of traffic policy, planning and engineering".

Although the Minister for Public Works, Sir Thomas Maltby, refused Council demands for additional funds, he announced that the dispute strengthened the Government's resolve to create an overall traffic authority which would "stop fiddling" with traffic problems⁴⁵. In defiant exasperation, the Council removed the roundabout in February 1956 and further traffic chaos ensued. Some motorists observed the roundabout code, others drove straight through, and pedestrians and tram travellers were caught in the traffic tangle. The *Sun* of 22 February 1956 deplored "Luna Park civics", while the *Argus* demanded: "Put it back, Mr. Bolte". Bolte directed the CRB to restore the roundabout on 23 February 1956 and he was praised by the press as the "top-of Bourke-street action man", but to his displeasure the Mayor of St. Kilda, Cr. J. L. Darbyshire, said: "We called their bluff and won"⁴⁶. Subsequently, pre-cast concrete kerbs were positioned in March 1956 but no traffic lights or signs were placed and the Government refused to expend anything else. The structure was soon labelled a paddling pool because it was undrained. The roundabout was described as "a filthy pile of split sandbags, smashed bottles, rocks and scraps of tin and wire" by October 1956⁴⁷, and it was in such a disgraceful condition the St. Kilda Boy Scouts volunteered to clean it prior to the Olympic Games.

The Junction still remained a motorist's nightmare, but at least the dispute hastened the introduction of the Road Traffic Bill in April 1956 which established a Commission to establish a uniform traffic code and delineate the financial responsibility of respective authorities. The Traffic Commission enforced regulations from January 1958 that no major traffic control item could be erected without its approval. It gave authority to existing traffic signals which, prior to that time, had no legal significance, and removed or altered signs which did not comply with standards. Subsequently, the four existing pedestrian crossings in the municipality on the Lower Esplanade, Marine Parade, Bluff Road and Ormond Esplanade were fitted with flashing amber lights.

The popularity of the motor-car also led to the loss of one of the municipality's most familiar institutions, the St. Kilda-Brighton Electric Street Railway, despite the protests of many residents. The roadway and tracks had fallen into a state of disrepair and the service was truncated by 1955 when the Brighton Council agreed to the substitution of buses from St. Kilda Street to Head Street. By 1958, the Minister for Transport, Sir Arthur Warner, announced that the

service between St. Kilda Railway Station and Head Street would also *be* discontinued and replaced with privately owned buses because of losses of £45,000 per annum. Council claimed that the *St. Kilda and Brighton Electric Railway Act*(1904), the *Extension Act*(1905), and indentures between St. Kilda City Council and the government of the day, implied that the service would be conducted at all times, which Warner denied:

No Government could take on the the obligation of guaranteeing to run a service continuously. You will appreciate that if this had been done in the days of Cobb's Coaches, absurdities might well have continued even into the present day...in fifty years time the trams, buses and motor cars may all be obsolete so that a guarantee by the Government of a continuous form of service is impossible and it has never been done.⁴⁸

Protests from the public, the Elwood and Balaclava Traders' Associations, and the St. Kilda City Council were ineffectual, and the *St. Kilda and Brighton Electric Street Railway (Dismantling) Act* of December 1958 legitimised the government's decision. The last tram was given an emotional farewell. More than two hundred people jammed into it, and few of the waiting crowd at St. Kilda Station, of more than one hundred and fifty people, were able to board it when it arrived there. On its final journey to Elwood from the Station, it was followed by a crowd of about five hundred people in cars, and greeted by about a thousand more at the Elwood depot, who stripped it of its old bells, bell cords, notices, rear vision mirrors and other fittings⁴⁹. The Melbourne-Brighton Bus Line Company, which operated a fleet of thirty-eight green buses, built an office block and depot on the section of Elsternwick Park used formerly as the Victorian Railways tram sheds; and the Government paid Council £199,000 as its share of the cost of ripping up the railway line and remaking the roads. The loss of the unique line meant there were even more cars on local roads after the last tram ran on 28 February 1959.

St. Kilda also seemed out of step with the creeds of respectability, clean-living, decent family life, caution and conformity which prevailed in the 1950s. St. Kilda was a city to be chastised, and a city now paying for past sins. It had played too hard during the war, and was now spent and notorious as the place where rules were broken. It housed deviant elements, non-conformists and lawbreakers, thus was condemned by those who regarded themselves as law abiding and decent, and by those who repressed or denied the sense of excitement which unsanctioned behaviour aroused in them. If Mel-

bourne had to be more restrained during the 1950s to make up for the excesses sanctioned in war-time, then St. Kilda was still not conforming.

Prostitution was an abhorrent subject when decent family life was so important and women were being expected to reassume roles which, supposedly, war had interrupted. Such deviance was particularly inexcusable when these roles were so clear. After all, the single woman's most important quest was the search for an upright man as American musicals like *Annie Get Your Gun*, *South Pacific*, *Carousel* and *Oklahoma* showed. Television imprinted more images of the glamour and allure necessary to trap him, and crowds gathered every year at St. Kilda Beach to watch single girls parade on the beach in the State final of the *Sun* Beach Girl Competition for prizes including £250, Jantzen swimsuits, and "Hickory wardrobe", and set standards of feminine beauty.

Once a husband was found, it was a woman's duty to obey him as her provider, and assume complete responsibility in nurturing the children and keeping the house, gaining handy advice in the press, including the column in the local paper called *Steady For The Girls*, which included useful hints about how wives could remove the shine from men's suits, how they could avoid peg marks in their jumpers and how they could playfully pull the wool over their husband's eyes with left over cooker?. It was said a woman lost nothing but gained everything in sacrificing paid employment to assume this role for the hand that rocked the cradle ruled the world, and the scandalous appearance of boddies and widgies was clearly attributable to maternal neglect.

Yet, despite such clear guidelines for women, the wicked behaviour of female prostitutes continued. Their work mocked and mirrored the contemporary vision of women's place in society, and touched such raw nerves that St. Kilda was damned because they were visible there. Councillors preferred to be discreet about the embarrassing problem, and as a consequence its incidence in St. Kilda increased during the 1950s. They distrusted those whom they believed used the issue to their own political advantage to the detriment of St. Kilda's reputation, knowing any publicity seeker could always gain press attention whenever the subject was publicly raised. They believed that, in 1949, St. Kilda had received most unwelcome national publicity when Jim Duggan campaigned on the issue of St. Kilda's image in his unsuccessful efforts to gain a seat on Council. Duggan, a self professed Catholic who worked in the hat

department of the Myer emporium and was the Senior Vice-President of the St. Kilda Branch of the ALP, decided to oppose Cr. John Talbot, who worked in a more senior position at the same emporium and was a member of the Liberal Party, on the issue of St. Kilda's image. He made "Clean up St. Kilda" his main campaign theme after a most unfavourable article appeared in *Truth* on 18 June 1949. St. Kilda was described as "the haunt of harpies, hooligans, drunks and perverts, to say nothing of teenagers who are willing converts to the vicious lawlessness that thrives there". The lead story also claimed that anyone walking along Fitzroy Street was in danger of being "accosted by women of easy virtue or to become the butt of suggestive banter by homo-sexuals", and that Acland Street attracted "the dross of Melbourne" and was becoming the "spawning ground for crime and mob violence".

Sitting Councillors called the article widely exaggerated. However, other residents evidently did not think it was because there was a large attendance at the citizen's protest meeting called soon after by the St. Kilda Branch of the ALP at the Town Hall to address the problems raised by *Truth* and take some action. There, Duggan claimed that St. Kilda, which had once been the show place of Victoria, had fallen into disrepute and that its main streets were recognised as the stamping ground of Melbourne's underworld:

To walk along Fitzroy Street where once local residents were pleased to walk with their wives and families at night is to be accosted by prostitutes to say nothing of the thieves, rogues and bash-men who accompany them.⁵¹

In the ensuing campaign, which the *Australasian Post* of 18 August 1949 extravagantly described as "perhaps the first Australian election to be fought largely on the issue of prostitution", Talbot refused to comment on the issue of St. Kilda's reputation. His supporters claimed that it was a political stunt which placed the municipality in an unfavorable light; that it was not a proper subject for public debate; and that it did not concern "the 56,000 law abiding citizens who rise at 7 a.m. and retire at 10 p.m."⁵². Talbot was reelected, though Duggan would eventually gain office after five unsuccessful attempts when he replaced W. O. J. Phillips as Councillor for North Ward in 1957.

In the meantime, prostitutes kept working. Some attracted considerable attention in the daily press, which was, as ever, intrigued with crime and deviant behaviour. One of the most well-known St. Kilda prostitutes during the 1940s and early 1950s was Jean

Beaumont, who was dubbed "the Queen of Vice" by the papers. She became notorious in 1945 when she confessed to the man-slaughter of the convicted criminal, Jack Varney in their home near the Junction after he had beaten her, and was involved in a fight with two other prostitutes in St. Kilda Road in 1952, when her face was slashed with a knife. She died of cancer in 1958 in squalid dwellings in Pakington Street where she lived as a recluse after 1955. Amongst other well-known prostitutes connected with criminals in St. Kilda's underworld enclave was Pretty Dulcie Markham, who was married to Redda Lewis, the hit man who eventually died on his door-step from a shot-gun blast.

With his surgery conveniently located in Grey Street, Dr. Shnookal often treated prostitutes. He concluded from the small survey he took in 1950 of a group of twenty-seven prostitutes operating in St. Kilda that most of that particular sample were lesbians. They were very good patients as far as he was concerned for they gave clear medical histories, complied with prescribed treatments and always paid their bills.⁵³

Council maintained its reticence about lawlessness in St. Kilda throughout the 1950s and generally confined any comments to correspondence with the police requesting an increase in patrols, or thanking them for undertaking specific campaigns. Such a campaign occurred from January to March in 1950, when the police conducted a blitz resulting in four hundred arrests in St. Kilda, mostly in Fitzroy Street, Barkly Street, and in Acland Street or the Village Belle where one hundred and fifteen were made. The Town Clerk expressed Council's gratitude to the Chief Commissioner of Police after Sergeant Guider reported a marked improvement in Acland Street:

A well known criminal, who is now in prison, and who was suspected of endeavouring to intimidate a café proprietor near Village Belle, was no doubt the cause of much window breaking in that vicinity. The café windows have been repaired and there is also improvement in that locality.⁵⁴

Such a routine by Council and police continued at regular intervals throughout the decade, but the incidence of crime did not diminish. The registers at the St. Kilda Court of Petty Sessions recorded increasing numbers of convictions for unlawful possession of weapons, housebreaking implements and stolen goods, housebreaking, shopbreaking and larceny throughout the 1950s.

Any social deviance whatsoever aroused exaggerated fears in the 1950s. Boddies and widdies began to congregate at Luna Park in the early 1950s jiving in the Giggle Palace to music replayed there from the merry-go-round inside Luna Park. In his novel *A Bunch of Rathags*, William Dick described how boys from "Goodway" (or Footscray) first decided to become boddies themselves when they meet an old mate at Luna Park, who had returned from Sydney and told them their "short-back-and-sides-with-a-part-please" haircuts looked like "the rough end of a pineapple", then introduced them to Ricky from King's Cross:

A big tall thick-set good-looking bloke with a smile on his face, dressed in blue jeans rolled up half-mast, a pair of white sandshoes, a coloured zip-front bright tartan shirt and a navy blue cardigan with white buttons, white bands down the front and two white bands an inch wide and an inch apart around the left arm at muscle height, walked towards us with a doll trailing behind him.⁵⁵

By mid 1952, St. Kilda was Melbourne's most popular rendez-vous for boddies and widdies as far as *Truth* newspaper was concerned. The cult was described as anti-social and a potential teenage college of crime, attracting "convicted car thieves, bashers, street girls, dupes and perverts". An officer from the C.I.B. reportedly said:

The thing started as what seemed like an innocent youth craze. The teenagers got around St. Kilda streets in blue jeans with boddie and widge hair-dos and didn't do much harm.

They seemed more interested in milk-shakes and nut sundaes than liquor, and behaved like a collection of jazz-happy exhibitionists. But now we believe the cult is being fifth-columned by much more sinister influences...

Truth concluded that boddies, widdies and sharpies in St. Kilda frequented sly-grog houses, were acquainted with notorious members of Melbourne's underworld, and induced young girls to engage in immoral and degrading practices, drink and delinquency. It interviewed two men, one of whom was convicted for car theft, and a woman, convicted of prostitution, in June 1952, who had arrived in St. Kilda from King's Cross in 1949, a location which they described as far more advanced than anywhere in Melbourne:

Some of the boys and girls are tropical (wanted by the police) but they're only boddies, widdies or sharpies because its a way for young people to get together and have a bit of fun...We call ourselves sharpies because our clothes are a bit more expensive and we're a bit more worldly than some of the others...There are a lot of peasants (anti-boddies) in Melbourne who say nasty things about us, and of course, squares like you believe it.⁵⁶

A number of St. Kilda cafes were commonly regarded as outlets for sly-grog in the early 1950s. The most notorious was the South St. Kilda Café at 216 Acland Street, described as "the habitat of downtown types and New Australians". The manager was jailed for six months in October 1951 for selling liquor without a licence, and the same cafe was declared a place where liquor was sold in June 1952 after police saw bottles being taken from the cafe, and found others under floors, on the roof, up the chimney, and in the kitchen stove. The judge, Mr. Justice Smith described cafe customers as "men and women of criminal type, seamen from visiting merchant ships and New Australian"⁵⁷

The police were particularly concerned too, about the the appearance of a drug they called "marihuana" which they described as filtering into Melbourne in early 1952, and being a particular favourite of musicians, who smoked "reefers", as well as being a feature of "fashionable parties, bohemian artist groups, and at licentious parties in hillside homes" in Melbourne⁵⁸. Its distribution, and that of opium, morphia and cocaine, was linked with sly-grog outlets, and a new Victorian Drug Bureau led by Sergeant Delaney was established to stamp out illicit drug dealing in November 1952.

Some vicious criminals were imbued with Cagney-like style in the imagination of the public as numerous killings followed mobsters' attempts to control the widespread network of illegal gambling, sly-grog and protection rackets which flourished in Melbourne. Freddie Harrison of St. Kilda was regarded as the czar of the underworld following numerous shooting incidents with which he and his sidekick, Norman Bradshaw, were connected. Bradshaw was often seen frequenting St. Kilda cafes and the Galleon, and had been fined £25 in January 1949 for carrying liquor to the South St. Kilda Cafe. Both Harrison and Bradshaw were acquitted of charges of wounding John Francis Gilligan and Robert Brewster with a tommy-gun fired from a car near the M.C.G. in 1949; and their names were linked with the shooting of Percy (Tiny) Neville, an Sydney extortionist who was shot in the back outside a baccarat school at the corner of Elizabeth Street and Flinders Lane in April 1951 from a car containing two men, a woman and a .22 rifle⁵⁹. Harrison was widely believed to be in control of the standover rackets in Melbourne by 1956 when he married Beryl Holland of St. Kilda. After a prison term in 1957 he worked as a ship painter and docker, having been charged with fifty-four offences in the past fifteen years. He died on 13 South Wharf in February 1958 from a shot-gun blast to the right side of his neck. Police estimated

that at least thirty people witnessed the crime, but they were unable to lay charges, finding that inordinate numbers of potential witnesses had been looking elsewhere or had been in the lavatory at the time of the shooting. Bradshaw, who was a reluctant pall-bearer at Harrison's funeral (attended mainly by police and reporters) then became a pimp, and was scornfully called the "Chauffeur" prior to his death in a plane accident in 1961 over Port Phillip Bay.⁶⁰

In the inhibited 1950s then, when conformity, respectability and conservatism were dominant creeds, the idea of St. Kilda's notoriety spread like wildfire. The question of whether its reputation was exaggerated or not was less relevant to St. Kilda than the fact that once the idea took hold in the public mind, it would remain, whatever its basis in truth; and that reputation, in turn, would attract more seekers and purveyors of illicit pleasures there. It was useful too, for residents of other suburbs who thought themselves scrupulous, if the name of St. Kilda became a synonym for vice, and a convenient symbol of what respectable Melbournians did not define themselves as being, for it could enable those who condemned evil there to deny any impurity in themselves. Furthermore, if there was a common belief that prostitution would never be eradicated, and was as necessary in peace as it had been in war, then it would be just as well if it remained in unambiguously defined parts of old Melbourne where it was already known to exist, thereby shielding nice suburbs from the nuisance of immediate proximity to a business which was still conveniently accessible to them.

Saddled with such a reputation, St. Kilda was out of step in another way as well. Just as the 1950s was a terrible decade for any person to be poor, so too was it an unfortunate decade for any city to appear to be slipping back in social status or seem to be out of step with the progress which was occurring. Council did not want to admit this was happening in St. Kilda, nor were the State Government or Federal Governments particularly interested in providing welfare assistance to any needy groups, or giving much thought to decaying cities out of kilter with the prevailing mood of hope and progress. Hence, governing authorities were simply not attuned to St. Kilda's needs as it accommodated more and more transient poorer people in cheaper accommodation, and fewer home owners.

Despite the social changes occurring in St. Kilda, Councillors clung to a conception of their role and of St. Kilda itself, as if their city were the prestigious St. Kilda of yore. Enough traces of its former

glory remained for them to see the elements of influence and wealth they wanted to see, for many comfortably settled, well-to-do property owners still lived there. Hence, when the Elwood Branch of the Ratepayers and Owners' Association of Victoria under the Presidency of E. R. Turnbull of 4 Los Angeles Court argued in 1954, for instance, that Councillors "should confine themselves to their main function of health and sanitation, and cut out the frills and furbelows" Councillors agreed, but the "frills and furbelows" were not morning tea for the Queen Mother, but social services for the poor. Councillors believed that those residents who could not help themselves were not ratepayers anyway and did not deserve any particular consideration from Council or additional services. Council may have been right to condemn Governments for foisting obligations on them which were "national in character" such as social, educational, recreational and health services, without providing funds but this disclaimer did little for those it did not want to see in St. Kilda, like the poor, the old, the divorced, or the transient tenant, when other authorities were overlooking them as well.

Council adamantly refused to provide a library because of the expense involved, and because it did not believe the service was necessary. Though a St. Kilda Library Promotion Committee was formed on 23 April 1953 with R. S. Veale as President, and Mrs. Elizabeth Hogg, a teacher living in Carlisle Street, as Secretary, Council rejected its arguments. It was outraged when disrespectful protest signs about lack of library facilities were daubed at the Balaclava Station in 1956, and demanded reassurances from the Promotion Committee that it was not involved. The Town Clerk also prepared long reports which showed conclusively that a library would be an unwarranted administrative and financial burden; and even the centenary booklet contained arguments against it:

...such a venture should not properly be a matter for the expenditure of municipal funds which are provided by property owners only. It would cost thousands of pounds per year to operate and, generally speaking, would provide mostly books of fiction and thus come into active competition with a large number of Lending Library businesses established in St. Kilda and providing excellent service to meet the public's requirements at reasonable rates"⁶¹

The plight of many elderly people was often overlooked. Some who had lived in St. Kilda for many years were displaced when redevelopment occurred, and had nowhere to go. Often they were asked to

leave at short notice as a friend of an single, elderly woman explained to the Town Clerk in 1955:

She is, and has been for the past eighteen years, living in part of an old house 364A Carlisle Street East St. Kilda and has received a letter from a solicitor to say she must be out of there, within three weeks (It is now nearer two weeks) or be evicted. She is a very sick woman, unable to look for *new* quarters, not bed ridden but in and out of hospital all the time. She has quite a small income and some furniture.⁶²

Mr Greaves responded that Council was not "in a position to find accommodation for cases such as this". Nor, it seemed was there any other source of help for such old people, apart from the good offices of friends if they were lucky enough to have them.

Many women struggled to keep their families because the reality of their situation was not admitted. There was often a gap between families' experience and the ideal of family life in the 1950s. In fact, more women were working and the divorce rate was increasing, as J. P. Bourke pointed out in his maiden speech to Parliament in 1952 when he said the courts were unable to cope with "a queue of people seeking relief from their matrimonial bonds"⁶³. Many households in St. Kilda depended for survival on the paid labour of the mother as they always had done. Luckily for them, employers' attempts to reduce the basic female wage to sixty per cent of the male wage failed in 1952 after various women's organisations, including the St. Kilda branch of the Housewives Association, organised by Rose Josephson and the League of Women Voters of Victoria under the Presidency of Julia Rapke, had backed Gladys Hain, President of the Housewives' Association, when she briefed Joan Rosanove to present the women's hours and wages case before the Commonwealth Arbitration Court in 1952. Women rejoiced when the Arbitration Court retained the female wage at seventy five per cent that of men's as the victory made a difference for families struggling to make ends meet.

The idea of providing child-care facilities in St. Kilda was simply not countenanced by Council which saw no further than the provision of infant welfare centres and thought it wrong for mothers to seek paid employment rather than look after their children, though such a choice did not exist for many families in St. Kilda. Although the Infant Welfare Centre, named in honour of Burnett Gray, which opened in 1950 on the Broadway, was a boon to young mothers in Elwood, many others who urgently required somewhere safe to leave their toddlers while they worked in paid employment, had no choice but to make private arrangements. Hence, children had to left at

private businesses like the *Happy Day Nursery* established at 12 Beach Avenue, Elwood in 1955. There, Sister Ruby Carr supervised up to sixteen children per day, ranging from small babies to five and a half year olds. She charged working mothers £2-10-0 per week and casuals 2/- per hour but she had to turn many away.

Kindergartens were inadequately funded, their neglect exposing another gap between the ideal of rearing children and the facilities provided for them. The only subsidised kindergarten in the municipality was the Free Kindergarten of St. Kilda and Balaclava at 23 Nelson Street which was one of the largest in the State. It enrolled about seventy children but there were hundreds on the list. Ruth Whitelaw, the Director, described the kindergarten in 1953 as being in a desperate financial state and categorised twenty of her children as being in poor health: of those, fourteen lived in apartments or flats and had no play area but the street."

Council expected volunteers and local charities to assist the poor as much as they had done in the past, and different volunteers displayed great initiative and altruism in their service to the community. Betty Talbot, for instance, devoted her time to the establishment and organisation of the Cora Graves Elderly Persons' Recreational Centre in Blessington Street in 1956, but as the wife of a Councillor, she received no payment for her service. Every day, she supervised volunteer workers there to serve about seventy-five hot mid-day meals for two shillings per head to St. Kilda residents over sixty years old who could also use the Centre's hot baths, free lending library, reading rooms, radio and games. Betty Day, was another prominent volunteer at the centre, promoting concerts, community singing and various entertainments. Another driving force was Mrs. Olive Johnston, who had founded the St. Kilda Boys' Club in her home at 73 Argyle Street in late 1947. She occupied new headquarters provided by Council at Frampton Street in 1955, when the club was renamed the St. Kilda Police and Citizens' Youth Club, and offered excursions, training and entertainment for youths. Members of the St. Kilda Welfare Organisation, led by Geoff Westbrook, also did a sterling job as they aimed to guarantee a reasonable standard of living for cases of distress by finding them accommodation; paying rent; organising holidays for children; finding hospital accommodation; and supplying groceries, meat, milk, groceries and firewood. The Organisation was largely self-supporting through its own fundraising activity, but found it more and more difficult to finance its own work as the decade progressed and demands increased.

However, the sections of the community who had performed voluntary work in the past in St. Kilda were declining in the 1950s. Though some still remained, many of the very wealthy families, to whom involvement in charity work had been second nature, had moved well before the war, whilst the numbers of middle-class residents who saw it as an important duty were also dwindling. While the numbers of residents with the means, time and inclination to render such service was declining though, the numbers of needy people in St. Kilda were increasing. The reluctance of any government to bridge this gap spelt trouble in St. Kilda, and overtaxed those who were willing to give freely of their time to help.

Clearly, St. Kilda was out of step in a decade when conformity was valued. Those, with suburban aspirations, who sought predictability and homogeneity, did not see such characteristics in St. Kilda, even though they too could still be found there in certain streets. Most were confounded by the variety of St. Kilda which was both redolent of the past with its crumbling mansions and old-fashioned amusements, yet lively in the newness of its migrant population or transient tenants; which contained both human relics of the nineteenth century who still demanded deference, and the poor who sought charity; which was both as respectable as some of the citizenry of Elwood who signed petitions and joined Progress Associations, and as notorious as some of the shady criminals who lurked in hotels and dark streets.

For many who were baffled by St. Kilda, it was simply easier to emphasise the seamy side, and judge it to be a place which they would do well to avoid living in, for they were urban dwellers yet they sought new urban frontiers as unsullied as they imagined the bush to be, not dark and decrepit like their imagined St. Kilda side of a city.

Unfortunately too, in a metropolis as new as Melbourne, there was little sense that much of its older face was worth preserving in the 1950s, and the public sense of its history was so undeveloped that many were scarcely even aware that the very St. Kilda streets they spurned were too grand for the bourgeois one hundred years before. Little wonder then, when much of old St. Kilda was wrecked in the following years, few demurred when block after block of new box-like brick flats, all looking the same, replaced run-down old places no one knew much about.

CHAPTER SIX

SEA 1960-1973

I. St. Kilda at a low ebb - Much of old St. Kilda wrecked as new flats are built - Reduction of residential amenity because of cars - Ruinous state of parts of the foreshore - Transient population provided with few community services - St. Kilda's reputation the only brake to profit in real estate - St. Kilda loses football club prior to its greatest victory

II. A sea of dissent - Vietnam - Youthful rebellion - Dr. Wainer - Germaine Greer - St. Kilda a hothouse of artistic expression

III. Residents crash through Council resistance to win a library - Council inertia seems to end - Tourism - Welfare - Environmental issues - Appeal of Gough Whitlam to St. Kilda voters.

I. EBB TIDE

The receding tide in St. Kilda's fortunes had not turned in the 1950s, and St. Kilda seemed less than it had been after wreckers careered through the city in the 1960s. Developers were given a green light after minimum site areas for flats and open spaces surrounding them had been reduced in 1959. In addition, the *Transfer of Land (Statum Estates) Act* (1960) permitted division of buildings into separate units by a plan of subdivision, and the transfer of the title to land in and around them to a service company; and the *Strata Titles Act* (1967) provided for the conversion of existing building schemes into strata subdivisions.

Investors sniffed great opportunities to profit from property development in St. Kilda as Melbourne flourished on the back of the Australian mineral boom. High-rise offices sprang up in St. Kilda Road, and St. Kilda City Council permitted the lowest standards possible in Melbourne in the construction of rental accommodation. The proportion of self-contained dwellings in St. Kilda which were flats increased from nearly half in 1961 to three-quarters by 1971, and allowed net residential densities of over one hundred persons per acre.

Familiar landmarks were wrecked to make way for this change. Flatman's Timber Yard, for instance, with its high chimney, on three and a half acres between Inkerman, Marriott and Argyle Streets, owned by the Flatman Family since the nineteenth century, was razed to the ground in April 1960. Many old mansions, once glorious,

were demolished and replaced with two or three storey box-like brick flats, without a trace of thoughtful design, set in concrete parking lots, and duplicated again and again and again. Large estates were carved up: Caenwood mansion, for instance, close to the corner of John and Tennyson Streets in Elwood, owned by Captain Howard Smith in the 1860s, was demolished in 1965; and Caenwood Estate of two acres was subdivided to form Greig Court, where nine lots were auctioned in July 1966.

St. Kilda City Council believed flats were the only way to develop highly priced inner suburban land economically, and that the Municipality benefitted from increased rate revenue as improved values increased. They did not share the view of more particular Councils such as Malvern, which controlled flat building more strictly to prevent low to average quality flats from affecting the status of the neighbourhood, exacerbating parking problems and overloading community services. Nor did they copy neighbouring Prahran, which curbed construction in certain areas, and imposed stricter height limits in 1962. Furthermore, the St. Kilda City Engineer, Maurice Moran, did not see the need for planning schemes, and stated in 1963 that they were "more applicable to areas of new development than built-up areas like St. Kilda".¹

Such a laissez-faire attitude on the part of Council was commended by real estate agents. The President of the Real Estate and Stock Institute of Victoria, G. G. Morley, an estate agent of Brighton Road, St. Kilda stressed the advantages for both Council and investors. He cited the typical example of the transformation of what once was a brick villa in St. Kilda in 1958 returning £27 p.a. in rates before it was purchased for £4,800 and replaced by a block of eight flats which returned £216 in rates by 1960. Soon after, the owner sold the flats for £5,000 each, and began building nine single bedroom units to be rented at £8-10-0 per week on another site nearby.²

Some of the construction was slipshod, and Councillors were given ample evidence of this. Building often began before permits were issued and standards were not always adhered to. Occasionally, the consequences were fatal. A German couple died from carbon monoxide poisoning in a room in a three-storey block of nine flats at 125 Glenhuntly Road, which only had one ventilator instead of the two required by regulation. The Coroner ruled it was a case of death by accident: "mainly caused by the mode of living which was different to the Australian mode of life, combined with the defect in the building". Subsequently, the Minister for Local Government asked the Town

Clerk to give attention to "closer inspection of buildings to ensure that regulations were complied with".³

Councillors were told of other breaches in building regulations which were occurring, but they continued to occur. The Town Clerk told a Building Regulations Sub-Committee in May 1962 of his concern about a number of streets fifty feet wide which contained small timber and brick residences where three-storey blocks of flats were being erected. He commented that in Gordon Street, Elwood permission had been granted in 1961 to erect a two-storey block of six flats, on a site with a forty-six foot frontage where once a small timber cottage had stood, even though the original permit had lapsed and an intervening ordinance on building standards had limited flat building to sites with a fifty foot frontage. Cr. Gamon objected in July 1963 that flats at 23 Neptune Street did not comply with the Uniform Building Regulations because they were too close to the street, and the City Engineer agreed. Nonetheless, there was no seconder for Cr. Gamon's motion that the matter should be investigated.

Councillors often dismissed criticism of the standards allowed in St. Kilda. They were cosy in the camaraderie of their office, for many had held their seats for years without being contested, and they expected deference rather than opposition. Their sense of competence was reinforced by St. Kilda's population growth from 1961, against other inner city trends, and the fact that the rate was one of the lowest in Victoria.

They took a very dim view of dissidence within their ranks. Cr. Eric Gamon, a real estate agent, was one of the few Councillors to consistently express grave misgivings about the nature of development in the early 1960s but he did not remain in office for long, and his warnings were largely ignored by his colleagues.

Another temporary thorn in Council's side was the *Times* free newspaper, published by Clifden Campton Eager, which circulated in Prahran, Armadale, Windsor, St. Kilda, Balaclava, Ripponlea, Elsternwick and South Caulfield. It made unfavorable comparisons between St. Kilda and other municipalities where Councils prohibited flats of more than two storeys, so Councillors were pleased when such details were largely excluded from Eager's paper after October 1962. From then on, St. Kilda readers relied mainly on Peter Isaacson's publications for news of Council activity after the *Southern Cross* combined eight newspapers under its masthead in 1961, and included St. Kilda news in some editions, to become Australia's second largest suburban newspaper by 1966.

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Residents objected that new buildings were lowering the tone of their streets, and encouraging a transient, undesirable population. Many lodged protests with Council, but their complaints fell on deaf ears. The venerable Commander Veale, affectionately called the Admiral of Elwood by then, had expected to spend his retirement peacefully at his home in Joyce Street, Elwood but was irate about what had happened to his street by 1965:

I have been the owner-occupier of the above premises since January 1920, in what used to be a nice quiet and peaceful street...

Now I have the misfortune to be living between two blocks of flats, each of six flats.

Most of the occupants are decent people, but there have been, still are, and will be — in the summer — nasty types who have noisy boosey parties until the small hours of the morning.

The occupants of one flat..are two young people with two small children. The husband is a loud-voiced filthy-tongued drunk and the young wife is a shrill-voiced virago, and, on occasions uses bad language...

In the front lower flat on the other side of my house...the first two occupants — for some weeks — were two prostitutes; so you can imagine the noisy orgies which went on there.⁴

He became even angrier when the new Town Clerk did not reply immediately, and by the manner in which his complaints were dismissed by Council. He had been accustomed to dealing with Mr. Greaves over the past thirty years, who retired as Town Clerk in 1964, and was succeeded by A. E. (Jim) Isaac, the former Town Clerk of Fitzroy and the first St. Kilda Town Clerk since September 1868 not to have been promoted from within the existing administration. The new deputy Town Clerk, however, in William Alfred (Bill) Sisson, had the long association with the Municipality which old established ratepayers were accustomed to: he had been born on the Town Hall grounds, and his father, Alf, rendered excellent service to St. Kilda as the hall-keeper for decades.

When Councillors thought of flats, they thought proudly of the towering high-rise apartment blocks which soared up, and in their view, rejuvenated the aging waterfront. *Edgewater Towers*, at 12 Marine Parade, was regarded as one of Melbourne's most luxurious multi-storied block of own-your-own flats in 1961, even though the area of the site, with a ninety foot frontage and depth of three hundred and sixty feet, would have been regarded as far too small for a thirteen-storey building prior to the amendments in 1959. The architect, M. Benshemesh, designed the building, and buyers were promised "everything you'd find in aluxury Manhattan build-

ing...only minutes from Collins Street". Advertising boasted of its innovative features, including automatic express electric lifts; an entrance foyer of "non-slip terrazzo" granolithic paving; a ground floor with shop and office space; one hundred single or two bedroom own-your-own apartments with views of the Bay, and private patios, lounge-rooms, television points, kitchens with stainless steel sinks, dinettes, laundry and garbage disposal chutes, infra red heating, enchanting colour schemes and feature walls.⁵

Other notable high-rise development along the waterfront was undertaken later in the 1960s. Nathan Beller, the director of a local real estate company, and promoter of a group of developers, described the beachfront between Fraser Street and Alfred Square in May 1968 as the coming residential area in Melbourne and predicted real estate there would soon be at a premium⁶. Beller's *Sunset Towers*, built at 350 Beaconsfield Parade had twelve storeys of one, two and four bedroom flats and a rooftop penthouse, while his *Twin Towers* at 13 The Esplanade was designed by Sol Sapir, and featured an ultramodern security TV door system, rubbish disposal units, gas central heating, modish nylon wall to wall carpets, and smart blackbean furniture at the cost of \$14,000 for a two-bedroom unit and \$11,500 for a one bedroom unit.

At the other end of the social spectrum, the Housing Commission of Victoria had hundreds of applications from older people for accommodation in St. Kilda, and, in 1961, it offered to erect flats for lone persons and "Darby and Joan" couples on land donated by the Council. Councillors declined to enter into an agreement at first, because they considered Housing Commission flats to be less prestigious than those built by private developers. However, it finally agreed because the plight of many elderly people was so desperate in St. Kilda where a pensioner might pay £2-10-0 per week for a sleep-out, plus electricity and gas bills in May 1960, and, according to *Health Reports* fewer rooms were available in boarding houses because so many were being wrecked and replaced by flats or motels.

Acknowledging the gravity of the situation in 1963, Council gave the Commission land at Inkerman and Henryville Streets, agreeing to halve the rates and nominate tenants itself. Construction commenced by August 1964, and the flats were opened on 29 April 1966, with most of the twelve storeys occupied by pensioners, who paid \$1.95 rent and eighty cents service charge per week.

Nonetheless, the number of Housing Commission flats in St. Kilda remained low compared with other inner city areas, a fact

which reflected Council's preference for private development rather than government enterprises:

Flats in the Central and Inner South Eastern Municipalities, 1971⁷

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Housing Commission component</i>	
	<i>Flats</i>	<i>Number*</i>	<i>%</i>
Melbourne	9980	4000	40
Prahran	11679	900	8
Fitzroy	1969	900	45
Collingwood	1481	800	55
South Melbourne	2807	644	28
Port Melbourne	497	320	72
St. Kilda	16516	165	1
Hawthorn	16107	22	2
Caulfield	9049	0	0
Malvern	4374	0	0

* These figures are extrapolated and hence approximate.

St. Kilda was re-shaped in other ways to become a more convenient thoroughfare for commuters. Traffic through parts of St. Kilda and Elwood increased markedly after the completion of the King Street Bridge in 1961. Residential amenity was reduced, and, in some streets, trees were removed to make more room for cars: in Alma Road, for instance, ninety-six large plane trees from High Street to Westbury Street were removed on the recommendation of the Traffic Commission in 1961. Traffic Commission surveys in 1961 also confirmed that the existing street system could not carry the expected doubling of the number of cars on them by 1970, and the inadequacy of the St. Kilda Junction was of major concern.

The reconstruction of the Junction was completed in stages, and was the biggest road building project completed by the MMBW, which lost that power in the following decade. In the then massive scheme, Queens Road was reconstructed up to the Albert Park fence to provide four traffic lanes, and a six-lane extension was formed passing under St. Kilda Road and linking to Dandenong Road. Tramlines formerly running along Wellington Street were diverted into the underpass. The project involved the demolition of over one hundred and fifty-six houses, fifty-two business premises, forty-two shops, three service stations and three hotels. Staunchest resistance came from Nellie Collins of Vine Street, Windsor, a sixty-six year old who had lived there for forty years. She was initially offered \$6,000

and \$600 disturbance money by the MMBW, but stubbornly refused to accept it. Her home was demolished by front-end loader in March 1967 when she was out, and she was eventually awarded \$9,640 by the Land Valuation Board in 1968, which was less than the MMBW's final offer.

The MMBW did take special care, though, to save the Corroboree Tree. To its credit, it realigned twenty metres of St. Kilda Road so that none of the main tree roots were touched. The tree stood majestically when the Governor, Sir Rohan Delacombe, opened the major section of the \$11m St. Kilda Junction improvement in December 1968, named Queen's Way by Premier Bolte, being spared to witness a more frantic congress than it had seen in the days when black tribes gathered under its branches.

The new Junction, which gave cars an uninterrupted run from Queen's Parade to Dandenong Road may have been a boon to motorists, but it was criticised on aesthetic grounds. Many called it a wilderness of bleak concrete, bitumen, advertising hoardings, graceless tiles, iron railings, power poles and tram wires; ugly enough in some people's view to match the vulgar tiered office buildings in St. Kilda Road.

Plans were also announced in 1970 to widen High Street, between the Junction and Carlisle Street, and make a road as wide as St. Kilda Road. The Board began notifying owners that their properties would be acquired under the reservation for the widening in the 1954 planning scheme, and began demolition of over one hundred and fifty dilapidated buildings, once the pride of St. Kilda in the late nineteenth century. Amongst those which were wrecked in 1973 was the Junction Hotel, which had always flown the St. Kilda flag high when the football team won, and at half-mast when it lost. Bulldozers ran through its main bar, once lined with photos of Bill Mohr, Hayden Bunton and other sportsmen, and smashed up its Pink Elephant Bar. Wreckers had already discovered and filled in a well, lined with bricks and eighty-three feet deep, in front of the hotel, which had been covered up long ago with red-gum boards. Council determined that the new multi-laned section of road with median strip would be called St. Kilda Road, when works were completed in the mid-1970s.

The attractiveness of the foreshore paled too, especially for poorer people, who could not afford expensive water sports but enjoyed the inexpensive recreational opportunities a beach provides.

Council ripped down both the ornamental wrought iron fence

which had graced the retaining wall on the Upper Esplanade since the nineteenth century, and the old pipe and post fence along the edge of the footpath at the Luna Park end in 1962, and replaced them with a Besser brick ornamental wall, which it rightfully regarded as being more in harmony with newer high-rise apartments nearby.

More sections of the foreshore were alienated from the public and leased to private interests. The Secretary of Lands permitted the Royal St. Kilda Yacht Club to use the Bathing Pavilion in Beaconsfield Parade in 1961 to store twelve foot dinghies. Once Council's pride when it opened in 1928, the pavilion stood dilapidated and wrecked by vandals on a ruined beach, which Greaves described in Council's submission to the Government on the Yacht Club's behalf in 1961, as "practically destroyed as a desirable bathing beach". Soon after gaining use of the pavilion, the Yacht Club dropped reference to St. Kilda in its name and became the Royal Melbourne Yacht Squadron; a change the Commodore, Otto Meik, welcomed because the prestigious club had long ceased to be made up entirely of St. Kilda residents.⁸

Another substantial portion of the foreshore was alienated from the public and leased to private interests when the Marina was constructed. The City Engineer, Maurice Moran, convinced Councilors that land reclaimed from the sea opposite Marine Parade should be leased to a private enterprise to develop wet and dry pens to store boats, rather than for the establishment of a recreation area and plantations as originally proposed in the 1950s. The concept of a Marina was American and the St. Kilda version was modelled on the floating dock system at Long Beach, California. The *St. Kilda Land Act* (1965) authorised the venture, and the State Government finally approved the tender of the only applicant to develop the twenty acre site in 1968, granting a lease until 2019. The first stage was opened in 1969 and provided the only facilities of its type in Australia: concrete sea walls surrounded wet pens for about two hundred boats, and dry storage was provided in triple tiered racks for another two hundred smaller craft which were retrieved by fork lift. A recreation area was developed by Council on the remaining twenty-five acres of the original forty-five which had been reclaimed.

Sections of the Little Luna Park funfair became more run down, deteriorating even further because of uncertainty about their future, and becoming quite unprofitable. Green and Thomas installed a *Mad Mouse* ride on their site in 1963 which was popular, but their profits, already affected by the introduction of the Totalisator Agency Board

in March 1961, fell further after the introduction of often o'clock closing of hotels in February 1966.

William Foster attributed his loss of profit to the cost of public transport, a lack of parking, and to the fact that his rival, Hall-Kenney, was permitted to duplicate his attractions. Hall-Kenney developed his territory as *Kiddieland*, then *Coney Island*, and became the Councillor for North Ward on 28 May 1964, lobbying hard to ensure that Council supported use of land from the seaward side to widen Marine Parade rather than the land on which the funfair stood. Foster and Hall-Kenney's rivalry became even more embittered as they argued about the noisiness of Hall-Kenney's *Cha-Cha* ride, and their feud ended only with their respective deaths.

The loss of the beloved Palais de Danse severed another irreplaceable link with the past. The ballroom, where thousands of Melbourne people had danced, was burnt down on 27 December 1968. A fire was believed to have started above a kitchen ceiling, and within minutes, the timber and stone ballroom was blazing from end to end, and the Stardust Room, added in 1962, was alight as well. Over one hundred firemen could do little to stop the fire which was so fierce that power poles and palm trees forty metres away ignited, and the billowing smoke could be seen from many parts of Melbourne. Thousands of onlookers lined the Lower Esplanade and Marine Parade, and others leant out of windows and stood on balconies from flats, and saw the last great show at the Palais de Danse as its roof appeared to lift off, then collapsed in a shower of bricks and glass. Within half an hour the building was razed.

Soon after, Maurice Sloman built a new Palais de Danse and Stardust Room of white concrete blocks with car parking underneath, which opened on 26 October 1972. Many sentimental memories were revived when Ken Bromley, the manager, presented a "Night of Nostalgia" in November 1972, compered by Ern Pettifer of Elwood, with Max Causon and his orchestra playing "In the Mood", and Geoff Brooke singing "Time On My Hands" in the new ballroom with its lurid wall of reflective silver vinyl, and carpet of luminous pinks, blues and purples.

St. Kilda suffered from materialism and snobbery. While the city was highly valued as ground for handsome profit, it was spurned by those who vaunted wealth as eminence because it was also the home of people who owned little. It housed transient and poorer people, such as migrants, the elderly, and single parent families in the very

accommodation created by private property developers who had made substantial profits there and often lived elsewhere.

Councillors saw the mobility of the population as a good reason not to provide welfare services which would assist transients at the expense of ratepayers. Even by 1961 they estimated that over thirty thousand people were moving in and out of the municipality every three years, and asked why ratepayers' money should be drained on such people. They resented unfavorable comparisons made between St. Kilda and South Melbourne, where the Council had employed Victoria's first Municipal welfare officer in 1948, and dismissed the pleas of local doctors, teachers and magistrates to do something.

The provision of welfare services was simply not a Council affair, in Councillors' view, and their responses to calls for help were monotonously predictable. When doctors in St. Kilda suggested that Council should provide a fully trained social worker "to deal with social problems viz. accommodation, delinquent children, alcoholism, deserted wives, pensioners without relatives unable to look after themselves" in October 1961, Council denied that such problems were its responsibility. When the Education Department asked if Council could advise migrants about the availability of language courses, the Town Clerk replied that "Council has no contact whatever with migrants other than those presenting themselves for naturalisation approximately every three or four months". When the Secretary of the St. Kilda Park State School requested the appointment of a full-time welfare officer in 1964 after the Psychology and Guidance Branch of the Education Department found the school had more children needing social guidance than other areas, "mainly due to the transitory population and high proportion of working mothers", Council refused.⁹

No government subsidised childcare centres were available to St. Kilda residents, and few were provided elsewhere as metropolitan services in 1964 were limited to five day nurseries administered by Councils in Prahran, South Melbourne, North Melbourne and Melbourne, and eight other centres administered by the Victorian Association of Day Nurseries. Consequently, many St. Kilda children were left at local private businesses and others were driven much further away. Occasionally, the consequences were tragic. Four of the seven children who burnt to death in a fire at unregistered premises of fibro-cement sheeting at the rear of a home in Templestowe, were from St. Kilda — two from Hotham Street, a two year old from Vale Street and a two year old from Inkerman Street¹⁰. Shortly after the

ghastly accident, the Government introduced legislation in April 1964 to regulate child-minding centres more strictly.

New migrants often had to overcome cultural, health, and welfare problems alone for there was no more formal assistance available than there had been in the early 1950s. Dr. Spiro Moraitis of St. Kilda noted that some of his patients simply relied on Greek rural practices such as olive oil for gall bladder complaints, herb tea for colic, rice water for diarrhoea, and hot baths for abortion, rather than attend surgeries where no one could understand them. Born in Athens in 1933 himself, the great grand-son of a doctor on the island of Castellorizo, Moraitis had arrived in Melbourne in 1939, attending Elwood Primary School in 1944, and graduating in Medicine from Melbourne University. He established a family practice at Westbury Street in 1961 and Greeks from many parts of Melbourne were grateful to find a doctor in St. Kilda with whom they could converse. Moraitis diagnosed many diseases attributable to the menial work they did, and also noted the housing, financial and family problems which arose for migrants, who were sometimes displaced within days from rural villages and extended families into urbanised, complicated, down-at-heel St. Kilda.¹¹

Councillors remained immovable in their opposition to the establishment of a library, and became even more obdurate if they suspected that critics were not as compliant, or respectful of the binding quality of Council's decisions, as the dignity of their office demanded. Some Councillors even maintained that a library would encourage the reading of fiction which, in turn, encouraged juvenile delinquency; and that ratepayers should not finance the education of ignorant transients who preferred to watch television than read¹². Councillors did not see themselves as being philistines, and could cite the decision to restore the Town Hall organ in 1961 as an example of their willingness to allocate Municipal funds for cultural enrichment.

Some residents were not prepared to let the matter rest. Articulate, well-educated parents at the Nelson Street kindergarten were incensed by Council's refusal to consider their case for a library, presented by its office-bearers, Jeanette (Jenny) Love and Ruth Shnookal. They formed the St. Kilda Library Establishment Committee with Ivan Scown, a TAA pilot as President, Jenny Love, a former librarian, as Secretary, and Angela Pedicini of Robe Street as Treasurer. The Committee persuaded Council to request that the Free Library Service Board conduct a Library Survey in St. Kilda and

the subsequent report, compiled and presented by Mary Carey in 1961, recommended the establishment of a library. Predictably, Council rejected it.

The Committee did not give up after that setback, but mounted a campaign which was a model of persistent community action: rate-payers were canvassed to sign petitions; pamphlets stating the case for a library were placed in every letterbox; residents were encouraged to write letters to Councillors and the daily papers; parliamentary representatives and the Free Library Service Board were kept informed of its activity and progress; Library Week was observed in the municipality; and public meetings were organised, with speakers such as Barry Jones and Dr. Andrew Fabyini. They drew support from all quarters of the community, and different residents did what they could to help. Miss Alice Michaelis of Linden sent a ten guinea donation, for instance, and Denis Farrington lent his spirit duplicator. The only Councillor prepared to support them was Cr. Eric Gamon, who failed to persuade Council to hold a referendum on the question in February 1962, and he feared business reprisals for doing so. Undaunted, Ivan Scown, the President of the Library Establishment Committee, stood unsuccessfully for Council in 1962, but polled well enough to hearten his committee.

Public support was so sincere that Norma Gormley, the joint secretary, declared in July 1964: "This year, next year or 10 years, there will be a library in St. Kilda. We will not be trodden into passive submission".¹³

Pressure on Council continued. The Jungwirth Report on the Provision of Libraries in 1964 criticised the St. Kilda City Council for refusing to conduct a poll on the issue and P. K Sutton, the Labor MLA for Albert Park, argued that the lack of a library safeguarded Council, which he described as a: "one-party body whose defence mechanism goes into gear immediately one of its members is threatened with opposition". He claimed that the absence of a public library where *Hansard* could be read, coupled with the lack of a local newspaper, meant that residents were ignorant of Municipal mismanagement¹⁴. Brian Dixon strongly supported the Committee as well, and he drew over five hundred people to a public meeting at Brighton Road State School on a cold wet evening where he argued for a library. Cr. A. C. "Wattie" Watson, one of the most influential Councillors, was so surprised by the numbers in attendance and the depth of community feeling displayed then, he said to Jenny Love:

"Well girlie, if you can get that many people out on a night like this, I might have to change my mind".¹⁵

Residents of all ages suffered because of the paucity of services in St. Kilda, and voluntary agencies were more taxed than ever. The St. Kilda Welfare Organisation lacked the money to satisfy some humble supplications no matter how it wanted to. Elderly pensioners, wrote in 1965 to the Secretary, Abe Cohen:

We are about 50 old folks around about this area as far as the St. Kilda Town Hall and Inkerman Road. We old folks cannot get on the tram to go as far as Blessington Street, St. Kilda, it is too far to walk...We don't ask for dinner, but a cup of tea, cakes, pies, sandwiches etc. we can pay and enjoy one another's company instead of sitting on the station or on the seat under the Railway Bridge, Balaclava where the trams stop in the winter time...Near the shops and station would be lovely, a bit of peace for us we hope Sir. Old folks live too long.¹⁶

The St. Kilda Ladies Benevolent Society, which celebrated its centenary in 1959, ceased functioning effectively in 1963 for a time when its long serving treasurer, Mrs. Percy Heymanson of *The Majestic* in Fitzroy Street, resigned after more than thirty years service; and Mary Hewison of Cole Street, Elwood died after being President for twenty years. The Society had not been given any financial support by Council since 1949, even though it continued to receive small bequests from the estates of Henry Giles Turner, and Alfred Edments, the merchant and philanthropist who died in 1909, and over £1,000 per annum from investments.

The Society was as defunct as some judged the principles of charity which marked its foundation in 1859, yet some of its cases listed in 1962 were in as much need as their counterparts had been one hundred years before. Among those whom the old ladies tended was an asthmatic thirty-two year old woman, with a ten month old baby, living in a draughty sleepout at 20 Chaucer Street, which she rented for £2-10-0 from her income of £4-17-6 sickness benefit. Irene Williams, the Benevolent Society Secretary, noted in June 1962, that the woman also had: "...4 older children, 2 adopted and 2 in homes. 1 husband dead, 1 husband deserted, de facto also deserted her", and that her only avenue of help was the Benevolent Society."

Stipendiary Magistrates and Justices at the St. Kilda Court often saw instances of neglect but their concerns were dismissed by Council as well. Frank Renton Power adjudicated on a case of suspected insanity in 1962 of an emaciated unwashed woman, "her whitish-yellow hair stuck out witch-like with accumulated matter" lying in a

filthy bed in a once splendid house in a wealthy part of St. Kilda, who had had no care for years, and was the last of her family¹⁸. However when members of the Bench combined to request that Council employ a social worker in 1967 "to undertake cases of deserted wives, widows and children, derelict old men who find themselves in St. Kilda...and young single people...attracted by the tawdry so-called 'glamour' and cheap lodgings¹⁹ Council ignored them. Keith Sutton remarked on Council obduracy in the Legislative Assembly in November 1967, and suggested that prostitution was the only social service available in St. Kilda.²⁰

St. Kilda's reputation as a city where prostitutes could be found grew even more strongly as car ownership increased, and confirmed many residents' gloomy view that its standing was at a low ebb. Activity became more blatant as large numbers of men in cars visited the area, slowly cruising up and down streets, blocking ordinary traffic, and creating the impression that prostitutes were very numerous.

Existing procedures to deal with prostitutes in St. Kilda had become a farce. The same females appeared week after week at the St. Kilda Court of Petty Sessions with monotonous regularity. For instance, between 4 May 1962 and 27 August 1962 at the St. Kilda Court of Petty Sessions, twenty-nine different women appeared before the Magistrates with almost all offenders there more than once: one, apparently of Dutch origin, appeared eighteen times in less than sixteen weeks, and paid £335 for two charges of use of her premises for prostitution, and sixteen of loitering for purposes of prostitution; another woman was charged eleven times for loitering and paid £175 in fines. During the same period, only three men were charged with sexual offences. One was sentenced to three months prison for living on the earnings of prostitution; another, who attempted to procure a male "for an act of gross indecency" in St. Kilda, was referred to the Prahran court; and another who attempted "to commit buggery with...a person under 14 years old" and exhibited obscene photos in St. Kilda, was referred to the Melbourne Court of General Sessions.²¹

An honorary Magistrate at the St. Kilda Court argued that governing authorities did not care whether prostitutes operated in St. Kilda or not. Frank Renton Power, a resident of 14 Gordon Avenue, Elwood, former journalist with *Age* and *Herald and Weekly Times*, member of the State Press Gallery, author, and unsuccessful candidate for South Ward in 1959 and 1963 when he campaigned to

"clean up St. Kilda", was a persistent critic of Council. He accused Councillors of preferring to "look away from reality"²² and in a letter to Baron Snider in 1963, he alleged that the Liberal-Country Party, which he described as political party in effective control of Council affairs, was not serious about curbing prostitution in St. Kilda:

The same women are repeatedly before us from week to week. The practice is to impose a fine of £5 for a first offence (very rarely is a plea other than "Guilty" proffered), then for a second offence in the same year this is increased to £10; then for more offences the fine is increased until a maximum of £30 is reached. There the person stays (on £30 for offences further committed in the same year and numbers are on this now —June). In the following year the slate is wiped, so to speak, and then the £5, £10, etc. business begins all over again. Never have I known in my ten years of service on the Bench for a prison sentence to be given. AND IT IS ON THIS POINT that several local policemen have ventilated their feelings to me unofficially that they are critical of the approach of the Bench to the problem...(Prostitutes) receive the VIP treatment considering their sleazy trade. Under these attractive conditions is it no wonder therefore that St. Kilda has become a "home away from home" for their ilk. I can see that St. Kilda is a district where people from other suburbs commit social errors they would never condone at home — say SE2 [Toorak].²³

Local real estate agents also condemned Council's reluctance to face the problem, because prostitution threatened the profitability of real estate dealings. They were alarmed because the rate at which flats were being vacated, or left untenanted, was growing, and because prices for units were falling by the mid 1960s. The Southern Branch of the Real Estate and Stock Institute of Victoria, including fifty-six real estate agents who acted for most of the owners of residential flat property in St. Kilda, met on 12 July 1966 to express their concern about "the alarming and unchecked rise" of prostitution in St. Kilda. They attributed growing vacancies and falling values to two factors: the harassment of female tenants in the street by men in search of prostitutes, and St. Kilda's "appalling reputation...as a prostitution city". Their survey over six months, and perusal of police records, made them draw several conclusions: at least one hundred prostitutes frequented St. Kilda; ninety-seven women giving St. Kilda addresses were charged in relation to prostitution between 1 January 1966 and 19 January 1966; five out of six charges relating to prostitution in Melbourne were laid in St. Kilda; fines in St. Kilda were lower than in other suburbs; and six establishments in St. Kilda were listed as "massage parlours" and employed prostitutes.

They collected testimonies from residents to substantiate their complaints:

I have lived in Robe Street for yrs. But never have I seen such blatant soliciting in this street as over the past 4/5 yrs...One girl *every day* runs from car to car up and down the str. Two dreadful looking common types stand at corner Robe and Acland. I believe at night it is worse. I'm too afraid to go out then. Gutter crawlers accost we residents all day — early morning included. Also our women friends are accosted, when calling to see us. Like many other residents, I intend to leave the area and advise others never to live here. HLK 387 has worked this street for years.²⁴

After the meeting, they made deputations to the Attorney-General, Arthur Rylah, requesting the introduction of harsher penalties and the assignation of more Vice Squad members to St. Kilda, and they asked the St. Kilda City Council to introduce new regulations and bylaws to meet the problem.

Brian Dixon, the new MLA for St. Kilda, believed too that the obvious existence of prostitution in St. Kilda should be discussed more openly in Melbourne: a city still so prudish that abortions were referred to as illegal operations in 1964; and where episodes of the Mavis Bramston Show, written for television by John Michael Howson of St. Kilda and seen in Sydney, were banned in April 1965 because censors thought *double entendre* made them too risqué. His predecessor, Baron Snider, had vacated the St. Kilda seat for the Legislative Council seat of Higinbotham in 1964, partly because he thought changes in St. Kilda's population made it less secure for the Liberal-Country Party, but died soon after in 1966. Dixon was born on 20 May 1936 in Melbourne and educated at Toorak Central State School, Melbourne High School and the University of Melbourne. He taught at that University and at Melbourne Grammar School and played football with the Melbourne Football Club from 1954, later becoming the coach of North Melbourne. As a boy, he had distributed election material for Frank Crean but the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 and the example of Lindsay Thompson, influenced his decision to style himself a liberal. He joined the Liberal-Country Party in 1963 and became the MLA for St. Kilda in June 1964 after defeating the ALP candidate, Julie Dahlitz, a solicitor.

Dixon's candour about the existence of prostitution startled both members of his party and St. Kilda City Councillors, who preferred Snider's discretion, and believed the distasteful subject of prostitution only generated poor publicity for St. Kilda though it might generate good publicity for this brash new young local member. Dixon would not be silenced though, and introduced the term "gutter

crawling" in the Legislative Assembly on 27 May 1965, seeing culpability in members of his own sex in regard to prostitution. He criticised the insignificance of the penalties for the offensive practice, and read a letter in parliament from a constituent, though he earned little praise from the police for doing so:

...no action is taken by the authorities regarding the menace of male car drivers in St. Kilda constantly following the females in the St. Kilda area. This I have experienced every night on my return from work. I have to walk from the station down Fitzroy-street and up Acland-street.²⁴

He congratulated St. Kilda police for obtaining a conviction against a man for gutter crawling on 2 December 1965, and in the following year, he advocated imprisonment of prostitutes after three convictions, and said he had been accosted by a prostitute himself in St. Kilda, where "Melbourne has a serious vice problem"²⁶. He wrote many letters to Council suggesting that lighting should be improved in Robe Street and Dalgety Street, but was always informed by Isaac that Council could not accede to his requests because lighting in the streets conformed to Municipal standards. On more than one occasion, Isaac was directed to remind Dixon about normal channels of action and the protocol followed in past dealings between the Council and the MLA for St. Kilda, for the Councillors had never seen such a member for St. Kilda in all their days, though many were of his party. Despite their doubts, though, Dixon was quickly gaining electoral support in St. Kilda.²⁷

The State Government reacted to the agitation by enacting more punitive legislation. Under the *Summary Offences Act* (1966), steeper fines and terms of imprisonment were imposed on prostitutes who found clients in the street, and on people who picked up a prostitute. The following year, Section 18A, an amendment to the *Summary Offences Act*, which had no counterpart in England or any other Australian States, was enacted to curb gutter crawling in St. Kilda by making male clients liable for prosecution. The St. Kilda City Council also requested the provision of more foot police, but the Deputy Commissioner advised that the manpower shortage of 1967 made it impossible to supplement the St. Kilda establishment of forty-eight, plus ten attached to the Criminal Investigation Branch. The Deputy Commissioner maintained too, that the operation of the Southern division of the Mobile Traffic Section from St. Kilda since 1964 had a deterrent effect, and that Wireless Patrol, Vice Squad, Licensing and Gaming Police also gave the area considerable attention. Council even offered to pay for extra policemen itself in Febru-

ary 1967 but the Force rejected the offer. In the meantime, the number of massage parlours in St. Kilda grew steadily.

Community morale, already at a low ebb in the early 1960s, was gutted even further when the football club moved. Several factors contributed to the relocation. The social composition of the Municipality of St. Kilda troubled some members of the football club who believed that migrants were only interested in soccer. (The St. Kilda Soccer Club was founded in 1960, and the Soccer Federation was relocated from Olympic Park to Fitzroy Street in the same year.) Some thought it would be better to move to a suburb like Moorabbin, where the population seemed more homogenous and stable because it had a higher proportion of Australian families, and would give the club a firmer supporter and recruitment base. The number of members who lived in St. Kilda had declined too: by 1964, seventy to seventy-five per cent resided south of Elsternwick and only one player on the senior list was recruited from the City of St. Kilda; of the others, eight were from the country and seventeen were from southern suburbs such as Hampton, Cheltenham and Moorabbin²⁸. Furthermore, the Club had worsening financial problems because television was making football a more marketable commodity, and driving up the cost of players, when it was recruiting new blood such as Darrel Baldock in 1962, and Jim Wallis, Bob Murray, Ian Stewart and Carl Ditterich in 1963, to support Allan Jeans, the former player who became coach in 1961. The situation was complicated by longstanding rivalry with the St. Kilda Cricket Club, with the football club dissatisfied about the amount of money it had to pay to use the Junction Oval, describing the distribution of football revenue as "archaic and farcical" in its *Annual Report* in 1963. Although St. Kilda City Council was asked to assist in devising another arrangement with the cricket club which would be more satisfactory, it did not intervene; its lack of interest in marked contrast to that of Moorabbin Council, which was eager to patronise the Saints.

At least the city's name was saved in the VFL, although the club was lost. The President, Graham Huggins informed the St. Kilda Cricket Club in late March 1964 that the football club had accepted an offer from the Moorabbin Council of a £100,000 loan to re-establish itself as the St. Kilda-Moorabbin Football Club for ten years, then simply the Moorabbin Football Club. Huggins' dramatic announcement prompted the St. Kilda Cricket Club President, Hec Oakley, and Secretary, Gordon Tamblyn, to threaten legal action because

they alleged the move would breach an earlier agreement; and the Victorian Football Association suspended Moorabbin during the 1964 season for disloyalty. Several St. Kilda Football Club Committee members resigned, and another member in John Sist, of Austin Street, Elwood took out a Supreme Court injunction on 6 April 1964, restraining the club from moving to Moorabbin or changing its name. Sist had migrated from Venice in 1951 and had been a member of the St. Kilda Football Club for ten years. He said:

I hate very much to do this. It is like acting against my own family. I'd go to Koo-wee-rup or North Queensland to watch the Saints play but I won't go to Moorabbin to watch Moorabbin.²⁹

Subsequently, the Moorabbin Council Committee withdrew its condition that St. Kilda should change its name, and Sist's action was struck out after the Committee announced that members would decide the issue by a poll and that the club's name would not be changed.

Prior to the poll, the Moorabbin City Council Engineer publicised enticing plans for a new £65,000 grandstand with seating for 4,000 St. Kilda Football Club members. Voting papers were then issued to the club's 4,297 members; and, of the eighty per cent who voted, 2,862 favoured the move, 697 were against and 21 votes were informal. Hec Oakley thought that members had been influenced by, misleading propaganda and expressed his regret at St. Kilda's loss. He predicted that the St. Kilda Football Club would be in serious financial difficulty within years. On the other hand, Huggins expressed his confidence that St. Kilda would become the strongest club in the League.

A city bereft of its football team seemed a hollow shell in a sports-mad metropolis. Still, the flag flew high from the Junction Hotel after the final game at the Junction Oval in 1964, when 37,000 people saw St. Kilda defeat Geelong, and Huggin's prophecy seemed closer to fruition than Oakley's in 1965, when Ian Stewart won the Brownlow Medal, and the club played in the Grand Final for the first time since 1913 and lost.

St. Kilda's loss of the club became even more poignant in 1966, when dreams came true and Barry Breen's wonky kick straggled through for a behind, the siren sounded at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, Collingwood was beaten by a point and St. Kilda were Premiers. St. Kilda supporters had begun barracking after the first bars of the National Anthem were played, and continued to do so with mounting excitement for the following four quarters. At three-

quarter time, St. Kilda led by four points with the wind against them in the last quarter, and Allan Jeans said: "You've got twenty-five minutes to make a name for yourselves like never before". Scores were tied after twenty-three minutes of play and when Wayne Richardson, the Collingwood rover, raced goalward and kicked the ball out of bounds, Jeans ordered everyone on the ball except key players. When a kick from Barry Breen, St. Kilda's half-forward flanker, bounced awkwardly well short of the goal line and ran on to score a behind, there was bedlam in the stands. Tuddenham, the Collingwood Captain, gained possession of the ball at the last minute, but his long kick was safely marked by Bob Murray, the full-back, who directed it towards Allan Morrow as the siren sounded. Spectators and players wept as Sir Kenneth Luke shouted to make himself heard and presented the premiership cup to Darrel Baldock. Players swapped guernseys, and only Ian Synman, the sole Jewish member of the team, wore St. Kilda colours when they ran triumphant victory laps, waving a red, black and white flag to the crowd as the words of "When the Saints Go Marching In" reverberated in the Stadium. It was the Jewish Day of Atonement, and when the result was known at the St. Kilda Synagogue, those present applauded. Emotions ran very high in the dressing-room at the MCG, too, when Jeans stood on a wooden bench and said: "I have not the ability to express fully how I feel. Whatever you players do, or where ever you go, I'll always remember what you have done for me", and players reached for towels as euphoric female supporters invaded their sanctum.

St. Kilda was the focal point of emotional celebrations after the match, not Moorabbin. Hundreds of supporters waited at Moorabbin but the players did not return to their new ground. Instead they danced the Go-Go to the music of the Kinetics at a private function at a restaurant in St. Kilda Road where Baldock told them: "St. Kilda had been laughed at over the years, but would never be laughed at again". Players then went to the Sierokowski family hotel in St. Kilda, which like every other hotel in the city, was crammed with jubilant supporters who had dreamt of that day all their lives.

People who had no chance to see their team the night before, saw the victors on HSV7's World of Sport on Sunday morning, while a few supporters further away in Vietnam received a tape of the match description on 3KZ³⁰. Somehow, St. Kilda's greatest sporting triumph had a hollow ring though, and some supporters of the city wondered

II. BREAKERS

The Vietnam war quickened dissent in people of all ages, and sent deep waves of shock through the community. It bred the divisiveness seen whenever Australian governments engaged in distant wars when most citizens' immediate safety was not at stake, but the lives of conscripts were endangered. Some local men complied dutifully when their marble was drawn out, after the Menzies' Government conducted the first ballot for National Service in 1965 under the *National Service Act* of 1964. Bob White was one such conscript, a member of the Light Aid Detachment of the Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in the First Armoured Regiment in Vietnam, and later a member of the St. Kilda Army and Navy Club. He recalled:

When I was called up in 1967 I just made the most of it and accepted it because it seemed the right thing to do. I had basic training at Puckapunyal, then a couple of weeks at Canungra, Queensland, which was about ten times tougher than Puckapunyal. We learnt how to handle machine guns and hand grenades, and to deal with booby traps, and we were told about signs to look for in Vietnam — three rocks in a line might mean a mine was planted, and a Vietnamese with both his sleeves rolled up a certain way was supposed to be another sign of danger. Vietnam was nothing like Canungra — it might have been different if we had been fighting hand to hand — but training did make us believe what we were doing was right.

While other eligible men in St. Kilda were jubilant when they missed the call-up, others opposed the war more actively. They resisted the draft and risked imprisonment, sometimes relying on the support of a network of suburban groups assisting draft dodgers, or seeking the anonymity of rented rooms in St. Kilda.

It became more and more apparent to both those at home and those in Vietnam that Australia was on the losing side as television showed residents what the horrible war was like and how Vietnamese peasants were defying the military might of the United States. Bob White knew within six months of arriving in Vietnam that the war could not be won:

I flew by myself from Sydney to Singapore on Qantas and as it was my first trip overseas I was excited. When I changed flights at Singapore, I was instructed to wear a civilian shirt which looked strange combined with our polys [polyesters or jungle greens], boots and berets. We sat on the floor of a plane from Singapore and when we flew over bomb craters and the tailgate went down at Saigon and we were soaked with rain, I knew the holiday was over. I was sent to Nui Dhat...

We could go out bush for up to eight weeks in our tanks looking for Vietcong. There was no front line and they were all underground. We would drive over them and they would mortar us from behind. We would clean up mines but they would lay more. Sometimes tanks were bogged in the wet season; other times we would drive through paddy fields burning after B52 strikes and we would be covered in dust and ash. The tracks through the rubber plantations and paddies would be classed as green (safe), amber (proceed with caution) or red (mined) but we were never sure...When we went through villages we had no idea who the enemy was but we knew that some who smiled at us during the day would be shooting us at night. After about six months there, I couldn't see the war being won, we didn't seem to be getting anywhere.

Protest against war was not new, but the Vietnam War drew in many people who had never dissented before alongside others who had campaigned for peace and disarmament for many years. Sam Goldbloom of 207 Alma Road, the former St. Kilda Council candidate and member of the Council to Combat Fascism and Anti-Semitism, was a member of the Elwood-St. Kilda Peace Committee in the 1950s. He was a member of the Australian Sponsoring Committee of the World Congress for Disarmament and International Cooperation of July 1958 in Stockholm and had seen the St. Kilda, Elwood, Brighton and Prahran Peace Fellowships grow in strength in preparation for the Australian and New Zealand Congress for International Cooperation and Disarmament and Festival of Arts in November 1959 of which he was the secretary. The Congress had held a peace rally at the St. Kilda Town Hall, addressed by the author, J. B. Priestley and Dr. Melkote from India, and following its success, the Congress of International Cooperation and Disarmament was formed, with Goldbloom as its Secretary. He was involved in other activities in the early 1960s, including a reception for Paul Robeson in St. Kilda in 1960, and the annual Hiroshima Day peace march, where marchers covered a distance representing the radius of the explosion in 1945, by walking from Frankston to Moorabbin on a Saturday, then lunching at the St. Kilda Junction before marching on over Princes Bridge. The St. Kilda City Council, however, regarded world peace as a subversive issue. Days after the USSR had placed nuclear missiles in Cuba in 1962, St. Kilda City Council refused his request that Congress members be permitted to sell Hiroshima Day badges depicting a mushroom badge in St. Kilda streets, despite his argument that it was their democratic right. Such activists were often reviled, for as Goldbloom later remembered:

We were always being watched, our children were followed by unmarked cars and people constantly called us communists and traitors. At best we were stupid dupes being led by the communists and at worst we were the communists themselves.³¹

Goldbloom saw a change in community attitude as the Vietnam War became the focus of dissent not only for existing anti-war bodies but also for new organisations like the Save Our Sons Movement, which coalesced to develop the Vietnam Moratorium campaign. Still more significant was the very broad range of individuals who protested against war. The groundswell became so great no particular organisation could claim the movement as its own. More and more people began to believe that they were right to oppose a war which the long-entrenched Federal Government had been wrong to engage in, and doubly wrong to send conscripts to fight in. Many experienced for the first time what it meant to challenge the existing order.

Public involvement increased as the war dragged on. When Goldbloom organised a "March for the Dead" with a black-draped coffin in Melbourne in November 1966, about one thousand people watched the burning of the call-up papers of three conscientious objectors to National Service. Bob White noticed the change when he returned to Melbourne:

I was discharged in July 1969. I had had eight days leave in Melbourne before then, and I remembered walking into the Bleak House Hotel and some of them at the bar said "Bloody Vietnam, what are you doing over there? so I learnt to keep away from all my old spots. It was bad enough being over there not knowing who you were fighting but old friends abused you at home and even blokes in the RSL didn't want to know us because we hadn't won and we weren't real soldiers. We hadn't done anything right and nothing we said seemed right even though we went to do our best. When I flew back by myself it only took eleven hours between being in a war zone and being home, and I didn't have time to adjust. Everyone expected you to be the same, and to be able to forget about it. I wasn't the same and I couldn't forget people being shot to pieces."³²

Opposition to the war had grown so much by 8 May 1970, that seventy thousand people turned out in Melbourne streets supporting the Moratorium. By then, such protest could not be written off as the antics of communists by the Government, for it was a legitimate expression of opinion by a substantial section of the population.

While all this excitement about war was occurring in St. Kilda, few worried about the disappearance of an old field gun from Alfred Square no-one seemed to know anything about. Maurice Moran was

authorised by Council to dispose of it on 29 July 1968. So, the gun citizens of St. Kilda had hoped would remind everyone of the torture and hell of war in 1923, the gun young Anzacs had died for, was gone. It reappeared soon in the Caribbean Gardens, an outer suburban amusement park.

As other waves of dissent and demands for change broke on the conservative shore, it often seemed to be youths riding them in. A youthful generation born about the same time the Holden car began to roll off assembly lines, who had known increasing opportunities for higher education and employment instead of depression and war, were feeling the sense of exhilaration and power a driver knows when they go wherever they please for the first time. Suddenly they seemed to be running helter-skelter in all directions, often ramming into obstructive predictions about propriety, morality, duty and obedience with the abandon of dodgem drivers at Luna Park. Dissent may have been shallow on the part of those who merely copied action seen overseas as television beamed images of flower power, love-ins, sit-ins, bra-burning, black power, psychedelic dreams, and revolt throughout the Western world; or frightening in those who seemed hell-bent on self-destruction. Nonetheless, there was depth in protest too, as youths challenged the authority and motives of those in power, and the materialism and conservatism of the society they had grown up in, in ways which could not be ignored; and their spirit of idealism, often nurtured in affluence, flowed beyond their generation.

Again, entertainers voiced the discord youths felt about the way the world was, and their confidence in their own power to change it. Fans raved when Mick Jagger strutted on the stage of the Palais in January 1965 for the first time in Melbourne, stuck out his tongue, and bawled "Time Is On My Side", taking seats once booked by generations who had enjoyed Harry Jacobs on the same stage, and who now regarded the Rolling Stones as loathsome, boorish, anarchic, obscene and probably homosexual.

Australian musicians who lived in St. Kilda attracted a cult following too, as the local industry thrived in the latter part of the 1960s. The Masters Apprentices, who lived in Carlisle Street, moved from rhythm and blues, to psychedelic head sounds, heavy metal and experimental music before they disbanded in 1972, producing hits including "Living in a Child's Dream" and "Wars or Hands of Time". Lead singer, Jim Keays, who wore fur coats, scarfs, velvet, satin and silk, later recalled:

Clothes cost us a bloody fortune because they kept getting torn off our backs...we couldn't go anywhere in Melbourne; no movies, no shopping, no parties. We lost most of our friends and became very insular. We began dressing leather not because we were tough but because it was.

We all lived in Carlisle Street, St. Kilda, a street where half a dozen bands lived as well. Eventually kids followed the van and found out where we lived and on a Sunday there'd be anything up to 200 girls just standing on the street.

I woke up one Saturday morning to be confronted with 15-20 girls sitting in my bedroom watching me sleep! One day we counted 67 girls in our two-bedroom flat at once.³³

Opus dances at the St. Kilda Town Hall, promoted by Barry Veith, became a showcase of new Melbourne talent. In a Hall where two-tone shoes had been outlawed ten years before, long-haired men in colourful Paisley ties, floral shirts, wide belts, flared pants, and boots, and women in mini-skirts, long lace-up boots, hot pants, and pantsuits, shuffled together under flickering strobe lights to the sound of groups like The Chain, Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs, the Ram Jam Big Band, the Groove, the La De Das, and The Groop; and singers including Ronnie Burns, who like Billy Thorpe had attended St. Kilda Park State School, Wendy Saddington, Johnny Farnham, and Russell Morris. When the performers finished, many of the audience caught the tram home, their behaviour so loutish at times that crews on the Carnegie route threatened to stop work after 11 p.m. on Saturday nights in May 1971 because they were intimidated by the prospect, described by the Tramways Board, of picking up "60-70 rampaging, foul-mouthed youths and girls"³⁴. Opus ended in July 1971 to the regret of Michael Gudinski of the Consolidated Rock Entertainment Agency of 27 Punt Road, Windsor, who supplied many of the musicians, because its closure meant: "a great loss to the music industry and loss of work to quite a number of musicians, striving to make a living out of playing the music in which they believe..."⁴⁵

Some youths experimented with drugs, popularly associated with the pop music industry, sometimes in a gesture of rebellion and total disregard for any short or long-term dangers to themselves. There were new synthetic stimulants such as dexedrine, methedrine, and purple hearts brought by some US servicemen on Rest and Recreation leave from Vietnam, and hallucinogenic mind drugs or psychedelics, which US West Coast hippies made notorious. *Go-Set* magazine, in an anti-drug feature on 28 June 1967, noted that psychedelic drug use was spreading like wildfire through Sydney and Melbourne,

and that intense colors, ecstasy, horror, distortion of space and time were some of the effects of LSD".³⁶

Marijuana was a favourite, and many users questioned laws which made it illegal while alcohol and tobacco were freely available, sometimes making its use part of a muddled revolt against the practice of capitalism. Numerous marijuana plants were seized from St. Kilda flats and sunroofs³⁷. However, police concentrated on a marijuana distribution network centred around Universities in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and associated illicit drug use with what they identified as a counter-culture around Carlton and Brunswick. There dealers worked from their homes, or "corner shops", and claimed their transactions raised consciousness and were an alternative to exploitative capitalistic practices as they supplied smokers with a few deals at a fixed price of about \$30 an ounce. By November 1972 however, workers at the Buoyancy Foundation at Greville Street, Prahran believed police activity was inducing pushers and addicts to move southwards to St. Kilda and Prahran, and that more drugs were being imported rather than being locally grown, as they had been six to twelve months before, indicating that organised criminals were moving into territory appropriated by the so-called counter-culture.³⁸

Youths explored other ways of altering consciousness. Some people decided to go back to earth, and left for the country, where they risked the derision of farmers, and tried to become self-sufficient, or devise alternative forms of communal life. Others stayed in St. Kilda, and tested out a collective philosophy in rented houses, replete with incense, candles, sea-grass matting, organic vegetables out the back, mattresses on the floor, posters of Jimi and Che and Janis on the wall, fleas, free love and freaking out.

Some followed the example of the Beatles who discovered Eastern religion. Disciples of the Maharishi Maresh Yogi operated a Transcendental Meditation Centre at 74 Tennyson Street, Elwood in January 1969, where devotees sought "the inner being or true self, by the employment of pure thought"³⁹; and the International Society for Krishna Consciousness at 14 Burnett Street in 1971 housed about thirty men and women, who chanted and danced ecstatically in their robes to drumbeats on the Esplanade and other St. Kilda streets. However Council was very suspicious of such goings-on and refused permission for their building to be used as a place of worship in February 1972 because: "Such use would be detrimental to the

existing amenity of the area and further, no car parking is provided".⁴⁰

A sea of questions about morality and social justice swamped everyone as well as different waves of dissent broke against standards which had prevailed for years.

Dr Bertram Wainer brought the issue of abortion before the public eye while he practiced in St. Kilda. General Practitioners there had long seen unfamiliar women in their surgeries from all over Victoria, who were looking for abortionists. Dr. Lawrence Shnookal described their difficulties in St. Kilda:

I found myself in an inescapable confrontation with the problem. Older women often found themselves unable to face the embarrassment of telling their local doctor about their dilemma, and young girls were far too guilt-ridden to approach their family doctor. St. Kilda was geographically accessible to almost all other places, and was considered "permissive" long before that word was invented so many desperate women turned up in my waiting room. It was unbelievable that I should have to practice such hypocrisy, but I would mention very casually that Dr. So-and-so in such-and-such a street performed these operations, and then hoped that these women did indeed receive good, safe medical treatment instead of resorting to the hazards of back-yard operators.⁴¹

The situation was untenable as far as many local doctors were concerned, and reformist doctors such as Dr. Richard Love of 65 Chapel Street were pressing for legal abortion on social and economic grounds, and civil libertarians were beginning to test the legal rulings on abortion when Dr. Wainer focussed media attention on the issue in 1969.

Wainer, of Jewish and Scottish descent, who had grown up in the slums of Glasgow, established a private practice at 338 Carlisle Street, St. Kilda in 1966 after leaving the Army where he had risen to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. At his Carlisle Street surgery, he saw many poor women who had suffered at the hands of bad backyard operators because they did not have the money or the knowledge to go to a doctor: some having been told to take Milk of Magnesia before the operation, and to take their own bottle of antiseptic to private homes, where they were not properly examined or anaesthetised before the operation, and then left to scream and bleed alone. Wainer claimed later that it was his concern about social injustice and inequitable distribution of abortions that made him take the issue up, rather than any concern about feminism or abortion itself⁴². At the time, he told Helen Homewood during an interview on Channel 10 on

May 1969, that his observations as a General Practitioner in St. Kilda made him conclude that the number of septic abortions were increasing because of more rigid enforcement of the law than in the past, and that: "Many women who have abortions are poor ones. They have the abortion because they cannot afford to have the child. And they can't afford the pill either"^o. He delivered letters to authorities in June 1969, including Detective Inspector Jack Ford, Chief of the Homicide Squad, and to the press, stating that he had terminated the pregnancy of twenty-two year old girl from the country on 11 June because of risks to her life and mental health, and accusing police of taking bribes in relation to abortion. He made a dramatic emotional plea in July 1969:

This is the moment of truth. It is a turning point in the history of Australia; there will not be another chance like this for 20 years. I'm pleading with all the doctors who do abortions, all the doctors who refer women to medical abortionists, and all the 25 per cent of Victorian women who have had abortions to stand up now and be counted.⁴⁴

He made a clandestine flight to Sydney accompanied by *Truth* reporter, Evan Whitton; fortified his home in Clyde Street, St. Kilda in the belief that his life was in danger; and made the allegation that he had met Superintendent Jack Ford near a car park in Albert Park on 14 September 1969, and had tested Ford's integrity by proposing to establish a protected abortion monopoly⁴⁵. Subsequently, William Kaye was appointed to conduct a "Board of Inquiry Into Allegations of Corruption in the Police Force in connection with Illegal Abortion Practices in the State of Victoria" in 1971. Kaye found Ford had a case to answer, but he also described Wainer as an "agent provocateur" with a propensity to exaggerate⁴⁶. Wainer believed his work was unfinished and left St. Kilda to establish a fertility control clinic in East Melbourne in 1972. There, he faced the anger of anti-abortionists, as members of the Right to Life Association, led by Margaret Tighe, often demonstrated at the clinic against abortion as murder. And soon he made further allegations about police corruption which prompted the Beach inquiry into other malpractices.

Dr Germaine Greer shook Melbourne too when she revisited in 1972 as the most famous feminist in the world. Her parents lived at 2/34 Docker Street, Elwood when she was born on 29 January 1939, the daughter of Eric Reginald Greer, then described as a "Newspaper Representative" in the St. Kilda Rate Books, and Margaret Mary Greer. The family soon moved into new flats at 8/57 Ormond Esplanade prior to Reg Greer's enlistment in the RAAF, and the young

Germaine lived there until she was eight years old, walking along the canal to school at St. Columba's in Elwood⁴⁷. Her book *The Female Eunuch* was published in Britain in 1969 and broke like a storm across the world as part of a second feminist wave. She jettisoned the gentility associated with earlier proponents of women's rights, using terms which would never have passed the lips of a lady such as Julia Rapke, demanded revolution, and took debate well beyond the question of equal pay for equal work, which had only been accepted as a principle by the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission in 1969. When she revisited Melbourne, she bested journalists in combat; showed how personal experience was political; challenged notions about sexuality, homosexuality and obscenity; was charged with obscenity herself; charged men with undue exercise of power; and angrily vowed never to return to Australia until the Liberal Government was defeated.

While some were revolted by her use of language they deemed crude, and called her unfeminine, she shocked others too, who found her words a revelation as she voiced ideas buried in themselves and she drew more people into a broad movement for sexual liberation which questioned the roles assigned to men and women. Ensuing responses were very diverse. Homosexuals came out openly and championed gay rights. Some women's liberationists linked male domination with capitalism and sought alternatives to both. Others joined the the South Yarra Branch of the Women's Electoral Lobby, formed in February 1972, which sometimes met in St. Kilda, and polled aspirants to political office about their views on equal pay, the right to choose an abortion, and the provision of childcare centres so they could have a fairer share of what the existing system offered.

Another exciting wave of change was seen in the self-conscious belief that national culture was flowering, and a growing impatience with any self-effacing notions that Australians should be apologetic about the quality of their own expression. Seeds were being planted which would make St. Kilda a hot-house of artistic expression for years to come in Melbourne, and the vitality there reflected the ironic fact that it was often European migrants, with a dynamic vision of their adopted city and land, generous enough to recognise and applaud Australians' work, and cultivated enough to make important contributions themselves and broaden local horizons, who were at the forefront in recharging cultural expression and appreciation of the arts in Australia.

The Palais became the home of the Melbourne Film Festival directed by Erwin Rado, who gave Melbourne a sense of its place in the world of film, and encouraged a new generation of Australian filmmakers, as confident as F. W. Thring had been when he made movies a few metres away decades before. Erwin Rado was born in Hungary in 1915, fled Hitler's armies and came to Australia in 1939 where he was interned in a camp for aliens, and later joined the committee running the Melbourne Film Festival in 1953. He persuaded the Committee to show overseas films, and argued for the creation of film schools and an Australian Film Institute. When the Festival moved to the Palais in 1962, the main evening programs were screened to two groups of two thousand members, who saw films including Renoir's *La Règle du Jeu*, Cassavetes' *Shadows*, Bunuel's *Viridiana*, and Antonioni's *La Notte*. As well, additional sessions were held in a small theatre set up in the Palais de Danse prior to the fire. Rado brought international film makers to the Palais in the following years, including Joseph von Sternberg, Rouben Mamoulian, Satyajit Ray, Jerzy Skolimowski and Michelangelo Antonioni, as well as encouraging film directors such as Paul Cox to give Australians an image of themselves on film, and revive an industry still as vulnerable as it had been in the days of the Efftee Studio.

Rado also encouraged the reassessment of Australia's censorship laws after films he had chosen to screen in St. Kilda were judged unsuitable by the censor. His selection in 1969 of the Stig Bjorkman film *I Love, You Love* was banned by Senator Scott, the Minister for Customs, because it included thirty seconds depicting a naked man and woman, sitting on a bed engaged in actions of a distinctly sexual nature. Subsequently Rado organised a censorship symposium at the Palais in June 1969 where various writers and broadcasters protested about the restrictive laws, and Rado challenged the Minister to submit the offending scene to an independent panel consisting of a member of the judiciary, a film critic and a gynaecologist to judge whether intercourse did in fact take place in the segment. The following year, the Canadian film, *A Married Couple*, was also banned from the Palais because it included a scene where adults used four letter words in the presence of their son. It was the last film to be excluded though, after censorship of Festival films was reviewed and laws were liberalised by the new Customs Minister, Don Chipp.⁴⁸

St. Kilda had other features which appealed to artists including lively cafes, cheaper accommodation, stimulating social variety and, importantly, new galleries which would show new work.

Many artists frequented St. Kilda cafes. Painters, sculptors and performers, for instance, enjoyed eating at the Scheherezade, which was close enough to the Palais to attract many theatre-goers as well. Karl Duldig often ate there. He had studied sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, and settled in St. Kilda from 1942 to 1944 after fleeing Hitler's armies. He won the Victorian Sculptors' Society prize in 1956 when his work "Moses" was purchased by the National Gallery; and completed commissions including ceramic, copper and terracotta murals. Sometimes as he ate cabbage rolls or barley soup with his wife, Slawa, at Scheherezade, he would sketch other diners on the serviettes, rapidly capturing the life around him⁴⁹. Others who enjoyed the unpretentious atmosphere, good food and spirited conversation there included performers from the Palais such as Rudolph Nureyev, Joan Sutherland and Richard Bonyngé; Albert Tucker, whose work was acclaimed at an exhibition called "Rebels and Precursors" at the National Gallery in 1962; Dr. Eric Westbrook, the Director of that Gallery; and Georges and Mirka Mora.

Georges and Mirka Mora changed from being frequent visitors to permanent residents of St. Kilda when Mora founded the Tolarno Galleries and restaurant in Fitzroy Street, St. Kilda after the Museum of Modern Art collapsed from lack of funds in 1966. Mirka Mora, who found St. Kilda a most congenial place for an artist, especially because of the sea, recalled:

I always needed a big studio and Mr. Mora bought the hotel in St. Kilda to give me space, and to continue the art gallery and restaurant. I was given the bridal suite on the first floor. The Tolarno was old. It still had electric buttons to call for servants and a tenant who had been there for years and whose mother had a dance with Ned Kelly. At the front was a garden where people used to play croquet. We wondered about the name. When Judith Wright came to visit us from Queensland she said her husband had been a jackaroo at Tolarno Station. Charles and Barbara Blackman also stayed when we had the hotel. When my husband sold the hotel part, I descended to the cellar for my studio.

St. Kilda was good to live in. I loved the romance of nineteenth century St. Kilda. Sarah Bernhardt stayed there. The Count de Chabrilan married the courtesan, Celeste Mogador and lived across the road from the Tolarno last century.

My son Tiriél went to St. Kilda Park Primary which was close. For me it was invaluable in my work to live near the sea. The sea calms, and you walk along the beach as you walk along your life.⁵⁰

Tolamo Galleries made St. Kilda a pivot of Melbourne's art world, and a showplace for both the famous and the unknown. Early exhibitions of the famous included a show of Renoir lithographs, and Sidney Nolan's *Ned Kelly* paintings, on loan from Sunday Reed, shown there in November 1967. Nolan, by then, was one of the best known artists in the world, and had been created a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1963 for his services to art in Britain. Although he lived overseas, his father and mother remained in St. Kilda until their respective deaths in 1965 and 1975, and prior to the Tolamo exhibition, he had lent work to be shown to benefit the Cora Graves Centre in appreciation of the pleasure the Centre gave his mother.

The Tolamo Galleries attracted more artists to St. Kilda, because Georges Mora gave many their first opportunity to show their work. Jeffrey Bren, who found lodgings in St. Kilda, then Elwood, had his first exhibition at Tolamo in 1967; then following shows in 1969, 1970 and 1971, when he won the Sir Keith and Dame Elizabeth Murdoch Travelling Scholarship.

The presence of the Moras also drew John Howley to the area. He arrived in St. Kilda in 1967, after spending four years in Israel, and worked with Mirka Mora to paint murals at the Tolamo. Although he was unaware of any fraternity of artists there, St. Kilda suited him very well, for he was comfortable in a cosmopolitan place with the sea nearby, where both the well-heeled and the down and out could be seen, where there was cheap accommodation and the chance to obtain studio space, and where there was a gallery which would show his work. Rachell, his wife, a gallery manager in Israel, also established the Junction Gallery in Wellington Street in 1968, showing the work of artists like Benny Zable and Jeffrey Bren there. After Howley was commissioned to do murals at Tullamarine Airport in the early 1970s, he bought a big villa in Loch Street and established a studio in the back yard, able to think of no other place in Melbourne where an artist would rather be.

Seemingly, these new waves of revolt against values which had prevailed since the 1950s carried exciting potential for St. Kilda. Any questioning of the status quo seemed promising in that governing authorities were failing to meet St. Kilda's existing needs, particularly in regard to welfare. Nonetheless, there were dangers too. St. Kilda would bear the brunt of problems associated with drug use which were generally unforeseen in the late 1960s. As well, rapid

changes in attitudes about acceptable sexual behaviour would cause great conflict in St. Kilda later in the 1970s and early 1980s, because the presence of prostitutes there always made it such a mirror of any flaws in that particular glass.

III. SWIMMING

Suddenly, the big sleep seemed to be ending in St. Kilda. Like a lazy sun-bather caught napping by a rising tide and having to quickly salvage picnic gear, Council had to respond somehow to demands for change because a spirit of passive compliance with long entrenched authorities was washing away so rapidly. As its composition changed, Council showed a willingness to plunge into new waters by granting a library after decades of refusal, by trying to improve St. Kilda's image albeit clumsily, and by addressing urgent welfare problems. Other politicians too, knew that they would soon be dumped as quickly as a poor swimmer in a sudden rip unless they satisfied new demands or swam with the tide. The degraded urban environment and the state of the sea itself, became questions they could not ignore as residents demanded action.

Council's inertia seemed to ending with its decision to build a library, and many other barriers seemed to crumble soon after the determined Library Establishment Committee won its fight in 1967. The Committee finally broke through Council's resistance when Ivan Trayling was elected to Council after defeating the sitting West Ward Councillor, Bill Bush, who had not been opposed before. Trayling, a thirty-one year old sales manager at the time of his candidature, had joined the St. Kilda West Branch of the Labor Party in 1964, and he campaigned on the need for a library and child minding centre in St. Kilda, as well as a range of other issues. Sitting Councillors were shaken by the vigour and purposeful nature of his campaign, which was managed by Brian Zouch, another member of the Labor Party who had previously belonged to the New Zealand National Party, and was a journalist, then news editor, for the *Southern Cross*. The voting in St. Kilda was voluntary, and was held on a Thursday, so Zouch ensured that all eligible voters in West Ward, including those in hospital, were canvassed. He made certain that all householders who had agreed to vote for Trayling did so by ticking names off on the roll on polling day, then sending cars out to fetch those who had not appeared so that they could vote as they had promised before the

booths closed. Bush's supporters shed tears at the announcement of the poll because Trayling's victory was a great shock to them and other sitting Councillors, who were unused to this new breed of Labor politician. Nonetheless, when they saw the community was dissatisfied with their stance, they conceded with grace and resolved to build the best library possible for the people of St. Kilda.⁵¹

The work of building began. Council set aside \$50,000 in the estimates in November 1967, and asked Barrett Reid, by then the Executive Officer of the Library Services Division of the Library Council of Victoria, to revise the survey of 1961. A Library subcommittee formed in mid 1969, which was the first Council committee to include community representatives as advisory members, and included Cr. Ivan Trayling as Chairman, Cr. Hall-Kenny, Cr. Manning, Cr. Clark, Jenny Love, Reverend Brother F. I. McCarthy, Bernard Rechter, and Bill Sisson, the Deputy Town Clerk. It recommended the purchase of a used car yard opposite the Town Hall and seven properties in Duke Street as the library site.

Vida Horn ALAA was appointed the Chief Librarian, and she pioneered the new service in St. Kilda. She had worked in the South Brisbane Municipal Library from 1943 to 1948, then in the State Library of Queensland from 1948 to July 1952, where she studied privately to qualify as a librarian because the Queensland Public Service did not employ married women. After being appointed Municipal Librarian at Lismore from July 1952 to 1955, she worked at the National Central Library in London, then as Children's Librarian at the Holburn Library. On her return to Australia, she became the City Librarian at Footscray from 1958 to 1960, then of Mordialloc in 1960, as well as holding other positions including Secretary of the Victorian Library Week Committee, the first lecturer in Children's Literature at the RMIT Department of Librarianship, and as a librarian representative in the Municipal Officers Association State Equal Pay Campaign. After her appointment in St. Kilda, she surveyed the user population, assessed staff and building requirements, and ordered books, sound recordings, prints and tapes which would satisfy St. Kilda's varied age groups, ethnic backgrounds and educational levels. By September 1971, 16,198 books were acquired, including "standard titles that should be in a good public library" and two hundred and forty-six reproduction prints.⁵²

Enrico Taglietti was appointed as the architect. He had already redesigned the award winning Dixon Library in Canberra, and his idea for St. Kilda included "bold horizontal lines of wide overhanging

eaves and the soaring lines of the roof over the foyer...The sweeping eaves will invite people to enter, acting rather like outstretched arms, involving the people in the building before they actually come inside". A tender was accepted by Taglietti on behalf of the Council for the St. Kilda Library contract of \$417,000 from the M. Notkin Construction Company of Caulfield South in December 1971, who began to build a library described as one which "people will want to enter, and once inside, want to remain in".⁵³

Ceremonies marked different stages in the library's establishment. The foundation stone was laid in August 1972 by the Mayor, Cr. Ivan Trayling, who had also become the ALP member for the Legislative Council seat of Melbourne Province. Sir Rohan Delacombe, the Governor of Victoria, opened the library on 14 May 1973, and the following day, Commander R. S. Veale, the original Chairman of the Library Promotion Committee, was invited to borrow the first book and chose a biography of Wilfred Kent-Hughes.

Most importantly, the library stood as an affirmation of the dignity and right to knowledge of all who lived in St. Kilda, no matter how short their stay, or how limited their financial resources, standing as a reminder to all, that if people worked hard for a just cause, they would eventually win through. Importantly, too, involvement in the long fight for the library taught those who struggled what it meant to win, and many joined other action groups afterwards.

St. Kilda Council Council appeared ready to shrug off the lethargy of the past and expand its role, seemingly revitalised by the election of other younger energetic men who followed Trayling into office. Among them was Brian Zouch. He had contested the seat of St. Kilda for the ALP in the 1967 State election, but had been soundly defeated by Brian Dixon, who was strengthening his hold on the seat because he was seen to be more liberal in his views than many in his party, courageous enough to act in accordance with his conscience and speak out as he had done before Ronald Ryan was hanged, and a tireless worker for St. Kilda. Zouch was undaunted by the setback in his quest for political success, and was elected to Council unopposed in April 1968 after the resignation of Cr. John Mickles. Peter Isaacson, his employer, noted that at last, young men with a sense of duty were standing and winning places in the St. Kilda Council, which had been moribund and weak and had allowed a first class residential area to degenerate into a tawdry district of jerry-built flats, abandoned shops, dreary apartment houses and sleazy cafes.⁵⁴

Seeing itself as being more enlightened than it had been in the past, Council was readier to admit that St. Kilda did have an image problem. The changing moral climate meant that the existence of prostitution could be admitted at least, and Council saw it as a sign of its progressive spirit and maturity that it was able to call publicly for increased penalties against prostitutes rather than pretend they were not there. It hoped too that St. Kilda could turn its reputation to advantage and attract more tourists in the more permissive climate which appeared to prevail by selling itself as a swinging, adult city full of attractions Melbourne was now more ready for. With the idea of multiculturalism gaining currency as well, it rightly believed that its diverse restaurants would attract visitors too.

St. Kilda, many Councillors hoped, could be the Gold Coast of the south. As the Mayor, Cr. John Staughton said in February 1969: "We intend to follow the lead set by the Gold Coast...lift St. Kilda to the premier tourist resort in Victoria and eventually...even surpass the Gold Coast in development⁵⁵, though Council had jibbed at the suggestion of the Beller group that Beaconsfield Parade should be renamed Sunset Boulevard the year before⁵⁶. Councillors hoped that American soldiers, on Rest and Recreation leave, could be lured to St. Kilda rather than Kings Cross, also seeing St. Kilda as a site for a casino, and believing St. Kilda could capitalise on the increase of tourists anticipated after the opening of Tullamarine Airport in 1970. They hired public relations consultants, J.J. Brennan and Associates, from February 1969 until August 1971, whose brainwaves included the promotion of St. Kilda as a swinging "City of Internationalism", bottling of "St. Kilda Lager" in April 1971, "Sell St. Kilda" missions to the country, and the employment of a litter-maid on the beach.

The PR men called St. Kilda a "happening place" for tourists — a little naughty perhaps, but never sleazy in its range of entertainment, accommodation and restaurants. New brochures boasted of its nightclubs like *Sage's Rendezvous Cabaret*, which opened in mid 1969 in Earl's Court, with mini-skirted waitresses and go-go dancers in bikinis, and a 3 a.m. liquor licence, granted on the condition that women were accompanied by a male escort. According to the publicists, *Oscar's Taboo Restaurant*, tastefully decorated with masks and totem poles and featuring Latin American style music might appeal more to middle-aged couples, while *Whisky-a-Go-Go* at the Baths, with more go-go girls in cages, was said to be extremely sophisticated. If this were not enough, the Ritz featured striptease artists, and

Sammy Lee's Les Ginks, starring Jon Jay, then Stan Munro, Melbourne's best female impersonator. Art Luden's show at the George Hotel also included comedians like Shane Bourne, the son of Stan, who told blue jokes and warmed the audience up before the strippers appeared.

Hotels were refurbished and new motels built in anticipation of the tourist boom. The "new" *Esplanade Hotel* was opened by the Mayor, Cr. Duggan in November 1969, after Tom Busst, the proprietor, expended \$50,000 in alterations. The *Bacarsfield Hotel* was also renovated by Dan Curtain at a cost of \$250,000 to provide three lounges. By 1971 St. Kilda had thirteen motels, including Cecil Gertz's *Bealy Crest Motel* with its "Ki-Ki Bar" and "Society Room", and the *Montmartre* at 92 Grey Street, offering the Montmartre Restaurant, and advertising a "French Atmosphere (the home of love) —continental staff".

New restaurants included *Bernardi's* in Punt Road near the Junction in 1968; *Tao Bills* in Fitzroy Street in 1967; a new licensed bistro seating over one hundred people, within *Leo's Spaghetti Bar* in 1972; a *Pizza Palace* in Fitzroy Street in 1972, which was part of an American chain, and featured a honky-tonk piano; and the *Haus Vaterland*, where musicians played German polkas in an interior featuring German style barrels, mock Tudor wood and plaster work. Other restaurants included Harry Partos's *Iliad*, *Sarti's Restaurant*, the *Bela Napoli Pizza Restaurant*, and the *Maritida Restaurant* in Fitzroy Street; Bob Fong's *Fairy Stick*, the *Baioska Restaurant*, the *Black Rose Café*, the *Eilat*, the *Widurski Milk Bar*, the *Tientsin Café* and *Mr. Peppi's Vineyard Charcoal Barbeque* in Acland Street; the *Zion* at 10 Glen Eira Road, Ripponlea; the *Kinneth Kosher* at 2 Brighton Road; and the *Little Vienna* in Carlisle Street. As well, the Wine and Brandy Producers' Association and Wine Information Bureau opened *Wine Industry House* at 157 Fitzroy Street in October 1971, catering for increasing numbers of people who were drinking more Australian wines.

As a special summer tourist attraction, Council created an Art Bank along the Upper Esplanade in late 1970. This drew thousands of visitors to St. Kilda on weekends, who wandered up and down the Esplanade, past stalls and varied displays of fashionable handcrafted goods of leather, wood and clay; paintings of bright pink sunsets or Elvis Presley on black velvet; handmade soap, fragrant oils and incense; and children's toys. The foreshore became a happy mélange of dogs, caftans, gelati vans, Hare Krishnas, strolling

couples arm in arm, children on piggy-back, hippies, swimmers, and parking inspectors. There was some fine work on display. Among the earliest exhibitors were James Egan; Kevin Denny; George Orlaz; Ray Tyrer, a blacksmith; Peggie Cairns, a potter; Peter Dekker, a woodcarver; and Peter Smith a ceramic sculptor. When the Mayor, Cr. Manning, opened the Art Bank in December 1970, Dora Nolan was his special guest, and he expressed the hope that the Art Bank might encourage another artist of the stature of her son, Sir Sidney.

Another positive shift in policy occurred when Council began to view itself as a provider of welfare services. Urgent problems were finally addressed, as the potential of local government to deliver community services was increasingly recognised by State and Federal governments. Council employed its first professional social worker in March 1969, Marion Bear, to advise people about government benefits, assist deserted wives, refer cases to welfare agencies, liaise with schools and public health centres, and coordinate its new meals on wheels service, which began in 1969. Bear soon found, however, there was no model she could apply to St. Kilda, where the most urgent problem was a shortage of rental accommodation for low income groups. After she resigned, her successor, Margaret McCubbin, led coordination of local welfare organisations and advised on the establishment of new services, encouraged community participation, and undertook short term case work and referral.

Soon after the appointment of the first professional workers, Council acknowledged the contribution of volunteers by presenting Civic Awards to people whose unstinting labour and dedication to others for no financial reward, had contributed to the welfare of people in St. Kilda in the past. Appropriately, the first three recipients in 1969 were Betty Talbot, President of the Cora Graves Centre for thirteen years; Geoff Westbrook, President of the St. Kilda Welfare Organisation for twenty-four years; and Olive Johnston, known as "Auntie 01" to thousands of St. Kilda girls and boys, for her continuing service as supervisor of the St. Kilda Police and Citizens Youth Club.

Provision of the first Municipal child-care facilities signalled new priorities. The centre in the Town Hall grounds was opened in August 1971 by the Mayor, Cr. Ray Manning. It catered for about fifty children, giving preference to children of single parent families or families suffering special hardship. It had a waiting list before it became operational, and McCubbin noted in November 1971:

Our nursery full, no vacancies in any reputable nursery. The only assistance I can give is to mention the name of someone with whom I have had contact in the local community who will care for the child. Need to develop a service like Family Day Care.⁵⁷

The new York Street Infant Welfare Centre, which opened in early 1972, was also extended to provide a day kindergarten at the rear, after protests by West St. Kilda residents, led by Helen Halliday of Park Street, a former social worker who would later become St. Kilda's first woman Councillor. She argued that the provision of preschool and child-minding facilities would be more useful than an infant welfare centre; and noted an increasing orientation towards the formation of multi-purpose community groups and centres, rather than scattered, isolated facilities.⁵⁸

The first full-scale attempt to gauge St. Kilda's welfare needs was undertaken when Clarke Gazzard Planners made a survey and analysis of the population and welfare situation in St. Kilda for the Council in August 1971. It revealed urgent problems. The report found the Jewish community of St. Kilda had initiated and maintained a far more comprehensive system of coordinated care than the remainder of the population, with services including the Senior Citizens Centres in Chamwood Crescent and Hotham Street, Rose Court and Pras Court Private Rest Homes in Herbert Street, B'nai B'rith Parents Home in Chaucer Street, Montefiore Homes at 619 St. Kilda Road, the Australian Jewish Welfare Society sheltered workshop in Herbert Street, and kindergartens at Temple Beth Israel and Moriah College in Dickens Street, Elwood. Overall, however, the planners concluded that St. Kilda welfare services were gravely deficient: the City lacked specialist counselling facilities for its disproportionate numbers of distressed and unsettled people; services were not integrated and coordinated; there was a marked absence of migrant services compared than other suburbs; and the incidence of juvenile delinquency in St. Kilda was increasing, with St. Kilda ranking eighth in Melbourne for the volume of juvenile delinquency in 1969, whereas in 1966 it had not appeared in the first ten local government areas. The seriousness of the latter problem was confirmed in a survey, undertaken by Margaret McCubbin in 1972, which revealed that many children were left alone after school up to 7.30 p.m., and that a program of street contact was required in areas of fun parlours and hotels where older youths were congregating.

The formation of the St. Kilda Community Group to rationalise and develop welfare services was an important step in facing these

problems. Brian Dixon was instrumental in its establishment, inviting community representatives to his home at 31 Martin Street, Elwood on 4 August 1971 to discuss the formation of a community welfare centre in St. Kilda, and forming a steering committee which was the genesis of the St. Kilda Community Group, formed to oversee delivery of welfare services in St. Kilda.⁵⁹

Eventually, the St. Kilda Community Centre opened at the corner of Carlisle and Chapel Streets in February 1973, with considerable assistance from the State Government and Council. Its agencies included a Citizen' Advice Bureau run by thirty volunteers under the presidency of Peter Arbon, which received over two hundred requests for financial relief and counselling in its first six weeks of operation. A Legal Aid Service was also established in April 1973 to advise about matters such as arrest, eviction and regulations of various government departments, and a Family Planning Clinic opened to provide contraceptive advice.

Council had to contend with better-organised opponents who understood how political decisions could be reversed. When Council resolved in September 1967 to cooperate with the Housing Commission and develop more areas bounded by Inkerman Street, Marriott Street, Argyle Street and the rear of High Street, there was a public outcry. Nancy Kruger, a school teacher of 63 Argyle Street, formed an Anti-Reclamation Committee. She claimed St. Kilda could not afford to lose "good, honest people" like those living in the area and cited the example of a Bath Street property, passed in at auction on 30 September 1967 after bids reached \$2,600, when months before, similar properties had realised six to eight thousand dollars. She persuaded Council to reverse its decision after several large public meetings and well organised protests. After further Housing Commission plans were rejected in mid 1970, Council was given five years to complete its own plans and it began buying properties on the east side of Bath Street so the street could be widened.⁶⁰

The St. Kilda Progress Association increased public support for urban planning. It was formed in 1967, and included some residents who had learnt a great deal from their involvement in the Library Establishment Committee. It aimed to awaken community awareness of the need for urban planning, and the consequences of Council's decisions. It participated in a day long planning seminar in St. Kilda, chaired by Brian Dixon, including architects with an interest in town planning in Andrew McCutcheon, the future MLA for St.

Kilda, Peter McIntyre, Peter Isaacson of the *Southern Cross*, and Mister Hepburn of the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works. Soon after, the need for city planning was acknowledged by Council, and it commissioned Clarke Gazzard Planners to prepare a general review of development in the city. They presented a plan, adopted in principle in October 1971, which laid down policies for future development of the municipality for the following fifteen years, making provision for a population of eighty thousand by the year 1985, and recommended re-zoning and review of land use. New planning standards became effective in October 1972, even though they fell short of some residents' wishes.⁶¹

The condition of West Beach became a matter of lively debate but action still floundered because of administrative complexity and rivalry. Existing bodies with jurisdiction over St. Kilda beaches in 1966 included the Department of Crown Lands and Survey, the Public Works Department, the Ports and Harbours Department, the MMBW, the Tourist Development Authority, the Soil Conservation Authority, the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission, the Foreshore Committee, the St. Kilda City Council, and the Port Phillip Authority, which was created in November 1966 to manage, develop and maintain the area. The Department of Local Government also took an interest when its Minister, Rupert Hamer, described the beach as a "blot on the City's foreshore area"⁶² and asked the MMBW to extend the Cowderoy Street drain in December 1966. However, the Chairman, Allan Croxford, denied that the drain was a factor and asked the Port Phillip Authority to convene a Joint Investigatory Committee to investigate.

The smell worsened daily due to the dry summer conditions. By November 1967 the Royal Melbourne Yacht Squadron claimed that members had to walk through a "foul smell and unhygienic conditions" to launch their boats.⁶³

West St. Kilda residents believed time was running out. They formed a committee in late 1967 and presented a petition to the Minister of Lands in January 1968 expressing their concern about the smell, the effects of the breakwater on their once beautiful beach, rumours of another Marina, and leasing of the beach to private interests. They were convinced that Council did not have their interests at heart because all were honorary members of the Yacht Club, four were members of the Foreshore Committee, and the Mayor Harry Hall-Kenny was a tenant of the Foreshore Committee. Resi-

dents mooted secession in February 1968, but these plans went no further.

In the meantime, the condition of the beach grew worse. All representatives on the Joint Investigatory Committee, except those of the MMBW, agreed in September 1969, that the open channel from the Cowderoy Street drain into the sea was a safety hazard, but still no action was taken. The stench was so overpowering, business men began to complain. Harry Partos, the proprietor of the Iliad Restaurant at 23 Fitzroy Street, found customers were unable to eat because of the rotten smell of the beach. Nathan Beller's Strata Title Manager/Secretary of eight new properties on the St. Kilda and South Melbourne beachfront reported owners' anger, and also warned that if action was not taken to combat the fouling of the beach areas, the future development of the area would be seriously affected⁶⁴. Council decided to employ a private company to assess the degree of water contamination but when consultants reported significant pollution, which they attributed largely to the four major drains in the municipality, the MMBW disputed the validity of the method employed to test *E. coli*, and claimed that water quality was satisfactory.⁶⁵

Timely comments by Prince Charles made the officials sit up. The drains came under closer scrutiny after the Prince swam at Elwood in April 1970. To authorities' embarrassment and conservationists' approval, he was reported as saying it was like swimming in diluted sewage⁶⁶. Although Cr. Trayling endorsed the Prince's remarks as very worthwhile because the matter was so serious, the Mayor, Cr. Duggan said that he had swum in the bay since 1930 without any ill effects, and gulped a tumbler of sea water to reassure prospective tourists and salvage some of the credibility of boasts made during recent "Sell St. Kilda" missions. He was later censured by Council after he observed that Prince Charles' words were "most unroyal", and that the Prince was "at an age where he still has a lot to learn".

A photograph of Brian Dixon taking his regular swim at Elwood appeared in the *Age* soon after the Prince's swim. He agreed that the water was becoming murkier and called for reports from the Fisheries and Wildlife Department, even though his leader, Henry Bolte, stated a few days later that: "More important than pollution of the air, soil and water is pollution of the mind"⁶⁷. Soon after, the State Government announced that officers of the Ports and Harbour Division of the Public Works Department would build a two hundred to one scale replica of the St. Kilda foreshore to simulate conditions and test action plan proposals.

Attention was also paid to the Elwood Canal after the Prince's swim. It was filthy with rubbish on the banks, and slimy at the bottom, and after outlets were assessed, an oil leak was traced into the canal from oil storage plants at the premises of W. D. & H. O. Wills". The canal remained in a filthy state though, and Cr. Zouch gained statewide publicity as an "Anti-pollution man" in April 1971 after he threatened to bring forty-eight Commissioners of the Board of Works to court over pollution in the Elwood Canal, which he claimed was a cause of recent hepatitis cases in Elwood. Hamer pledged that heavy suction equipment would be used to clean the canal when available but it was a over a year before workmen removed one thousand cubic yards of sludge and decomposed seaweed from the mouth of the canal and two hundred yards of debris from the rat infested banks of the canal between the Broadway and Glenhuntly Road.⁶⁹

Many locals suspected though, that the cause of the Prince's discomfort was the lavatory on the pier. It was eventually upgraded so that it no longer emptied into the sea.

Council plans to develop the Foreshore were regarded with great suspicion by residents, who opposed further commercial development there, and regarded some of Council's tourist development schemes as being as tasteless as the Gold Coast itself. Local rumours grew that a second Marina was being planned with the cooperation of the Yacht Squadron so the West St. Kilda-Middle Park Coastline Conservation League was formed in 1969 largely to oppose the idea, and presented the Town Clerk with a petition against it, signed by four thousand people in May 1970. The League was also concerned about a foreshore development plan completed in October 1970 by Clarke Gazzard Planners, which recommended the reclamation of further land from the sea, construction of a mono-rail to carry tourists from Luna Park to the beach and a seaquarium operated by private enterprise, the reconstruction and provision of entertainment facilities at the head of the pier, and a six-lane dual carriageway linking Beaconsfield Parade along the Foreshore with Marine Parade". Residents soon marshalled forces to ensure that the Catani Gardens were saved from destruction by such a road.

The idea of leasing Crown Land in St. Kilda to provide revenue for beautification works, which had prompted the formation of the Foreshore Committee and financed the creation of those very gardens, was well out of favour. While the Catani Gardens remained a

monument to the vision of their creator, the eye-sore of the neglected Baths and their ever-changing tawdry night-clubs, served as a reminder of what could eventuate when unwise decisions were made about leases. Hence, many residents protested when Council announced its intention to approve the construction of a split level restaurant at the knoll at Point Ormond, and use income from site rental to beautify the area, as authorised by the *St Kilda Land Act* (1965). They were supported by Cr. Zouch, and the National Trust, which protested about the alienation by commercial interests of reserved public land set aside for recreational purposes, arguing that the green knoll at Point Ormond was the first vestige of natural foreshore, south along the coast from the city, and its restoration would be of psychological relief in what was a "very long stretch of featureless, run down and commercialised foreshore"⁷¹. The restaurant project was eventually scrapped after the Premier, Rupert Hamer, advised that alienation of reserves for private development no longer accorded with government policy⁷², and Council resolved to support the Premier on the casting vote of the Mayor, Cr. Ian Williams in November 1973. A week later, Council received notice that a St. Kilda Foreshore Protection Committee had been formed under the presidency of Noel Stone to protect the foreshore against further encroachment by commercial interests, and to ensure that future governments did not ignore the promise that "no further private developments would be allowed on the foreshore by way of leases of Crown land".⁷³

Government plans to carve up more of St. Kilda for freeways were also fiercely opposed. The scheme was for the F14 Mulgrave Freeway to run in from Warrigal Road following the line of Inkerman Street, cut through the heart of St Kilda along Grey Street, and then run along the south side of Albert Park into South Melbourne. Residents only had to look at High Street to imagine what such plans would mean to them. Cr. Brian Zouch became Deputy Chairman of the F2 Freeway Regional Committee composed of representatives from eight inner metropolitan Councils opposed to the proposed freeways. Over seven hundred residents attended the St. Kilda Town Hall for a protest meeting organised by the St. Kilda Progress Association on 22 March 1973. Robin Beaumont, the ALP candidate for St. Kilda said that the Liberal Government planned to destroy St. Kilda by making it "the doormat of the city to the outer suburbs". Brian Dixon spoke of Liberal concern for the "quality of life" and said he would resign his seat if freeways aimed at St. Kilda were not stopped. In late

March, the Premier announced that the F2 and F14 were no longer part of the Melbourne Transportation Committee's freeway network. Alan Bawden, the President of the St. Kilda Progress Association, architect and St. Kilda Councillor from August 1973, welcomed the announcement as a victory for resident groups but warned that "...in about five years our streets will either be choked with traffic or we will be facing the threat of another freeway proposal".⁷⁴

The blighted funfair near Luna Park was reduced to tumble-down buildings where no children's voices were heard while lessees, or executors of their estates, awaited a ruling about its future. The decision to re-align Marine Parade in a gradual curve landward of its existing position sealed its fate, and the Foreshore Committee was wound up in 1973. Brian Dixon achieved the latter outcome, which Council had sought for decades, after informal discussions with Councillors and members of the Shore Committee convinced him that the Shore Committee would agree to being disbanded. He informed the Minister of Lands, W. A. Borthwick, to that effect in March 1973, although the Town Clerk reminded him that he should have approached Council formally before contacting the Minister. Nonetheless, on 17 April Council advised the Secretary of Lands that it would assume the responsibilities of the Shore Committee, providing it was not responsible for any work on the Cowderoy Street drain.⁷⁵

Sadly, St. Kilda lost another remnant of its past glory, and the funfair's joy; tatty perhaps, but a lucky survivor of the despoliation of the 1960s, and still with no equal in Australia. The executors of the estate of Harry Hall-Kenny put the merry-go-round up for auction on 28 September 1973, and advertised it as "Australia's Most Famous "Merry", "One of few such merry-go-rounds outside Europe", and "the peer" of Australia's mechanical amusements:

Forty-eight ornately carved horses galloping four abreast; a steam-engine of brass against a highly decorative mirrored background; twisted brass upright bars and an elaborate organ with moving mechanical figures.

The National Trust considered classifying it as "an object of industrial history" but was half-hearted, because as one member, Colonel Birch, said, the merry-go-round was an "odd sort of object that doesn't quite fit in with buildings and landscapes and that sort of thing". However, other localities were keen to buy a piece of the rich past which St. Kilda possessed, and they lacked: the Melbourne Steam Traction Club and Knox City Council raised \$39,000 to purchase the merry-go-round for a proposed "historical complex" at the City of

Knox, but could not outbid the recreation division of the Department of the Capital Territory, which at the instigation of the new Labor Minister for the ACT, Kim Enderby, purchased the merry-go-round at \$40,000 for soulless Canberra, and spent much more on careful restoration.⁷⁶

The horses imported from Germany, impaled on brass bars made in Scotland, carved and painted with coloured glass on their harnesses and gargoyles on the rear of their saddles, and the old wooden elephants, safe enough for the littlest children, had seen many changes in the fairground. They had seen Weniger stoned, and Kelly broken. They had carried Sunday Reed and Sidney Nolan. They had delighted Mirka Mora. They had given pleasure to thousands of Melbourne's children. They would not turn at St. Kilda again.

With so many different demands being made, the politician who best understood what city dwellers needed was Gough Whitlam, the leader of the Federal Opposition. He emphasised urban renewal when he campaigned in St. Kilda in July 1969, after electoral boundaries of Melbourne Ports had been expanded to include parts of South Yarra, Prahran and St. Kilda. Accompanied by Frank Crean, his shadow Treasurer and sitting member, and Senator Sam Cohen, then Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Senate and former Dux of Elwood Central School, who died later in October 1969, Whitlam said:

The failure to save and revive the oldest parts of Australian cities is a major reason for the ugliness of the newest parts. South Melbourne, St. Kilda and Prahran for example, are not just slabs of territory to provide access to the dormitory suburbs of the south and east. They are places where people want to live. They should be among the best places to live...Our cities are perfectly designed to isolate the old, alienate the young and segregate the new.⁷⁷

Such an emphasis, which had strong appeal to voters in St. Kilda, continued prior to the elections of 1972 when Whitlam proposed the creation of a Ministry of Urban Affairs and said: "A national government which has nothing to say about cities has nothing relevant or enduring to say about the nation or the future"⁷⁸. He spoke of many other issues as well, right on the wave-length of the spirit of the day such as urban transport, multiculturalism, a more exciting role for local government, equal opportunity for women, better educational opportunities for the disadvantaged, a national health scheme, improved welfare services, child-care, and new nationalism, and was

far more attuned to the prevailing mood than the Liberal Party, which was disunited after the retirement of R. G., Menzies in 1966, the death of Harold Holt in December 1967, and the replacement of John Gorton by William McMahon. He struck a chord with many residents who also voted for Brian Dixon, and many middle-class professionals who had not voted for Labor before, when he said it was time for change and promised reform which seemed affordable in 1972 when Australia seemed flush with funds, and essential for a fairer society.

The agitated, exciting feeling that inertia had ended reached its climax in St. Kilda days before he was elected. Over four thousand euphoric supporters crowded into the St. Kilda Town Hall, which was decorated with balloons, streamers and banners, and milled outside on the lawns for Melbourne's last and largest rally of the 1972 campaign. They heard entertainers including Leonard Teale, Liz Harris, Issy Di, Sue Donovan, and shed tears when Shirley Jacobs sang "It's Time". Then a great roar of approval broke out as Gough Whitlam, and Bob Hawke, the President of the ACTU, strode into the hall. Whitlam harkened back to the days of Chifley, and told them:

We, the people of Australia, need a new vision to help us as a nation...The light has almost gone out...Let us set it aflame again...We do not have to be an uncertain and fearful people.⁷⁹

Seemingly, the tide had turned. Within days, he was Prime Minister: troops were withdrawn from Vietnam, the *National Service Act* was abandoned, China was recognised and sanctions placed on trade with South Africa.

The following year many reforms in social welfare, child-care, equal opportunity, education, and promotion of the arts followed. One landmark decision for St. Kilda City Council was the infusion of Commonwealth funds into local government with the *Grants Commission Act* 1973 creating regional groupings of Councils which furnished submissions for assistance, granted in accordance with principles of fiscal equalisation.

Confidence was immense, the future was exciting, the economy was buoyant, and further changes in St. Kilda seemed as unstoppable as a new tide. Few dreamt the fortune of the Whitlam government would ebb as quickly as it has surged, the government would soon sink, and the unplumbed national wealth on which hope rested was a very shallow sea.

CHAPTER SEVEN

HALL OF MIRRORS 1974 - JULY 1983

I. Propertyed and propertyless in St. Kilda - Suffering visible in St. Kilda - Economic recession - Sir Zelman Cowen appointed to heal wounds after dismissal of Whitlam - Increasing unemployment in St. Kilda - Community services burdened - Some unemployed youths caught in a lethal network - Growing schisms in Council

II. Community divisions about punishment, legalisation or decriminalisation of prostitution and treatment of heroin addicts - Allegations of sexual discrimination on Council

III. St. Kilda Festival as a vindication of the city - St. Kilda's various attractions - St. Kilda a showplace of consequences of worsening social and economic problems - Defeat of State and Federal Liberal Governments - Streetkids - Poverty - Economic outlook an inducement to restructure Council administration by July 1983 - Volume III concludes.

I. DISILLUSION

Illusions about the strength of the Australian economy were soon shattered by the recession of the middle 1970s. As well, the hopes of people who had milled in front of the St. Kilda Town Hall to cheer their idol in 1972 were in pieces after Whitlam's dismissal. Unemployment surfaced as a bleak reality in St. Kilda and took its dreadful toll. Embryonic community services, already overtaxed, were burdened further while the hopes of the young, once the luckiest of generations, sometimes ended in the street. Social disharmony grew as changes in property development made it more likely that the poor might be displaced in St. Kilda. However, the likelihood of finding solutions was remote for compromise seemed impossible in the poisoned political atmosphere which prevailed after the dismissal.

Again, as in the 1930s, the effects of the economic crisis were unevenly borne. The worst burdened groups were already vulnerable social service recipients, single older unemployed people, and the young, while those with secure employment enjoyed wage rises and improving standards of living.

The gap was becoming more obvious in St. Kilda because of a drift back to the inner city from outer suburbs as many wage-earners

rediscovered the advantages of living nearer to the Central Business District, and bought homes suitable for renovation or own-your-own units in areas once thought to be the preserve of migrants and the working class. Indications that such trends would gather strength raised questions for Council about what type of city they wanted St. Kilda to be, and who the city should be for.

Gentrification, a term which gained currency in the 1970s, spelt the possibility of dislocation for the poor as well-to-do professional people began to reappraise the value of run down homes, ripe for renovation. This process was less noticeable in St. Kilda with its large numbers of undistinctive flats, which even lacked the appeal of age, and its reputation as a centre for prostitution, than in other inner-city areas such as Carlton. Nonetheless, as the number of suitable properties dwindled elsewhere, more people began to consider St. Kilda:

Median Sales Prices* for Houses in various Inner Melbourne Local Government Areas¹

L. G. A.	1970 \$	1976 \$	1977 \$	1970-77 %Increase	1976-77 %Increase
Collingwood	9,120	25,300	29,950	228.4	18.3
Fitzroy	9,380	31,700	35,000	273.1	10.5
Port Melbourne	10,000	26,500	31,000	210.0	17.0
Richmond	9,120	26,000	29,250	220.7	12.5
South Melbourne	11,540	35,000	37,000	220.6	5.7
Prahran (S.Yarra))	14,510	80,500	77,500		3.7
Prahran (South))		35,000	39,750		13.4
St. Kilda	14,000	36,750	38,000	171.4	3.4

*The median price is such that exactly half of the sales are below and half above it.

One newcomer to West St. Kilda was Colin Bell, who would soon become prominent in community life as a foundation member of Westaction and a Councillor. He wrote a letter to the *Southern Cross* on 20 March 1977, expressing his enthusiasm and aspirations for his new location:

St. Kilda is changing, reverting to the once proud era *where* families resided in spacious mansions. Rooming houses are diminishing in number and the future status of the city will be that of a high-class residential area. The future populace will demand change and change will come lifting the city from its present lowly classification on the social scale.

Others who came did not regard themselves as conformists who would jeopardise the heterogeneity of St. Kilda, but thought their choice very daring because the city was not yet as fashionable as other parts of the inner-city, and decided it was St. Kilda's "ambience" they liked best of all. It was fun to amuse their guests at dinner parties with hilarious anecdotes about the antics of the crazed old woman around the corner, or the darling bottle-oh who collected their empty chardonnay bottles every week.

The growing social split was particularly noticeable in West Ward, which contained St. Kilda's largest group of lone parents existing on social security benefits, alongside its significant group of professionals, often employed in public administration, community services, education, management and private business. Researchers on childcare needs in 1976, in Margaret McCubbin, Phyllis Tinney and Kym Wyman, concluded:

Almost one in every five couples with pre-school children were well educated, often professional people who had perhaps consciously rejected middle and outer -suburban life-styles and who tended to regard themselves as the vanguard of a movement to revitalise the dying heart of a large metropolitan complex.²

Many such residents regarded themselves as defenders of underprivileged people betrayed by conservative governments, rather than any threat to the poor themselves by dislodging tenants by their own arrival in St. Kilda.

Increasing ownership of units also posed potential problems for poorer tenants. The number of new flats being built in St. Kilda decreased markedly in the 1970s while increasing strata subdivision enabled more people to own their own units:

Flat building permits issued: 1971-1983³

<i>Year</i>	<i>Flats</i>	<i>Strata Applications</i>		
		<i>Total</i>	<i>New</i>	<i>Existing</i>
1971/2	459	341	304	37
1972/3	631	381	285	96
1973/4	294	307	203	104
1974/5	131	401	232	169
1975/6	72	414	172	242
1976/7	24	546	151	395

This change occurred partly because many small developers were unwilling to build flats and take financial risks in the prevailing

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economic climate or found Council's new residential development code too restrictive. The new code, introduced at the end of 1974, applied to two to four storey flats and introduced much stricter controls. Cr. Alan Bawden, an architect and management consultant to the building industry, formerly involved with the St. Kilda Progress Association, was instrumental in recommending changes, while the Flat Action Group, formed in 1974, also agitated against disfiguring development. Members of the latter group were partially satisfied with the code, but dissatisfied with the fact that Council still allowed commercial high-rise development in parts of the Upper Esplanade, Queens Road and St. Kilda Road.

Property developers were also deterred by cases of speculators failing to realise anticipated profits in St. Kilda because of changes in planning regulations. A notable example of this occurred when development licensed by the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works Amendment 45 was delayed, then abandoned. This Amendment permitted the construction of high-rise offices in the extension of St. Kilda Road from the junction to the Town Hall (formerly High Street). Many residents opposed such development. Members of the St. Kilda Progress Association, the St. Kilda Resident Action Group, St. Kilda Foreshore Protection Committee, West St. Kilda Conservation Group and the Flat Action Group made submissions to the town planning consultants, Loder and Bayly, who were already engaged by Council to study the implications of Amendment 45. After extensive consultation and compromise with the St. Kilda City Council, the MMBW resolved to permit a buffer zone of seven different sections between the more residential Brighton Road and the commercial stretch of St. Kilda Road, in a decision hailed as a triumph for resident action groups.

Opinion was divided about the long term effects of strata subdivision and how many tenants might be dislodged in the process. Many property owners and real estate agents welcomed the prospect of growth in the value in real estate, improvement of existing stock by proud new owners and a more stable population even though they were certain that many units would be re-offered for rental anyway. Real estate agents argued that if strata subdivision was refused, owners would achieve de facto subdivision by dividing buildings into company shares; furthermore, that there was no shortage of vacant low income accommodation in St. Kilda by 1977, as there had been in 1975, because working couples were buying homes sooner, and the young were remaining at home longer, or sharing accommodation

with larger groups because they could not afford to rent flats any more. Other residents, however, were determined to prevent any development which they believed would disadvantage the poor, and joined the St. Kilda branch of the Tenants Union. The branch, formed in 1975 after the Union's foundation in Fitzroy in 1974, argued that increasing availability of own-your-own units would reduce the availability of rental accommodation, increase its cost, and drive poorer people away, often without being given adequate notice that their unit was being sold. Some residents too, often employed in the public sector, had a view of the causes of poverty and inequity which made them doubt whether further property development by private enterprise, or increasing private ownership would ever work in the interests of the poor in St. Kilda, where over sixty per cent of the population were tenants. Many were beginning to view St. Kilda's cheaper rental housing, much of it built by private speculators in the past, as a priceless resource which had to be conserved for the disadvantaged.

Conflict within the community was not then, a straightforward case of the haves opposing the have-nots, or the propertied versus the propertyless. Often the case for the poor was not put by the poor themselves, because they were intent on survival or lacked knowledge and experience about the exercise of political power, but put instead by articulate educated professionals. As well, a great reserve of altruism and idealism, seen prior to 1972, was still bottled up in many middle-class residents of St. Kilda because of the inability of the Whitlam government to deliver desired social reforms. Many of these champions of the poor were even more determined to pursue ideals of social reform at the local level because they felt disillusioned by the turn of political events or because they were still quite secure enough themselves to consider the plight of others. Some felt guilty about the unevenness of the burden of the recession, perhaps believing too, that they had inadvertently contributed to problems for the poor themselves, by moving to St. Kilda in the first place, or by success in their action to conserve and protect the environment, thereby adding to St. Kilda's attractiveness and the value of property there.

Both the Tenants Union and members of the Real Estate and Stock Institute lobbied to promote their conflicting interests after Brian Dixon announced that the tenancy laws would be reviewed. Peter Lake, a Tenants Union housing research officer, opposed Dixon at the State elections of March 1976, and the Union was jubilant

before the election when Dixon promised community consultation and reform of the tenancy laws, which, as they stood, allowed eviction on two weeks notice, and did not compel landlords to provide property fit for habitation. Dixon held the seat of St. Kilda easily, and soon after, the Attorney-General, Haddon Storey, convened a meeting at St. Kilda to discuss the process of public consultation of tenancy law reform. A Community Committee of Tenancy Law Reform was formed which included real estate agents, tenants, economists, planners and welfare workers. Subsequently, the Residential Tenancies Bill, introduced in Parliament in December 1978, proposed controls of excessive rates and bonds, and the establishment of an informal tribunal to settle disputes. Reaction to the proposed reforms, however, was not as favourable from any side as Dixon had hoped it would be, caught as he was between the conservative interests in his party and the demands of a seat which was unlike any other it held. The St. Kilda Tenants Union criticised the retention of bonds, and provisions which permitted eviction after six months notice without landlords providing reasons, while St. Kilda estate agents described it as a move towards socialized controls in the private housing market, and circulated draft letters of protest for their clients to send to the government.⁴

One outcome of "gentrification" was a decline in the total population of the City, as houses and flats which had been home to large families, or let out room by room, were "restored" by young couples or wealthy single occupants. However, at the other end of the social spectrum, the number of unemployed rose. The city was polarising, with increasingly affluent and increasingly desperate sections of the population.

Total population and unemployment, June 1971 -June 1981⁵

	<i>1971</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>1976</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>1981</i>	<i>%</i>
Employed	34,229	97.3	28,674	93.8	24,962	90.2
Unemployed	961	2.7	1,888	6.2	2706	9.8
Total workforce	35190	100	30,562	100	27,669	100
 Total population	 61,203		 52,154		 49,370	

New community services were hard pressed to meet existing demands, and many people remained beyond any network of support.

Agencies like the Citizen's Advice Bureau were never empty, and their casebooks were full of entries which spoke volumes:

Deserted wife seeking immediate assistance. Quite destitute. Arranged food parcel. Contacted St. Kilda day care regarding twenty-two month old son. Referred her to Department of Labour regarding training scheme. Contacted SEC re threat of power cut-off due to non-payment of account.⁶

Volunteers knew too, that they saw only a fraction of those needing help.

There were many others beyond any network of support in St. Kilda, which was often home to outcasts from other places. Amongst them were dishevelled alcoholics, who weathered the night in doorways or parks, and returned to Fitzroy Street during the day to sit with other drinkers, greet familiar locals, shake their fists at the air, or cadge twenty cents from occasional strangers who were glad to get away from them. Elsewhere, other old people sat in dingy rooms, speaking in broken English to few others because they were still refugees, confused by memories of bright cultivated conversations in Europe and the dark gruesome pits of a war which had brought them to a city which was still strange. Other casualties, clutching their prescriptions after they were discharged from psychiatric hospitals, came to St. Kilda too, and wandered by its sane sea because it was a more generous city, not as mean as others where they would be singled out as being queer if their lipstick were skew-whiff, or buttons undone, or speech slurred, or hands shaky and yellow with nicotine.

There was a shortage of emergency accommodation and housing in St. Kilda well before the worst effects of unemployment and inflation were felt. Many people were unable to pay rents, bonds, advance deposits, gas and electricity bills and removal expenses. Social workers were sometimes able to find them overnight shelter in local resident's homes, pay for their accommodation in apartment houses through poor box assistance, arrange bond and rent money from the St. Kilda Welfare Organisation's resources, or find refuge for victims of domestic violence when there was room at the Women's Liberation Halfway House in Beaconsfield Parade. However, every night there would still be people sleeping in cars, lanes, on the beach, and under buildings in St. Kilda: in one disturbing case during the summer of 1975, social workers found a young couple, with a nine month old child and no bedding, who had spent three nights in a lane-way after being ejected from a rooming house. Some people sought shelter at the St. Kilda Emergency Mission Centre, opened by Reverend John Grant of 1 Princes Street, St. Kilda, which operated

from July 1974 until December 1975. It housed an average of sixteen people every night, and sometimes as many as thirty-five, whom Grant described as varied types: "from intact families without money and possessions to single teenagers caught up and confused by life". Refuge was also found behind the buttresses of St. Kilda's stately churches, and in the calm sanctuaries inside. Another possible shelter was the new library with its ledges outside and its warm, pleasant space inside, open for long hours every week.⁷

Matters became worse when unemployment and inflation became more noticeable in St. Kilda, and the national economy displayed long concealed flaws. Australia's economic susceptibility to international influences spelt great problems for the Whitlam government, which won a second term in 1974 after being forced to the polls because the Senate blocked Appropriation Bills (or Supply). After the election, Whitlam still faced an obstructive Senate, wage increases, inflation, and growing unemployment, even though the levels then would soon seem insignificant. His government introduced a Regional Employment Development Scheme in September 1974 to provide work in areas with high levels of unemployment. Under the scheme, jobless people in St. Kilda, who were registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service, worked at Elwood Park and on a restoration project at the St. Kilda Life Saving Club. Unemployment benefits were also fixed at a rate of \$36 per week, for sixteen to eighteen year olds, and \$51 per week for those over eighteen.

Whitlam was dumped soon afterwards in controversial circumstances which magnified and heightened divisions in St. Kilda. Malcolm Fraser became leader of the Opposition in March 1975 and refused to pass Appropriation Bills again in August 1975. Whitlam would not agree to a dissolution, and the Governor-General, Sir John Kerr, withdrew his commission as Prime Minister in November, replacing him with Fraser. In the elections which followed in December, Frank Crean held Melbourne Ports. But, overall, across the nation, the Liberal-National Country Party coalition secured a clear majority in both houses.

The legitimacy of Kerr's action was bitterly debated in St. Kilda. Whitlam's disillusioned supporters despised Kerr as a top-hatted conspirator, who had betrayed his working class origins and put democracy at risk, and accused Malcolm Fraser of taking a dishonourable path to power. Others wondered how shallow the impulse for reform had been in the first place, and how deep the forces of reaction ran, and became more determined not to give any ground to their

political opponents and fight hard for reform. On the other hand, some erstwhile Labor supporters did not think the dreams of 1972 were affordable any more, and anticipated stable, authoritative government from Fraser. Many blamed Whitlam for the economic and political crises, believing he had let them down, and singled out some of his ministers as foolish or incompetent. And conservatives rejoiced that the dangerous, socialist government had been removed after three aberrant years, however unorthodox the means of dismissal.

Angry protests occurred every time the Governor-General was seen in public, and his visit to St. Kilda on 13 November 1976, as a guest of the Royal Melbourne Yacht Squadron, showed how his office was viewed. Eureka flags draped balconies and festooned the Esplanade, and over three hundred spectators jeered as the dark grey Rolls Royce arrived, one and a half hours later than expected. Yacht Squadron members began cheering wildly in the Governor-General's defence, and over one hundred police moved between them and demonstrators as Sir John stepped out to open the centenary celebrations. As soon as the Naval Band struck up *God Save the Queen*, the blue and white flags of republicans waved more frantically, and chants of "Sack Kerr" continued for fifteen minutes while Melbourne Grammar School cadets and band members stood stiffly for inspection, as if oblivious to the cat-calls. The Governor-General looked apprehensive, his hand trembling as he raised his hat to acknowledge salutes, and his speech dwelt on the reception he had received:

In the 100 years since this squadron was formed, a great deal has happened including wars and depressions. They have been crises of a real type which make the trivial noises you are hearing disappear into limbo.⁸

Kerr's successor, Sir Zelman Cowen was given the task of restoring dignity to the office, smoothing over the constitutional cracks and healing the wounds inflicted by the dismissal. He was born in St. Kilda on 7 October 1919, attending Brighton Road State School from 1925-1927, when his family lived in Brighton Road; then St. Kilda Park Primary School until 1931, when they lived at Lambeth Place, off Alma Road. His father, Benjamin Cowen, (1892-1975), was a commercial traveller in the 1920s, and involved in the establishment of the Pacific Oil Company in the 1930s; he assisted Jewish refugees and was Australian President of the Jewish National Fund, President of the State Zionist Council, a President of the Temple Beth Israel, and a close friend of Rabbi Sanger⁹. Young Zelman was a choirboy at the St. Kilda Synagogue, and deeply conscious of the

dignity and authority of Rabbi Danglow, who attempted to reach a compromise on his behalf with Dr. Darling, the Principal of Geelong Grammar, after he was awarded a scholarship there in 1931 but was not permitted to go when his parents learnt he would have to attend chape¹⁰. Subsequently, Zelman Cowen attended Scotch College, then the University of Melbourne in 1936 where, as a brilliant academic, he was appointed tutor and extension lecturer in Political Philosophy at the age of nineteen, and won the exhibition for every subject taken for honours degrees in Arts and Law in his five undergraduate years.

His subsequent career had already made him one of St. Kilda's most famous sons prior to his appointment as Governor-General. He had won Victoria's Rhodes Scholarship in 1941, but did not take it up at that time because he joined the Navy, serving in Naval Intelligence. After his marriage to Anna Wittner at Temple Beth Israel, St. Kilda in 1945, he lectured at Oriel College, Oxford, in 1946, and became a Fellow of Oriel and the University in 1947, when he was Dux of the Oxford post-graduate law school. He was legal consultant, with the Honorary Rank of Brigadier, to the British Occupation Army in Germany, then taught at the Chicago Law School in 1949. On his return to Melbourne in 1950, he was Dean of the Faculty of Law and Professor of Public Law, and opposed Menzies' intention to outlaw the Communist Party in Australia at the time. His works included Federal *Jurisdiction in Australia* (1959) and a biography, *Isaac Isaacs* (1966); and in his introduction to the second edition of H. V. Evatt, *The King and His Dominion Governors* (1966), he foreshadowed future events when he warned that "uncertainty and vagueness in the definition of reserve powers may lead to inconsistent action and may embroil the Crown and its representatives in unhappy political controversy". He was knighted for services to law and education in 1967, when he also became Vice-Chancellor of the University of New England. His following appointment as Vice-Chancellor at the University of Queensland in 1970, proved to be one of the most difficult periods in his life because he was attacked by students for being too authoritarian and criticised by members of the Queensland right for not taking tougher measures. He was shaken by student behaviour because he thought it shattered the academic traditions he valued of civility and trust, and distinctions between the teacher and the taught.

He had a strong liberal belief in the importance of consensus, which was a spirit absent in Australia after the dismissal. His

experience at Queensland University had shown him how fragile consensus was, and after his appointment as Governor-General was announced, he emphasised his concern about people's readiness to take extreme positions rather than work within rules and constraints, and argued that questions should be answered in the realm of discourse rather than of violence. Prior to the civic reception accorded to him by a proud Council at the St. Kilda Town Hall in February 1978, he said that if he brought a touch of healing to the office, he would have rendered useful service to the country ¹¹

Many poor people in St. Kilda were in desperate trouble by the latter part of the 1970s. Community Group agencies were besieged with requests for money, food, fuel and housing. The Citizen's Advice Bureau, for example, dealt with 1,645 requests for material help of food, finance or fuel in its 2,626 client contacts in 1977/78, compared with 204 (of 1,525) in 1973/74.

The St. Kilda Community Group, under the presidency of Randall Kent, then Reverend Granton Hay, coped as well as its resources allowed and tacked on new services when funds became available. A Volunteer Outreach Program, organised by Ann Whyte from 1975, was partly designed to revive traditions of neighbourliness and voluntary work within the community. The St. Kilda Tenants Union was invited to establish a Tenant's Advisory Service and the Community Group also established its own accommodation service in 1977. In this service, Irena Davis was employed to develop a pool of emergency overnight accommodation; display lists of vacancies of flats, houses and rooms; establish a bond fund; and liaise with real estate agents and landlords, and organisations involved in housing and emergency accommodation such as Shelter.

Increasing unemployment caused great hardship in St. Kilda. There were always far more applicants for jobs than vacancies displayed at the St. Kilda Commonwealth Employment Service, where job-seekers were so transient that forty per cent of them could not be contacted within two to three weeks of registration in St. Kilda.¹²

Unemployment Rates:

St. Kilda Compared With Wider Areas 1976¹³

	Male <i>Rate</i>	Female <i>Rate</i>
St. Kilda	6.1%	6.3%
Inner Melbourne	5.3	4.9
Melbourne Statistical Division	2.9	4.6

When a new Commonwealth Employment Service St. Kilda Job Centre opened at 80 Acland Street in March 1979 three thousand and ninety people were registered for jobs, but details of only one hundred and sixteen jobs were on display.¹⁴

Many unemployed in St. Kilda were caught in a depressing downward spiral from which there seemed to be no escape: it was bad enough to be jobless and be labelled a dole bludger when the number of job-seekers outstripped the number of jobs available, but even worse when the cost of living increased and the dole did not. Some of the local unemployed met at the library in July 1979 and expressed their frustration about being on unemployment benefits. They spoke of their strong desire for work, dignity and a guaranteed minimum income, and Reverend Peter Hollingworth, of the Brotherhood of St. Laurence, also urged those at the meeting who knew the plight of the poor to speak of Australians' right to live above the poverty line.¹⁵

Rises in unemployment benefits, announced in the budget in August 1980, were cold comfort. The poverty line was calculated to be \$73 per week in April 1980, but the budget only allowed increases in the dole to \$53.45 per week for those over eighteen, and a \$10 benefit per child, and relaxed the income test to permit beneficiaries to earn an additional \$22 per week, or \$18.50 if they were under eighteen. For the nine per cent of the population unemployed in St. Kilda, the situation was desperate. Felicity Browning, the Senior Social Worker in St. Kilda, reported in November 1980:

The social work office has been affected by the dramatic increase in Unemployment Beneficiaries, the sub-poverty level of benefits paid, and the length of time during which people are receiving benefits...Tenancy and credit problems have increased noticeably over the last year...77% of people requesting emergency relief from voluntary agencies are in receipt of pensions and benefits...because of dwindling funds, a third of agencies has had to cut the aid given to each client to spread funds...In St. Kilda now, it is a matter of ringing around to find out who has money, e.g. Community Welfare Services, Accommodation Officer, etc., to assist with a bond or light bill.¹⁶

Council took up the matter of a guaranteed minimum income with the Fraser government in 1980, but again, there was little comfort in the response for those who needed immediate help. Council complained to Senator Chaney, the Minister for Social Security, that the number of people on unemployment benefits in St. Kilda had increased by 300% between 1974 and 1980, that benefits were below the poverty line, and that the average period residents were on unemployment benefits had increased to seven months. Senator Chaney

replied that the government would continue its policy of reducing inflation to reduce unemployment, and that:

The Government does, of course, recognise the need to provide an adequate level of income support to the unemployed but it also has a responsibility to ensure that rates and conditions of payment do not act as a disincentive to full-time work. Significant real increases in income support for unemployed persons could, for example, add to the problems associated with unemployment beneficiaries being able to receive more than a person with similar family responsibilities who is in full-time employment.¹⁷

In the meantime, such unemployment beneficiaries stared blankly at the skimpy job sheets posted in Acland Street, and knew their chances of gaining one position that hundreds of others sought was illusory.

At least, the Community Group rendered as much practical assistance as it could by establishing a Budget Advisory Service to help the poor: it provided a bus to the Prahran Market on the day after pension day, and surveyed meat and grocery prices in the Balaclava shopping centre to assist people on government benefits to survive after many had paid about fifty per cent of their weekly income on rent.¹⁸

The situation of unemployed, homeless youth in St. Kilda showed the price which was being paid as the full-time teenage employment market collapsed in Australia. Somehow, a new jobless generation had to be nurtured. Yet short term job training schemes, and support schemes, would provide no permanent solutions when there were simply not enough jobs for everyone. The Regional Employment Development Scheme was abandoned in June 1976 by the Fraser Government, and a Special Youth Employment Training Program (SYETP) introduced in October 1976, which subsidised employers for providing employment for six months. Then, the Community Youth Support Scheme (CYSS) was introduced in November to provide programmes for unemployed youth in areas of high unemployment like St. Kilda. The Community Group employed Dianne Otto as a youth worker in December 1976, with funds from the Department of Youth Sport and Recreation, and youths were encouraged to devise projects for themselves. They came up with an odd job scheme, working around St. Kilda for \$3 an hour, in a small project reminiscent of some tried over forty years before¹⁹. The Community Group provided room for the Community Youth Support Scheme at its new centre in St. Leonard's Avenue in 1978, but the CYSS later shifted to 165 Ormond Road, Elwood after ideological clashes be-

tween different professional welfare workers and volunteers about the need for structure and rules within the house..

It was evident in St. Kilda that many youths were becoming severely troubled and emotionally distraught as fewer and fewer jobs were to be found. One indication was that more contemplated suicide: the twenty-four hour Link-Up telephone crisis intervention centre at Inkerman Street, founded in 1975, reported more and more calls advising of intended suicide between January and April 1977, when members of its flying squad, directed by John Dickinson, attended to thirty suicide attempts, mostly from people aged between seventeen and twenty-five rather than the mid-thirties age-group which had predominated in the past²⁰. Youths also turned to the St. Kilda Crisis Centre founded by Salvation Army Officers, John and Pam Bond in 1976, and Father Bob Maguire at the presbytery of Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church in South Melbourne, or a new youth counselling "Drop-In" Centre called *Wellington House*, opened at 100 Wellington Street in August 1976, with Dr. Richard Griffith as Director, and Philip Badger as Assistant Director. Wellington House was the first centre of its type in Victoria, and was funded by the Mental Health Commission despite severe cuts in the Commonwealth allocation to mental health clinics in 1976. It provided counselling for youths from fourteen to eighteen whose problems often sprang from unemployment and family crisis.

Some unemployed, demoralised youths resorted to prostitution and drug use. Some with no legitimate source of income if they were under sixteen, and some between sixteen and eighteen, who were eligible for \$36 per week unemployment benefit, saw there was more money to be made from gutter crawlers in a few hours than the dole would yield for weeks, and began by prostituting themselves. Others started with drug use, then moved into prostitution, perhaps seeking some illusory escape, or wanting to numb their sensibility because they were already victims of domestic violence, neglect or incest. Often, they drifted to St. Kilda after being turned out of homes or school or other institutions, going there because media reports often gave explicit details of how drugs were obtainable around Fitzroy Street even though many drug counsellors believed less than ten per cent of drugs in Melbourne were sold there, and viewed it as a focus for desperate people rather than a drug capital because it always displayed what other suburbs hid.

The age of prostitutes decreased in St. Kilda throughout the 1970s. This was evident to police after a blitz around Acland, Grey

and Robe Streets in May 1977 when many plain-clothed women officers were used as decoys and several St. Kilda hotels were raided for drugs. Police concluded that there were more younger people prostituting themselves than had been the case in the past, that prostitution was becoming more closely tied with the drug trade and organised crime, and that investigation of massage parlours and worsening economic conditions were inducing prostitutes to move onto the streets and use single rooms²¹. Later, Bert Gaudion of the St. Kilda police estimated that the age of prostitutes had declined to about seventeen to twenty-five in 1980, whereas more had been aged between twenty-five to forty in the early 1970s, and that many young prostitutes were simply living from one drug fix to another²². The Foundation of Alcoholism and Drug Dependence also estimated in January 1980 that 95% of prostitutes in St. Kilda were on the dole, and most were addicts between fifteen and twenty-three, even though the President, Sir Edward Dunlop, admitted that drug addiction was a twilight area where few definite facts were known.²³

Younger people were drifting into a deadly trade as heroin appeared in larger quantities in Melbourne and street prostitution was part of distribution rackets. By about 1976, highly organised criminals had cornered the disorganised Melbourne "corner-shop" market running since the Hippie days of the 1960s and were dealing with heroin. The trade was organised hierarchically, with syndicate heads, removed from contact with narcotics, providing finance to traffickers to oversee international purchases; pushers, who often cut the narcotic for more financial gain, and were involved in other criminal activities; and dealers, who sometimes sold drugs to maintain their own habit, and perhaps cut it further before supplying it to users and addicts. Once addicted, a user of heroin would quickly experience intense craving, sweats and shakes, cramps and unbearable pain until their next dose. Users who might resort to prostitution, dealing, and burglary to maintain their habit, were often very transient, moving from rented rooms again and again, and were the group most likely to be apprehended by the police. After using the deadly narcotic for some time, human contacts might be limited to other users, pushers, dealers, prostitutes and the police.²⁴

Illegal drug use amongst youths changed according to availability. St. Kilda Community Group workers noticed an increase in use of barbiturates such as Tiunal, Mandrax and Seconal, which cost about \$2 per pill in Fitzroy Street in 1979. Sometimes death resulted. The body of a sixteen year boy, of no fixed address, who overdosed on

barbiturates was found behind All Saints Church in the winter of 1979, his lungs full of blood, his spleen twice the normal size, and his brain dark in colour. Sometimes barbiturates were peddled on the streets after being easily obtained from doctors: an Elsternwick doctor was de-registered when the State Medical Board found him guilty of prescribing drugs in other than a reasonable manner after a young woman died in her St. Kilda flat on 25 February 1980 from an overdose of Tiunal and Seconal. Lifesavers dealt with more cases of youths collapsing on the beach from barbiturate overdoses than they had ever done before: Elwood lifesavers, for instance, had seven cases in a fortnight in February 1980 of youths who overdosed on Mandrax and Serepax, compared with a total of two cases in 1979.

In the early 1930s residents had asked why heroic soldiers died in penury, by the late 1970s they had to ask what was happening in Australia when the life of some of its children was ending in the street.

Questions like these exposed growing schisms within Council about the interests they represented and the type of people they wanted to see living in St. Kilda. The ever altering Council now contained some Councillors whose political involvement had begun in community action groups in the late 1960s, and whose views made those Councillors once regarded as quite radical in chambers in the 1960s seem more conservative by the latter part of the 1970s.

Amongst the new Councillors was Helen Halliday, the first woman to gain such office in St. Kilda. She was encouraged to stand by fellow activists including her friend, Ailsa O'Connor, the artist, a teacher, sculptor, and former member of the Social Realist group of the Contemporary Art Society during the war. Ailsa O'Connor had moved to 22 Broadway in 1967, at a time when the new wave of feminism was having a profound effect on her view of her own life and work. She played an effective part in encouraging community environmental action groups to work together, and drew up many of the broadsheets publicising issues and ways in which St. Kilda could be a fairer place to live. A quiet person, who inspired those who knew her, she helped Helen Halliday, then a member of the Flat Action Group and West St. Kilda Conservation Group, to organise her election campaign to represent West Ward. Helen Halliday won a by-election in February 1975, and soon proved to be an accomplished performer at a time when many men in public life were still unused to dealing with women on that ground. She was joined on Council in

1976 by Elaine Miller, also involved with the Flat Action Group, who defeated Cr. Clarrie King after some Councillors had expressed surprise that a "house-wife", unknown to them, would nominate for Council. Other women Councillors would soon follow them. Cr. Mary-Lou Jelbart, an ABC broadcaster, became a Councillor in November 1978, and Cr. Bev Staughton, a manager of Brock's Hardware in St. Kilda, and wife of a former Mayor, was a Councillor for a brief time in 1980.

Council's vision of St. Kilda was becoming as divided as a broken mirror. Some hoped gentrification would accelerate because the city's social standing was so low. After all, St. Kilda had been given the worst rating of any city in Melbourne in a well-publicised sociological survey in 1976 which rated suburbs according to factors such as unemployment, poverty, divorce, mental illness, delinquency and suicide. Some believed if St. Kilda had fewer tenants its status would improve, and wondered whether unlimited provision of welfare services might reinforce perception of St. Kilda as a place for the poor, and attract more disadvantaged people and fringe groups to St. Kilda²⁵, when it would be better to attract middle-class property owners instead. Furthermore, some regarded the Tenants Union as a disreputable left-wing grouping of disaffected radicals and ratbag stirrers out to wrest the seat of St. Kilda from the Liberal Party. Cr. Zouch complained prior to the State election in 1976 that the Tenants Union should not be part of the St. Kilda Community Group because it was a political party, and clashed with Cr. Halliday, who defended the right of users of the Community Centre to defend their views at the political level.

She, and other Councillors including Crs. Miller and Bawden, took a different view of the fact that St. Kilda accommodated many disadvantaged groups. They believed Council should be more representative of the broad community, and when more services were needed as was the case because the economic crisis was worsening, then they should be provided. They were concerned about the abysmal turnout at Council elections, when sometimes fewer than ten per cent of eligible residents voted. Many tenants were unaware of their entitlement to vote if their name appeared on the lease or rent book as one of the first three listed occupiers, and there was difficulty in keeping accurate electoral rolls because of the high turn over of population. Cr. Halliday successfully put forward the motion in May 1977 to alter polling day from Thursday to Saturday, which was passed by six votes to five, arguing that it might boost participation

in elections from its meagre level. Although Cr. Zouch had unsuccessfully tried to introduce the same measure years before, he opposed it in 1977, arguing that the move discriminated against Jews, whose observance of the Sabbath from sunset on Friday prevented them from attending a polling booth before sundown on Saturday.

The incursion of the Tenants Union into local government politics revealed more about Councillors' views. The Tenants Union contested all four wards in the Council elections of 1977, which were the first to be overseen by Bill Sisson, who became Town Clerk after Jim Isaac retired. The Tenants Union candidates fared badly in the elections, despite the change in polling day, but still claimed some credit in influencing the shape of *Planning Policy Number Seven*, adopted by Council in September 1977. This stipulated that tenants should be notified by owners before applications for strata subdivisions were made, and also admitted the need for further research to guide planning. However, the new Mayor, Cr. Zouch denied the Union had any influence whatsoever on Council, and he threw down the gauntlet again after being sworn in, by criticising the living standards of some St. Kilda tenants, and querying the credibility of tenants who would despoil the quality of life in St. Kilda.²⁶

By then, Cr. Zouch was one of the most experienced and prominent members of Council, well in command of procedures and debate, with great insight into the operation of the media. He was very widely known in Melbourne as the Editor of the *Southern Cross* until August 1975, as the Victorian Chairman of the Australia Party after leaving the Labor Party, then as a member of the Liberal Party, and as a dapper alderman who often wore a flower in his button-hole. He was also clashing more and more frequently with Cr. Halliday.

The growing conflict between Councillors reflected conflict within their city. Social divisions were identified by Peter Viola, a former research officer for the London borough of Hammersmith, appointed by Council to report on social structure and housing in St. Kilda. His exhaustive research, presented in a two volume report, led him to describe St. Kilda as a community in conflict, and identify gentrification as being most evident in West St. Kilda, West Ripponlea and parts of Elwood. He saw that many different groups competed for housing in St. Kilda, their success largely dependent on their spending power and age. He saw splits between permanents versus temporaries, rich versus poor, owners versus renters, the childless versus families, and the old versus the young. He believed Council would play a vital role in determining how conflict would be resolved,

and in improving housing opportunities for the poor. By the time his second report was presented in February 1980, however, Council was poorly positioned to deal with the important points he raised, as confrontation became the order of the day.

II. CONFRONTATIONS

A single vision about the type of city St. Kilda should be, and who it should be for seemed as unlikely as a fused vision in a hall of mirrors, particularly when the emotional questions of prostitution and drug abuse became the issues on which the community split.

Residents squabbled about ways of dealing with prostitutes, who were largely blamed for the slower increase of property values in St. Kilda compared with other inner city areas. Opinion differed whether prostitutes could, or even should, be removed from St. Kilda, and people argued about the merits of increasing penalties, legalising or decriminalising prostitution, still in itself, not illegal in Victoria. Confrontations were very fierce because street activity and press publicity was worse than it had ever been before, and because feminist perspectives added new dimensions to the debate. The connection between drug addiction and prostitution made rational discussion even more difficult because so few facts were known about the extent of drug abuse and the merits of different treatments and many residents feared that the establishment of drug treatment centres would draw more addicts to St. Kilda.

It was difficult for local politicians to give the community a lead either. Brian Dixon was fired on from all sides too as he tried to push his reluctant government into considering alternatives to punishment of prostitutes, and nearly lost his seat in the process. Council became embattled and meetings deteriorated into disorderly slanging-matches where it seemed to some observers that some Councillors regarded female Councillors as being just as much of a nuisance in chambers as prostitutes were in St. Kilda.

The only ground for agreement about prostitution in St. Kilda was that something had to be done about it. Many residents were becoming extremely distressed by sights in St. Kilda streets in the late 1970s, particularly because young people were often involved and because gutter crawlers were such a nuisance to passers-by. Street activity around Acland, Grey and Robe streets was at its peak on Thursdays (a common payday), and Friday and Saturday nights

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from midday onwards. Robe Street was so hectic during the holidays in January 1977 that Sergeant John Sadler of the Vice Squad described it as a little race track: "If a set of brake lights goes on a group of cars will race to the spot to get the girl before the other guy"²⁸. Council traffic counts taken in Robe Street in early 1977, over a five day period, were as high as five hundred and ninety vehicles an hour, or one every six seconds, with 6,940 vehicles passing through the street in a twenty-four hour period²⁹. Nonetheless, few gutter-crawlers were prosecuted at the time:

Cases detected by the Victoria Police Vice Squad 1975-1977³⁰

<i>Details of Offence</i>	<i>Sex of Offender</i>		1975	1976	1977
Section 18	Female	Cases reported	184	204	294
		Cases cleared	184	204	294
		Cases proceeded with	183	200	283
Section 18	Male	Cases reported	79	176	70
		Cases cleared	78	169	66
		Cases proceeded with	70	121	57
Section 18A (Gutter Crawling)	Male	Cases reported	8	11	23
		Cases cleared	8	11	11
		Cases proceeded with	8	11	23

The State Government had failed to control massage parlours by using the back-door method of town planning regulations. Instead the number of these thinly veiled brothels increased in St. Kilda, though the increasing scrutiny of massage parlours and ensuing court proceedings, prosecutions and publicity which accompanied the new regulations did have the negative effect of driving more prostitutes out on to the streets. The government amended the Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme in September 1975 to include a definition of a massage parlour as: "any building or part of any building used for the purpose of body massage by a person other than a person registered under the *Masseurs Act* 1958 whether or not it is used solely for that purpose"³¹, and permitted the use of land for massage parlours in prescribed industrial and commercial zones, subject to Council approval.

Few of the parlours in St. Kilda met those requirements at the time the regulation was introduced. It was estimated that twenty-one such businesses were operating in September 1975, including sixteen in prohibited residential zones; one at HE/12 Marine Parade advertising as "Mobile Massage — Dial a Date"; and establishments

in Glen Eira Avenue, Glen Eira Road, Fitzroy Street and Clyde Street, zoned as local businesses, but operating without a permit³². Although Council favoured more punitive measures at that stage, it began legal proceedings against massage parlours and health studios breaching the regulations. The action was expensive and convictions were difficult to obtain because Council needed to obtain evidence of actual massaging being carried out and the names of the persons doing such work. Even when successful prosecutions were made, however, owners faced insignificant fines: on 30 June 1977, for instance, Rita and Sergio Fasio who owned *The Executive Suite* at 4 Glen Eira Road were only fined \$100 each for contravention of the Town and Country Planning Act on 30 June 1977.³³

The regulations were a failure: by September 1977, it was estimated that about thirty parlours, or nine more than those detected in 1975, were located in St. Kilda, and that only three had sought permits.

Residents were also disturbed by evidence of increasing violence in the massage parlour industry as isolated incidents exposed the hand of organised crime. The extent of standover tactics, assaults, rapes and murders associated with the multi-million dollar parlour industry was never clear, but a number of suspicious fires in local premises, including the *Hawaiian Health Studio* in Queens Road in January 1977, and the murder of a parlour owner in the same month were indications of its nature. James Kelly, the owner of the *Gentle Touch* parlour in St. Kilda Road, was shot near his Kew home in his Ford LTD as he left to drive to his parlour after receiving his customary wake-up call from a female employee, who managed the parlour during the night. He had employed twenty women who mainly catered for business men; his parlour fashionably decorated with antiques and shag-pile carpet within, and a dark green facade. Prostitutes themselves were often subject to violence from both standover men and clients which was infrequently reported: a woman from a parlour in St. Kilda Road, for instance, was stabbed in the chest by a customer in February 1977.³⁴

Something had to be done. In a clear departure from previous policy, Council resolved to face prostitution from a different angle.

Cr. Halliday was instrumental in convincing Council that legislation would be the most practical course. In a submission to the Public Works Committee on 3 March 1977, she linked increasing prostitution with growing unemployment, and argued that St. Kilda City Council would have to take a lead in confronting what was really

Melbourne's problem because prostitution, and the need for prostitutes, was something governments, and people not directly affected, would prefer to forget³⁵. She put the motion, seconded by Cr. Alan Bawden at the full Council meeting on 7 March 1977, that Council arrange a delegation to see the Chief Secretary, Vance Dickie, and Brian Dixon, expressing the opinion that:

...the only viable solutions for resident's problems rest with the State Government and they include the necessity to :-

(a) Legalize prostitution so that brothels can be licensed to operate in non-residential areas. It is fairly apparent that the problem of prostitution is not going to disappear by ignoring it or by the application of rigid controls.

(b) Make more powers available to police in respect of prostitutes soliciting and operating from the streets and for utilising unlicensed premises for the purposes of prostitution; and additional powers to be used against gutter crawlers.³⁶

She advocated legal controls because punitive methods had failed to solve the complex problem, and argued that prostitution could be viewed as a commercial arrangement between consenting adults rather than as a moral issue, and that residents who had been harassed by gutter crawlers had been victims for too long. Reflecting how feminist perspectives were altering perceptions of the problem, Cr. Garth Phillips supported her, expressing concern about discrimination, harassment and manipulation of female prostitutes and the belief that they should be free to practice with as little loss of human dignity as possible, provided that residents' rights were not impaired³⁷. All Councillors supported the motion except Cr. Zouch, who had unsuccessfully moved an earlier amendment to exclude all words after State Government. After the motion was passed, Council received further support from Brian Dixon, who tried to persuade his government to review legislation because existing laws did not offer workable means of control.³⁸

The State Government preferred to be seen enforcing penalties, however, rather than considering the legalisation of prostitution. The Chief Secretary was convinced there was little public support for St. Kilda City Council's position on legalisation, and he received the Council deputation of the Mayor, Cr. Thomas, the Town Clerk, Bill Sisson, City Engineer Vernhoeven and Crs. Miller, Bawden, Phillips and Halliday, without great enthusiasm.³⁹

Council tried to force the issue further by granting the first permit for a massage parlour under the 1975 planning amendment to Anette Peters on 10 April 1978. The *Something Incredible Saloon* at 15 Carlisle Street was given twelve months approval to operate with one

masseur between 9 a.m. and 11 p.m. from Monday to Saturday. It offered "strip tease, twin massage, Japanese massage and suspender massage", and its advertisements featured a naked woman lying on a bed with a credit card sign at her feet⁴⁰. The measure alarmed some residents and Councillors in other municipalities: Brighton Council requested that it should be informed of any intention to licence further brothels near its boundary by its errant neighbour, while Footscray Councillors feared that such legalisation would remove parlours from St. Kilda and push them into Footscray, Altona and Sunshine.⁴¹

Councillors, who advocated legalisation, soon found they were caught between opposing camps, and satisfied neither. On one side were residents in West St. Kilda, who wanted prostitutes removed from their streets and punished. They formed Westaction in August, with Colin Bell as Chairman, and Graham Bradbury as Vice-Chairman. This influential group lobbied the State Government to enforce more punitive legislation, and also promoted other schemes like tree planting and restoration of buildings. Colin Bell wrote in October 1978:

We are not concerned with the moral aspects of prostitution but this type of activity must be somewhere that it does not effect decent people...Property values have declined by 30% in some areas in the past two years and people are finding it impossible to sell their properties.⁴²

Soon after, in November, Westaction presented a petition signed by over a thousand people to the then Chief Secretary, Mr. Rafferty, in November 1978 which stated:

We, the undersigned residents of the City of St. Kilda, having little confidence in the manner by which laws of Victoria are drafted, administered and exercised, hereby demand that immediate action be taken towards the elimination of street prostitution, gutter crawling, illegally established massage parlours, sex shops, drug pushing and other associated crimes from the City of St. Kilda.⁴³

On the other side, members of the St. Kilda Women's Liberation Group, and the Prostitutes Action Group, which was formed in 1978 and later renamed *Hetaira*, favoured decriminalisation of prostitution. They commanded much less public support in the community than Westaction, though the very fact that prostitutes were showing a defiant public face indicated the rapid changes in attitudes about women's place since the days of Germaine Greer's visit to Melbourne. The Prostitutes Action Group argued that existing laws discriminated against female prostitutes, and encouraged working conditions involving the payment of exorbitant sums to pimps, or hoons,

and perhaps two-thirds of takings to parlour operators. They warned that legalisation might mean registration, and that such a legal record might jeopardise their right to other employment. Their broadsheet, which circulated amongst prostitutes in St. Kilda in November 1978, was headed "Why Should Prostitutes Pay?":

Why should prostitutes be hassled because of problems they don't cause? Straight women are complaining about being hassled by gutter crawlers. Why not find other ways to control gutter crawlers..

Is this just another way to set the police loose against prostitutes again? Prostitutes have rights as residents and citizens as well...⁴⁴

Members of the Prostitutes Action Group did not view themselves as degraded, pitiful victims or as sinners. One wrote to the *Southern Cross*:

Prostitutes get their reward. Not only financially but by having good, regular customers, who won't use anybody but you. We are complimented on our skill and recommended to their friends...At least I haven't sold my body for a lifetime merely to be lavished with wealth and to be made smart and "respectable"...At least I can set a time limit on my body — half an hour, an hour.⁴⁵

The opposing groups clashed at a forum on prostitution and drugs at the St. Kilda Town Hall on 19 November 1978, organised by St. Kilda City Council to prompt some action from the government. The majority of those in the audience of eight hundred supported Westaction. They booed loudly when a member of the Prostitutes Action Group addressed the meeting, and screwed up a sheet distributed by the Women Behind Bars Collective, titled: "Clean Up St. Kilda? — Who'd Be Left!". Graham Bradbury was given a hearty round of applause when he stated Westaction's unequivocal position:

The victims are those people whose home values have eroded and whose addresses have become a dirty joke ...Westaction believes the only acceptable level of prostitution in this area is nil..This community has got a great number of angry citizens who are unimpressed with council and state legislation and not content with the two-week clean-up that follows when we protest.

They listened intently as Cr. Halliday explained Council's position because for the life of them they could not understand why their West Ward representative, and first lady Councillor, would be condoning the immoral activity which had brought their Ward into such disrepute. Cr. Halliday made the logic behind Council's policy clear. She told them: "To truly eliminate prostitution is little more than a pious hope", and suggested that the government would probably take

the line of least resistance and leave things as they were. Hence, the action that was most likely would be suppression, or legalisation, which Council favoured. She outlined Council priorities as protection of residential amenity, elimination of criminal connections, elimination of exploitation and discrimination, and maintenance of hygiene.

Brian Dixon was then introduced. He was trying to walk a very tricky tightrope. He announced his government's intentions to introduce tougher penalties and fines against massage parlour operators, and against street walking, soliciting, and gutter crawling but also expressed his hope that those would only be interim measures, and distributed a discussion paper called *Prostitution — the Alternatives*, researched by Bronwen Rumbold. This paper suggested options including non-gender specific laws which would cover transvestites, homosexuals and sex-change cases, all increasingly common in the industry; that non-injurious, non-offensive prostitution practices should not be criminalised; a media and education campaign should make the public more aware of venereal diseases; and that drug treatment programs should be extended.⁴⁶

After the stormy meeting, vigilant members of Westaction continued to prowl at night, filing reports, which recorded their images of life on the other side of the fence:

ST KILDA STREET REPORT — Thursday January, 1979

Areas covered from 9.30 to 11.30 p.m.

Robe, Acland, Jackson, Grey, Fitzroy, Grey, Jackson, Acland, Robe.

1. Car No _____ 3 men from this vehicle entered "Tickled Pink" Massage Parlour.
2. Car No _____ picked up Blonde Pro. cnr Acland/Jackson, disengaged her after conversation in car.
3. Same car approached observers in two occasions within 50 meters in Jackson St. Upon approaching he claimed he was looking for Robe St. (did have a directory out), also stated he was to deliver a "Doona" to a shop in that street for a Mr. S of Glenhuntly Road (note similarity to car no), on behalf of butterfly Doona Quilt Co. Observations —not a clean-cut decisive personality.
4. Many groups of lower type environment gathered and loitering in Fitzroy street, in the vicinity of Theo's Cafe, and St. Kilda Cafe.
5. Had coffee at Theo's, in conversation with table company on elements of St. Kilda, posing as two tourists, it was freely stated on that situation of drug availability (sic), and the ages involved 15/16 year olds. Also that there was not the number of Prost. around that had been in the past. Much quieter in that respect. Drugs the main element.
6. Cnr Victoria and Acland St. 10.40 p.m. Dark Hair/thin/Jeans girl. Most obviously in a very distressed physical condition, staggering.

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supporting her head, but still approaching cars that slowly cruised around the corner.
7. 10.50 p.m. Cnr Fawkner & Acland Streets. Dark I-Tair/Red/ (very brief shorts)/Black top girl in conversation with occupants of Police Car No ... low tones conversation. P/C left girl approached car that pulled up behind and left scene. Returned in 10 minutes exactly in same car (11.01 p.m.) and took up position at corner. 2 males were obviously flanking her during all these proceeding, they were lurking near-by. When they noticed us taking notes from seat opposite, spoke with her and she left in a car with one, while the other chap proceeded up and loitered at Robe Street corner.

Conclusion -

All Pros. noted, on corners with the exception of the Victoria St. corner incident were flanked by two young males.

Monday January, 1979

Areas covered were the same, from 10 p m to 12 20 a.m.

Observations - "Tickled Pink" Massage Parlour, and one above, well lit, girls outside (including Jenny R_____), and definitely working.

Pros on Jackson and Acland corner. Fitzroy a mess both in respect to persons and rubbish. At least 50 gathered outside St. Kilda Cafe, including obvious transvestites. Mess on Tolarno side a disgrace.

2 Pros in Grey Street, near convent, car no _____ approached the big blonde (male species), and drove off alone. Girls entered (11.55 p.m.) Neptune Street and did not reappear. No __ Jackson Street was reported as harbouring Pros, and being on the premises.

Drunk asleep on foot-path Grey & Fitzroy Street corner.

Young thin Pros working Fawkner & Acland Street corner.

No Police Cars were observed at all during this trip, or time.

DURING BOTH NIGHTS TRAFFIC (GUTTER-CRAWLERS) WAS EXTREMELY HEAVY.⁴⁷

Like many other members of Westaction, the zealous vigilantes were convinced that drugs were the main element now making St. Kilda Melbourne's Gomorrah.

Apart from irreconcilable differences in moral viewpoints about prostitution, the connection between prostitution and drug distribution made it even less likely that any prostitutes would be able to convince residents they deserved consideration as workers choosing to supply a commodity in demand. At the very time they were beginning to show their face in the community, residents were dismayed by the sight of addicts metres from their front door and by violent evidence of the way some prostitute addicts were hopelessly caught up with organised crime.

Examples of the latter included the shootings in St. Kilda of Victor Allard in February 1979, and Peter Russell in 1980. Allard, a former member of the Federated Ship Painters' and Dockers' Union, who supplied heroin to prostitutes, was shot on Fitzroy Street at 1.15 am on 9 February 1979. No one was apprehended but it was thought that his murderer had demanded money after a prostitute addict had disappeared from the streets owing Allard about \$6,000 for about one hundred and eighty heroin caps he had given her to sell. In another incident, Peter Dale Russell, who was believed to make \$500 a day selling heroin to prostitutes, was shot at his flat in Waterloo Crescent in July 1980. A month later, the body of a drug courier who was to give evidence at Russell's inquest was found at Lilydale: he was John Desmond "Machinegun Fred" Gordon, a New Zealander, who lived in Inkerman Street, and had been expected to testify in the trial of Terence Clark, the man accused of the murder of Martin Johnstone or "Mr. Asia".

Such incidents were also grist to the media mill. Many stones were being cast at St. Kilda by the mass media which made many residents more outraged and determined to give prostitutes and addicts no quarter because of the shame they had brought to the city. Article after article was appearing in the daily papers employing terms like "streets of hell", "devil's playground", "drug supermarket", "streets of death" and "the devil's triangle". St. Kilda was a very easy target. For instance, radio personality, Derryn Hinch, said he would be ashamed to be the Mayor of St. Kilda. Michael Willessee despatched camera crews down to Fitzroy Street to obtain quick footage of drug addicts or show how and where drugs were obtained for his current affairs program. The message was clear: St. Kilda was the place to be stoned in Melbourne.

More Councillors responded to the outrage Westaction expressed and the dismay of distressed residents by taking high moral ground and demanding that prostitutes be given no consideration. After the Prostitutes Action Group applied to use the St. Leonards Avenue Community Centre for meetings, only Councillors Miller, Halliday, Slattery and Bawden took the view that prostitutes should be able to meet there, because the centre should be open to all groups. In doing so they perplexed many emotional residents, who could not accept that prostitutes should be regarded as members of the community, or who had clashed already with others in the Community Group about the use of the troubled St. Leonards Avenue Centre as an open house and the disruption caused by psychiatric patients to structured

programs. An onlooker at the meeting, and resident of Robe Street, who thought the use of the Centre by prostitutes would make St. Kilda a "laughing stock", believed the four Councillors failed to acknowledge the connection between prostitution and drug abuse:

...the main reason that there are so many street-walking prostitutes —predominantly teenagers...(is) the incredible drug problem. Many of the gutter-crawlers are drug pushers...Most of the girls, we, the residents, see every day or night appear to be quite "out of this world"! Some of them work from 10 am until 3 am — We (the residents know them, we speak to them!) often offer help, but it appears to us, that these young addicts who have resorted to prostitution — are beyond our help.⁴⁸

The four Councillors were also attacked by Cr. Ken Barker, who had been strongly supported by Cr. Zouch in his successful bid to gain a South Ward seat in August 1976. He accused prostitutes of trying to gain respectability by their application. Cr. Zouch agreed too, that people should not be forced to mix with prostitutes, and threatened to find ways to stop funding for the centre if the Prostitutes Action Group were allowed to use it, drawing Cr. Halliday into the debate with remarks like: "Unless she is without scruples she will have to put the record straight"⁴⁹. After the confrontation, Council resolved to assess the feasibility of the publication of names of gutter crawlers, requested increased police power to obtain warrants of entry in massage parlours for the purpose of prosecution, and requested equal treatment under the law for male and female prostitutes⁵⁰. In the end, the Prostitutes Action Group ended the dispute about the community centre by withdrawing its own application because it did not want to be the cause of the Community Group losing the financial support of Council, noting the St. Leonards Avenue was like a battlegrounds⁵¹ — an apt description considering the bitter clashes occurring there between professional workers, who in some cases were radical feminists, and volunteer workers who had lived in St. Kilda for many years.

Schisms widened in the community after another police blitz. Operation Zeta, launched just before the State elections in May 1979 was the largest police operation ever seen in St. Kilda. It focussed on the area between Acland, Barkly and Fitzroy streets. More than three thousand people were questioned; over three hundred cars stopped and checked; hundreds of people booked for consorting, theft, drug trafficking, and soliciting; hotels raided; and stolen goods, hashish blocks, heroin and marijuana seized. When the operation ended, Phil Bennett, the Detective Superintendent in charge, claimed: "The riff-raff will not be allowed back in St. Kilda".⁵²

Days after the operation began, Brian Dixon only held the seat of St Kilda from David Hardy of the ALP by eighty-three votes, and gave the Liberal Party a one seat majority in the Legislative Assembly. His views about prostitution and abortion certainly cost him votes though many other factors came into play. Worsening economic conditions made St. Kilda look less and less secure. He had failed to gain preselection for the blue-ribbon seat of Brighton years before, and knew there were many opponents in his own party who posed greater problems for him at times than the Labor Party itself. Crucial Democratic Labour Party preferences, from candidate John Cotter, were directed away from him because his position on prostitution was regarded as permissive, because of the extremely low rating he had received from the Right To Life Association for his stance on abortion, and because he supported the choice of Moscow as a site for the Olympic Games in 1980. Some local Catholics were also displeased because he had been divorced. Furthermore, he received very damaging publicity, and an apology from the Police Commissioner, S. I. (Mick) Miller after police reported that he had been seen in the company of a criminal, after a visit to a massage parlour with his research assistant whom he later married. Miller said the report was an "act of stupidity", and the proprietor Anette Peters said someone was "out to cut Mr. Dixon's throat" because he was simply thanking her for her help with the preparation of his discussion paper on prostitution⁵³. His task was harder too, because the Liberal Party was dogged by scandal following the Housing Commission land deals, the expulsion of Doug Jennings and Charles Francis, and allegations of MMBW mismanagement. Believing that Dixon's personal popularity exceeded that of his party, his campaign committee concentrated on a "Back Brian Dixon" campaign. He also received unsolicited support from Councillors Bawden, Halliday and Miller, who were not affiliated with any party, for his work in St. Kilda, cooperation with Council and preparation of the paper on prostitution⁵⁴. After his slim victory, he partly attributed the narrowness of his margin to the inability of Orthodox Jews to register a vote, because polls closed at six rather than eight o'clock as they had done in the past, to his taxing ministerial duties, which had included a review of welfare services and the creation of the Department of Community Services, and to misrepresentation of his views on abortion and prostitution. Clearly, prostitution was a mine-field for politicians.

Cr. Zouch had few doubts about the majority view and expressed his position when a new action group emerged in St. Kilda. The group

called SKRAG (St. Kilda Residents Action Group) appeared in July 1979 and was formed by residents who claimed that Operation Zeta had infringed civil liberties. It aimed to protect the rights of prostitutes, homosexuals, unemployed people and people from lower income groups, whom it described as part of the city's cultural tradition⁵⁵. Many ratepayers were enraged by such gall and only a few Councillors responded to the invitation to attend the inaugural meeting where Cr. Halliday suggested SKRAG should test whether there was any community support for their views by contesting elections, and Cr. Bawden endorsed their right to express an alternative view to Westaction. On the other hand, Cr. Zouch described SKRAG as extremist, and said the meeting was sponsored by the Gay Teachers and Students Union, the Women's Abortion Action Campaign, Women Against Rape, Monash Feminist Lawyers, the Communist Party of Australia and Hetaira; hence, it was a "loud mouthed ratbag group that St. Kilda would do well without", and in words which gained great publicity, he added: "I am quite sure we can live quite happily without prostitutes, pimps and poofers".⁵⁶

Council was becoming more and more polarised, as was the community. Cr. Zouch commanded further support when Colin Bell of Westaction was elected in August 1979, after Cr. Bawden retired. Increased punishment became the favoured means of control even though punitive legislation and police action was failing to curb street activity. By this stage, Robe Street was so active that outraged members of Westaction, now led by Margaret Williams as President, were throwing buckets of water and stones from their windows at offending street walkers, and booby-trapping bushes in their gardens to deter trespassers.⁵⁷

Council revoked the permit for the Something Incredible Saloon in November 1979, despite the opposition of Cr. Halliday, and called for control of adult sex shops as well as increased police powers. Police were having increasing difficulties in establishing the sex of offenders as it was thought that half the estimated five hundred prostitutes in St. Kilda were transvestites by that time.⁶⁸

Rational debate about treatment of drug problems was impossible when feeling ran so high, and prostitution was so firmly linked with addiction and trafficking in many residents' minds. There was yet another outcry when social workers and health workers recommended the provision of a medical centre in St. Kilda and the appointment of drug outreach workers to counsel addicts. Councillors who supported the proposals no longer commanded a majority, and faced the

ire of ratepayers who accused them of betraying St. Kilda by providing facilities which would draw more prostitutes and addicts there.

The situation was more complicated because few hard facts were known. People were frightened by press reports. Authorities differed about the validity of new treatments like methadone, which substituted one form of addiction for another; and different agencies were competing for scarce funds, and confused the public further with conflicting claims about suitable treatment. Residents were also influenced by the arguments of Dr. T. B. Stephens, of the Health Commission's alcohol and drug services branch, who warned Council against the use of methadone as a legal substitute for heroin, and stated that any clinic in St. Kilda could become a centre for methadone trafficking⁵⁹. Hence, Westaction members and many other residents protested strongly against proposals by the Uniting Church Moreland Hall Alcohol and Drug Treatment Centre in early 1980 to establish a hostel at 5 Princes Street, primarily for the rehabilitation of female heroin addicts, and argued such a centre would bring more undesirables to St. Kilda, and more shooting up in the street.

By then Council Chambers resembled a shooting gallery itself. Disorderly scenes became more common as debate degenerated into a show of personal abuse, slanderous remarks, bullying and muck-raking.

The barrage was very fierce, because female Councillors refused to be treated like sitting ducks, and fired many shots of their own. When they sought local government office, they had not expected to be told in Council chambers that they were the petticoat brigade, frustrated witches, or lesbians rather than ladies.

Trouble flared after Beverley Staughton defeated her opponents Sam Taylor, the Managing Director of Balaclava Hardware, and Margaret Williams of Westaction to win a by-election in May 1980. Despite the existence of By-law 205 which specified that Councillors were not allowed to engage in imputation, or make personal reflections on other Councillors, Cr. Zouch mounted a personal attack against her after she was sworn in, which stunned other Councillors and caused so much uproar that the police were called to the Town Hall by the Town Clerk to restore order later in the evening". Cr. Zouch was roundly condemned for his behaviour and Cr. Staughton commended for her dignity in the press. Peter Isaacson observed that his former employee would do better to rehabilitate his seedy municipality rather than engage in tawdry research, heading his article "People in glasshouses...". Nancy Dexter of the *Age*, a campaigner for

women's rights since *her Accent* column began in 1972 and an Editor who transformed the women's pages of that paper, also praised the four female Councillors, who did not agree on many issues, for supporting one another in the face of "fairly explicit sexist opposition"⁶¹. Subsequently, at the following annual elections, Cr. Zouch only held his South Ward seat by sixty-one votes after a strong challenge from Keith McGregor, area manager of an oil company. Nonetheless, he was pleased when Cr. Staughton, was defeated by Sam Taylor by twenty-six votes in a clean fought campaign, though Cr. Taylor himself would soon to be subjected to allegations in Council which questioned his right to hold office.

Cr. Zouch denied the existence of a "Zouch group", but in the new Council, headed by Cr. Clarrie King as Mayor, Crs. Zouch, Taylor, Irving, Barker, Manning and Bell voted as a bloc on many issues, particularly those concerned with welfare, conservation, drugs and prostitution, often opposing developments or services which, they felt, attracted "undesirables" to St. Kilda.

It seemed that the majority of Councillors not only favoured the exclusion of prostitutes and drug addicts from St. Kilda, but also the exclusion of female Councillors from any influential positions Council offered when they reassembled in September 1980. Cr. Helen Halliday was excluded from every committee, and walked out in disgust. No women were represented on the Finance, and Works and Planning Committees, and Cr. Elaine Miller was replaced as St. Kilda's representative on the Municipal Association of Victoria. Cr. Brian Slattery and Cr. Robert Browning were also excluded from Finance, Community Development, and Works and Planning Committees, and though it was customary for every ward to be represented on each committee, the new arrangement left Central Ward unrepresented on two, and North Ward unrepresented on another. An observer in the gallery, Marie Bell, believed she had witnessed a "ruling elite" declare themselves, even though the offending Councillors may not have been unaware of the sexual basis of their stance:

... Cr. Barker spoke glowingly of "dutiful wives sitting on the beach watching their husbands sailing on the waters of West St. Kilda".

Was he perhaps dreaming of days gone by when the Council chamber held no women, especially women of the capabilities of Crs. Halliday, Jelbart and Miller?⁶²

Council was in a shambles and some residents thought it only a matter of time before it was sacked as the Melbourne City Council was in early 1981. The balance was altered somewhat after the death

of Cr. Manning, and the election in November 1980 of Cr. Keith McGregor, a self declared "Independent". Nonetheless, whenever a casting vote was required, the Mayor, Cr. King, usually voted as Cr. Zouch did even though he did accuse Cr. Zouch of turning Council into a two-ring circus at one stage. Meetings often continued until the early hours of the morning and the routine became predictable. A typical example occurred in May 1981 when Cr. McGregor moved to restrict the time of speeches in May 1981. Cr. Zouch expressed his opposition at great length, the motion was defeated six all on the casting vote of the Mayor, personal insults were exchanged, and Cr. Halliday objected to Cr. Zouch's reference to her as "woman".⁶³

Debate became particularly acrimonious whenever the matter of drug treatment arose. Cr. Halliday chaired a Community Drug Liaison Committee, which was sponsored by St. Kilda City Council with Jeremy Tatchell as Secretary, and was the first to be established in Australia in accordance with the recommendations of the Hon Mr. Justice Williams' Australian Royal Commission of Inquiry into Drugs. Its main purpose was to promote greater awareness of problems of drug abuse and to discuss appropriate drug services south of the Yarra. Repeated applications were still being made by the Uniting Church's Moreland Hall to establish their proposed centre in Princes Street, but the majority of Councillors still maintained that drug addicts were not wanted in St. Kilda. Tempers flared at the meeting on 6 July 1981, after Cr. Halliday supported yet another application on the grounds that St. Kilda had to confront the existence of serious drug problems, and take positive action. Crs. Zouch and Barker brought her to tears with their arguments against the "methadone pick up centre in the municipality", and then made remarks including: "Want a hankie?" and "Don't cry, love".⁶⁴

The *Southern Cross* analysed Council's sorry state prior to the 1981 election when journalist, Leon Gettler, presented articles which Cr. Zouch described as biased and blatantly partial. Gettler identified a "progressive bloc" of Councillors Halliday, Jelbart, Slattery, Miller and Browning; a "conservative" group where "Crs. Barker and George Irving always seem to be riding shot-gun on the Zouch stagecoach"; and only regarded Cr. McGregor as unaligned. Divisions were not on political party lines, however, for although Crs. Zouch, Taylor and Bell were members of the Liberal Party, Cr. Browning was a member too, being the Vice-President of the Ripponlea Branch, and Chairman of the St. Kilda Liberal Election Committee. The remaining Councillors were unaffiliated with any party. Cr. McGregor did

not regard Gettler's description of the division as being accurate, but he did join with Crs. Halliday, Jelbart, Miller, Slattery and Browning in a statement to the *Southern Cross* on 22 July 1981 that a concerted effort was being made to remove female Councillors from the St. Kilda City Council. Cr. Robert Browning described the situation:

The attacks on Female Councillors here have been shameful. They have not been allowed to speak without interjection and harassment. Their views are systematically ridiculed. Those male Councillors who do not join in attacking the women are themselves subjected to continuous personal attack, but these attacks don't have the destructive and bullying force that is applied when one of the women Councillors stands up to speak.

Such attacks are ~~even~~ more amazing..when you consider that each of the women concerned is married and fully involved with her family, and that each of them has been extremely productive in St. Kilda.⁶⁵

Cr. Mary-Lou Jelbart went further:

Certain councillors have persistently attacked and denigrated the women in this council and they have been assisted by the silent assent of some of the male councillors who have not had the courage to object to their disgraceful behaviour. Within the past few weeks, the women councillors here have been accused of being "lesbian", of not being "proper" ladies, of being "frustrated witches". That these remarks are permitted and condoned gives some indication of the way council is being conducted.⁶⁶

Cr. Halliday was not prepared to let such conduct pass. She did not renominate for West Ward in 1981 in the belief that it was not possible to sustain a productive effort for more than two terms, but lodged a complaint against Crs. Zouch, Barker and King with the Victorian Equal Opportunity Board. The Board had been established in 1977 under the *Equal Opportunity Act* to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of sex and marital status in employment, education, the provision of goods and services, and accommodation. She alleged that Crs. Zouch and Barker harassed her during speaking time and excluded her and other female Councillors from committees; that the Mayor, Cr. King, failed to protect her right to be heard; and that she had been prevented from serving her constituents because of treatment afforded to her by other Councillors because of her sex.

She was warmly supported by the Gallery at her final meeting. Onlookers jeered when Cr. Zouch pulled out a white handkerchief and asked if she would be displaying her usual exhibition of tears, and their cries of "You are paranoid, Zouch", and "Shut him up Mr. Mayor", provoked Cr. Zouch to tell them if they came more regularly, they would be better acquainted with "the pathetic performance of

women councillors on this council"⁶⁷. He denied that he objected to women in public affairs but said they should not receive any favouritism on the basis of their sex.⁶⁸

Some equilibrium returned when Council reassembled after the elections, though the balance of power was unchanged, with Cr. David Edwards taking Halliday's position. Cr. Elaine Miller and Cr. Colin Bell contested the Mayoral position, securing five votes each, so Bill Sisson had to draw the name of the Mayor from a hat and Cr. Bell was successful. Council also returned to a more balanced and representative committee structure, and meetings were conducted in a more orderly manner. As well, Council went so far as to vote in favour of a drug treatment centre, "South of the Yarra", with a thirty day withdrawal methadone program in November 1981.⁶⁹

The case brought by Helen Halliday ended in the Supreme Court in March 1982. Initially, Crs. Zouch, Barker and King challenged the jurisdiction of the Board to hear the complaint, and opposed a request that tape recordings of five Council meetings be subpoenaed as evidence. However, the Chairperson of the Equal Opportunity Board, Joan Dwyer, announced in November 1981 that the Board had voted 2-1 for the proposition that it had jurisdiction to hear the case, and rejected arguments that Council meetings were privileged in a similar manner to Parliament. She, and Board member Don Ross, took the view that if a Council downgraded Councillors on the basis of their sex, this could be read as a failure to provide the service of representation to the ratepayers, as well as failure to provide the service to the Councillor of allowing her to represent her ward". However, the other member of the Board, Dr. Ian Sharp had dissented from this view on the grounds that the alleged withholding of an individual Councillor's right to give services to the public was not relevant to the Board, only the withholding of services provided by a local government authority. Subsequently, the St. Kilda City Council defeated a motion that it should cover the legal costs of Crs. Zouch, Barker and King, and it authorised Council solicitors to release to the Town Clerk five tape recordings of Council meetings for production before the Board, despite the strong protests of Cr. Zouch. However, the Equal Opportunity Board's right to hear the complaint was challenged in the Supreme Court by the respondents, and Sir John Young, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court stopped the Board from hearing Halliday's complaint on 25 February. The following month, Mr. Justice Marks ruled that Section 26 of the *Equal Opportunity Act* dealt with discrimination in services provided by a local

government authority, and he did not think the three Councillors provided services to Mrs. Halliday "within the fair, meaning of the word".

The ruling cast doubt on the efficacy of the Act, and was regarded as a setback for Victorian women: Joan Dwyer said if Mrs. Halliday's allegations were true then the Supreme Court decision was against the spirit, if not the letter of the law; and Helen Halliday expressed bitter disappointment because the Act should ensure that women take their place beside men, not only in employment, but in public office.⁷¹

Nonetheless, Halliday's action ensured that Councillors who spoke in terms of the petticoat brigade would be given short shift in the future in St. Kilda. As an example of their even-mindedness, Crs. Zouch, Barker and King pointed to their endorsement of Margaret Williams of Westaction at a by-election to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Cr. George Irving, their erstwhile supporter. By that time, however, Westaction was losing support, having been described as a plaything of aspiring politicians, and a forum of narrow minds by Nicole Bradbury, a foundation member⁷². Tony Della-Porta, who had been supported by Helen Halliday, won the election in a result which Cr. McGregor interpreted as a clear indication of the "waning power" of the conservative or Zouch faction.⁷³

Later in the year, Cr. Elaine Miller became the first woman to be Mayor of St. Kilda in one hundred and twenty-seven years, her election confirming the right of women to take their place beside men in public office as people with an important contribution to make, and bade well for St. Kilda. As well, Cr. Margaret Niall was elected to represent South Ward, taking a particular interest in child-care and community health. Nor would Cr. Zouch be returned when his term expired in 1983, being replaced by Cr. Terry Collison.

The entire confrontation served as an indication too, that an inability to view women on equal human terms in daily life sometimes mirrored an inability to deal with prostitution in anything but a punitive manner.

III. SPLIT IMAGES

Meanwhile, the battles on Council had not prevented some Councillors from getting on with their real job: to make St. Kilda a better place to live in. One such activity was the St. Kilda Festival of 1980.

It was timed to celebrate the city's one hundred and twenty-fifth birthday, and show that St. Kilda was a city with a myriad of faces.

This first Festival, which Cr. Jelbart played a leading role in organising, drew together many of the facets of St. Kilda which made it such a lively showplace with its artists, musicians, writers, entertainments, gardens, beaches, shops, and historic buildings.

The strains of baroque and classical music wafted from the Christ Church Vicarage grounds, spinets sounded in the church, jazz bands improvised in Albert Square, rock bands jived at the Esplanade, country and western bands twanged earnestly, and the City Band happily oom-pah-pahed away. Crowds on the Esplanade bustled past the jaunty displays at the Art Bank and threw coins in the buskers' hats; and boys and girls created a mural under the eye of Mirka Mora, or had their faces painted so they could be clowns or tigers, or listened to stories. Artists opened up their studios, and welcomed visitors who wandered around their looms and kilns and easels. The *St. Kilda Sketchbook*, written by Stan Marks and illustrated by Bill Brodie, was launched by Sam Lipski, who described St. Kilda as Melbourne's urban heart. At the Palais, film lovers enjoyed some of the films F. W. Thring had made in the days when St. Moritz was a studio.

St. Kilda remained an important place for artists because new galleries were opening where they could display their work, and many also responded to the resilience of the down and out which was exposed there. Different St. Kilda artists showed their work in the Acland Street Gallery, opened by Bob Hawke in April 1980 at the former site of the notorious Tickled Pink Massage Parlour. Its walls, once shocking pink, were now displaying the work of John Howley at its first exhibition. Rachell Howley also managed the art gallery which was formerly the Tolarno in Fitzroy Street, after its founder, Georges Mora, moved to South Yarra, and took the name of Tolarno Galleries with him. As a gallery director, she had astute eye. The exhibition of James Wigley's work at the Acland Street Gallery in 1981 revived interest in his artistic achievement as a social realist and contemporary of Bergner and Counihan. As well, Douglas Stubbs, well known in St. Kilda as the archetypal bohemian, with his flowing hair and beard, showed his *Eureka Stockade* series at the Rachell Howley Art Centre in April 1982, and Jeffrey Bren of Elwood had a number of exhibitions in her galleries. Bren's *Phantasms and Fantasies* exhibition at Acland Street in 1981 included paintings for those around him with no voice, as it included frightening images of

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the horrors of delirium tremens, and the booze bootle as armour, and showed the price he had paid for his own alcoholism.

Artists such as Mirka Mora and Albert Tucker who had lived there in the past, were drawn back to St. Kilda again, because it suited them better than any other place. Mirka Mora returned in 1981 after leaving in 1975 to live in Toorak, then Rankins Lane off Little Bourke Street. Her work included paintings innocent and erotic, drawings, costume and set designs, a travelling show of dolls for the Crafts Board and an embroidery show at regional galleries. She had completed a mural at the Playbox Theatre foyer, and painted a tram in 1978, which delighted Melbourne. She was the visiting artist at Connecticut College in 1979 and tutor artist at the Preston Institute of Technology in 1980 before returning to live in Barkly Street in 1981, surrounding herself with books, dolls, paint and canvas. There, the knowledge that children walked beyond her door, led to self examination:

Near the sea you expect paradise but in St. Kilda you face the dilemma of living close to disaster and that is good for an artist. A painter is a maker and people are fragile. You question all your values when prostitutes and children and drug addicts walk near your home. And you ask what is the point of painting when children are walking outside in the cold; homeless. But one must hold the fort while the world grows up.⁷⁴

Albert Tucker returned too, living permanently in Blessington Street, St. Kilda in 1983. He appreciated St. Kilda after his extensive travel overseas and time in the country because it was a dynamic place where good and evil worked alongside one another, and conflict was ever present. He continued to paint, and some of his portraits of faces he had seen, like Sidney Nolan, Sunday Reed, John Reed, Joy Hester, Barrett Reid, John Sinclair and Noel Counihan, explained more about himself and his past.

Other artists, who came to live in St. Kilda for the first time, were delighted by the beauty, colour, and exotic and eccentric elements they saw there. Greg Irvine captured some of these facets in the posters he designed for the first three St. Kilda festivals, the first poster in 1980 featuring palm trees and the sea, the old kiosk on the pier, and sailboats and sea gulls. He had arrived in Mary Street in 1979 with his wife Chantal, then moved to a two-storied house in Alfred Square where there was plenty of space for his studio and growing family. He was born in 1946, studying at the National Gallery Art School, and first exhibiting when he was eighteen. Amongst his exhibitions after moving to St. Kilda were shows at the

Holdsworth Gallery in Sydney and the Gallery Art Naive in Melbourne. He designed sets and costumes for the Australian ballet production of Scheherazade in 1980; and won the Boechout Art Prize in Belgium for mixed mediums in 1982, and exhibited in the Alpha Gallery in Brussels where his work was acclaimed as lyrical, romantic, luminous and dreamlike.⁷⁶

St. Kilda remained Ailsa O'Connor's home until her death in February 1980. There she established a comfortable studio and sculptured as she had always wanted to do. She had her first solo work of sculpture and drawings in 1975, and won the Caulfield City Council invitation art award in 1979. She wrote numerous reviews, and articles about images of women in art, women's art history, and the role of art in social change. She gently encouraged many other artists, and always affirmed the need for art which people beyond the verbiage of universities could identify with, and for realism which affirmed positive human values and penetrated the general consciousness, rather than art which was obscure and esoteric. She died of cancer in 1980, aged fifty-nine, not long after she gave a talk at the St. Kilda Library about her early married life with Vic O'Connor and political activity in the days when she and Joy Hester were on different fringes of the Contemporary Art Society.

She left Melbourne with strong serene statues, like that of Mary Gilbert in the Conservatory of the Fitzroy Gardens in Melbourne. She wanted this statue to suggest innocence, the potential for hard work, courage and resilience; and she hoped when people looked across the city skyline with its edifices constructed by nameless workers, who were in turn supported by women, and saw that as their memorial, they might then turn to the small figure of Mary Gilbert, standing in the green, and ask who should be honoured.⁷⁶

St. Kilda City Council recognised the Municipality's importance to many artists, and began to acquire art works again in 1980, as it had done in the nineteenth century but ceased to do in the 1920s. Again, Cr. Jelbart played a leading role in this revived interest, and Council began collecting work from artists who had links with the area, or work which related to it: in 1980, works by Geoff Lowe, Robert Rooney, Craig Gough and Gary James joined those of Rupert Bunny, and other Victorian artists, and the works already presented to the city by Sir Sidney Nolan.

Musicians of all types lived in St. Kilda as they had always done. Denis Farrington still worked at home in Carlisle Street taking bookings and lining up musicians as he had done for years; instru-

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ments stacked in the corner; drum kits in the lounge; friends sitting nearby and others streaming in and out all the time; the old Acland Street barber shop sign, faded clippings and photos pinned up around him; exercise books on the shelves behind him full of the names and phone numbers of drummers, pianists, saxophonists and other musicians he had worked with since arriving in St. Kilda in 1941; registers of over thirty years of bookings for his bands and artists at dances, receptions, and clubs stacked in front of him; coffee cups around him; and two phones ringing at once as he arranged entertainment all over Melbourne the next day, or next week, or next year.

Rock groups like Painters and Dockers, and Mondo Rock, were based in St. Kilda too, and rock musicians rented rooms in St. Kilda, forming and reforming new groups, sometimes playing at the Seaview, the Electric Ballroom, and Earls Court: all venues where bands like the Beat Detectives, Alice and the Alligators, Little Murders, the Chemicals, the Models, Echo and the Bunnymen, the Tinsley Waterhouse Band appeared and sometimes disappeared just as quickly in the early 1980s.

Jazz was heard at different St. Kilda hotels. Pete Gaudion, who was involved in the foundation of the Victorian Jazz Club, moved to the Beaconsfield Hotel in 1981 with his Blues Express of Dick Miller, Allan Browne, Vic Connor, and later, Bob Sedergreen; and vocalists like Judy Jaques. He also presented musicians there, including Sonny Stitt, Richie Cole and Kenny Ball. The Prince of Wales featured jazzmen like Mark Murphy and the Tony Gould Trio, and it became the home of an FM radio station, which stimulated interest in the local music scene even further. Radio station 3PBS-FM, directed by John Maizels and with seven hundred subscribers, opened its studios there in February 1980 with a musical review of big bands, jazz, country music, rock and roll, new wave and comedy routines.

Many classical musicians continued to live and work in St. Kilda as they had done since the city's foundation. They included Paul McDermott who formed Melbourne's first string chamber music group in 1951, and his string quartet continued to play chamber music in settings like the Great Hall of the National Gallery, and Montsalvat.

St. Kilda was home to writers of every sort. Barry Dickens, the playwright and humorist, moved from Carlton as more and more of the terrace houses there were painted in designer tones, and revelled in St. Kilda's madness, its dives, sunsets, Jewish op shops, backlanes,

moonlit trams, skin-heads, toothless drinkers, yachts, deros and coughing alley-cats⁷⁷. Science fiction writers who clustered there in 1980 included Lee Harding, who won the Children's Book of the Year Award in 1980 with his book about dispossessed and alienated adolescents called *Displaced Person*, and lived in Westbury Street; George Turner, the *Age* Science Fiction critic and author of works, including *Beloved Son*, who lived in the same street; Keith Taylor, a sword and sorcery writer for the American magazine *Fantastic*, who used the pseudonym Denis More, and lived in Barkly Street; David Trigg, who wrote children's science fiction, in Gurner Street; and Ted Mundy, an anthologist and writer, in Princes Street. Bookshop managers included Paul Stevens, of *Space Age Books* in Swanston Street, who lived in Dickens Street; Paul Collins, literary agent and author, and Rowena Cory, a reviewer and artist, who operated second-hand book and record exchanges in Chapel and Barkly Streets; and Gerhard Sawatzky, who had established the *Cosmos Bookshop* at 145 Acland Street in 1960.

St. Kilda theatres continued to make their contribution to Melbourne's cultural life. The Victory Theatre was refurbished and altered to house the National Theatre in 1974, founded in 1935 by Gertrude Johnson to provide tuition for singers, dancers and actors. It provided studios for opera, drama and ballet schools and an auditorium; and the theatre was managed by John Cargher, with Peter Rorke as the director of the Opera School, Marilyn Jones as director of the Ballet School, and Joan Harris, the director of the Drama School. Among the artists who lent their time to teach younger people were experienced old hands like Madam Saranova, and her husband, Harry Jacobs, who often played the piano at the ballet school. The theatre was opened on 7 September 1974 by the Premier, R. J. Hamer, in the presence of the Governor, Sir Henry Winneke. On the grand occasion, the Elizabethan Trust presented the overture, *Waltzing St. Kilda*, written by John Lanchberry, Ballet Victoria performed *Raymonda*, and the Victoria Opera Company presented *The Impresario*.

Another St. Kilda theatre which was revived in 1982 was the Astor. It had closed in February 1982 after being used for over ten years to screen Greek films and concerts, and it reopened again on 17 September, under the management of George Florence, to screen films often ignored on the commercial circuit. The opening session was screened by Wally Waterfall, who had worked for seventeen years at the theatre as a technician and projectionist, and it included

King Kong, *Blood and Sand* with Rudolph Valentino, *Wizard of Oz*, *Some Like It Hot* and *Jailhouse Rock*.

The Palais faced a less certain future. It still drew full houses to see artists such as Joan Armatrading, and Split Enz; the Bolshoi Ballet, the Kirov Ballet and Stars of the World Ballet presented by Michael Edgely; and performances of the Australian Opera, including Nabucco with Rita Hunter in 1978; and Joan Sutherland in *La Traviata* in 1979. The Film Festival continued there, and in 1980, a guest in Kevin Thomas, the film critic from the *Los Angeles Times*, expressed astonishment to see such a theatre still intact since its opening in Hollywood's heyday, and reminded the audience of the need to preserve its fittings, concealed lighting, columns, bronze chandelier weighing over a tonne with over one hundred and sixty electric candles, cabinets, sofas, and carpets woven to Leon Phillips' design, because the theatre was unique. It was very difficult however, to fill it to its capacity on a regular basis, and expensive to maintain. Some alterations were made for the Sutherland visit in 1979, with dressing rooms being repainted, a computerised switchboard installed backstage, and closed circuit televisions placed in the foyers for the benefit of latecomers⁷⁸. Its future profitability however seemed threatened by competition from the Art Centre Concert Hall in St. Kilda Road, planned to hold two thousand five hundred, and the possibility of a further over supply of theatre seats if the Regent Theatre was restored. The eight hundred and thirty four seat dress circle closed temporarily in March 1981 because the wooden roof lacked a sprinkler system but the theatre reopened in time for the opera season at the end of the year after \$300,000 was spent to install sprinklers, extra exits and an emergency passageway. By 1983, Les Hyams was the Chairman of Directors, Nigel Markov became the General Manager, and Esther Wyatt retired after forty-five years at the theatre.

Luna Park, the other part of the Phillips Brothers' legacy, retained its innocent and timeless appeal. However, it lost a number of its oldest attractions, and faced competition from pin-ball parlours and other new amusements. The Rotor was replaced by a German-designed ride called the *UFO* in October 1978, but the Big Dipper remained the most popular ride. Renewed attention was paid to safety in July 1979 after a fire on the ghost train at Luna Park in Sydney killed a man and six children; and later in the year at the older St. Kilda Luna Park, the famous River Caves ride, with its Grotto of

Capri, polar bears and other *papier mache* scenes, was closed down. Seat restraints were fitted to the Scenic Railway carriages after a man died after leaning out and hitting his head in August 1980, but the accident was attributed to his consumption of beer and marijuana rather than the safety of the ride. The Giggle Palace, another old favourite, was destroyed after vandals started a fire in the Shooting Gallery in November 1981. The following month, the Local Government Department ordered the closure of the Big Dipper, Scenic Railway and Ghost Train until they met safety regulations. At the same time, the new *Fun Factory* at the corner of Chapel Street and Toorak Road, South Yarra, with its neon lights, disco music and *Space Invader* machines provided tough competition. Nonetheless, Luna Park remained the most fantastic amusement park in Australia: it celebrated its Seventieth birthday in fine style in December 1982 with a rock concert.

The traditional beauty of St. Kilda's recreational areas was enhanced by various projects. Palms were favoured again after their removal in the 1950s and replanting of fully grown *Phoenix canariensis* palms began in 1980 along the Upper and Lower Esplanade, after they had been donated and collected from all over Melbourne. The Elwood foreshore was also replanted with Moreton Bay figs, Norfolk Island pines, Coastal Wattle, Coastal Banksia, Drooping Sheoak and Coastal Tea Tree. More attractive streets were also assured after a Street Tree Policy Review was completed by Narelle Harmey, the Council's Landscape Architect, with the assistance of George Young, the Superintendent of Parks and Gardens in February 1983 which recommended planting to strengthen the existing character of streets, and categorised the municipality into dominant tree species of mixed natives, palms, plane trees, and deciduous exotic trees.

Gardening was very important to many residents particularly because they lived in the municipality with the greatest population density in Melbourne (6,086 persons per square kilometre in 1977). The St. Kilda Community Garden Club, formed under the Presidency of John Phillips, used a block purchased by Council in 1980 at 24 Railway Place, which was divided into plots on which residents without land of their own could grow vegetables for their families. Others were assisted by the St. Kilda Gardening Group, formed at a public meeting at the St. Kilda Library on 6 October 1981, organised by Vida Horn and Rosemary Black, the Park Recreation Officer. It aimed to encourage plant cultivation, foster neighbourliness, and interest in

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public gardens; and presented speakers on topics such as hydroponics, herb growing, biological control of garden pests, vegetable growing in small containers, and plant cultivation for flat dwellers. Community interest was also stimulated by the Garden Festivals held every October from 1979, which featured indoor plant displays in the Blessington Street hothouses; the distribution of free trees; a garden competition with sections for the best balcony, flat and house displays; gardening book displays at the Library; tree planting; hay rides for children; and entertainment.

Beaches remained a major attraction. Elwood Beach was still one of Melbourne's favourites. It attracted crowds of eighty to one hundred thousand on hot days. The Elwood Life Saving Club operated for twenty four hours a day during the summer, and was one of the best equipped in Australia, gaining its own rescue ambulance in 1976, a control room which was the State disaster headquarters for marine emergencies in Port Phillip Bay, connected by Telex to the Weather Bureau and equipped with radar; a medical room with resuscitation equipment; a small surf boat for rescues from the shore and a larger launch; and a four wheel drive. However, Jack Conabere, the President of the Life Saving Club from 1952 to 1982, and a member since 1932, also sounded a warning that his Club's future could not be guaranteed, and that the government and the general public could not take the services of lifesavers for granted any more because the club had running costs of \$7,000 to \$8,000 per year in the early 1980s, with only a grant of \$500 available from the Royal Life Saving Association, and community interest in rendering voluntary service seemed to be declining.

Swimmers welcomed the creation of a new beach. The City Engineer and Manager of Technical Services, Ken Dowling, who took office after Martin Vermhoeven left in October 1980, watched over the removal of the old shark-proof Baths enclosure, the construction of a rock groyne, and the creation of a new beach when over seventy thousand cubic metres of sand were pumped from the bed of the St. Kilda Yacht Harbour, north of the St. Kilda pier, on to a section of shore stretching from Blessington Street, northwards behind the old St. Kilda baths to St. Kilda pier. Coarser sand was then dumped along the beach to increase stability and provide more space for sunbathers, swimmers and sail-board riders. Council's plans to demolish the Baths, though, and remove the ever-changing nightclubs they housed, such as the *Mousetrap Cabaret* in 1976 and *Mickey's Coun-*

try Rock in 1980, as well as the *South Pacific Health Studios* sea baths, were hampered by the Government's reluctance to cancel the lease to Seaquarium Proprietary Limited because it maintained the lessee's rights were inviolable.⁷⁹

Other designs on the foreshore were closely watched by suspicious residents. Council also approved a proposal for marina development despite the protests of resident action groups, and organisations such as the Port Phillip Conservation Council, led by Guy Boyd, the sculptor. The Port Phillip Authority approved the establishment of ten boat havens in Port Phillip Bay in 1981, including one at St. Kilda, but none of the proposals were proceeded with.

The state of the beach around the Cowderoy Street drain remained unsatisfactory. The Conservation Minister, Mr. Borthwick announced in September 1976 that discharge into the drain from the Alfred Hospital and the Chevron Hotel had ceased. Another enquiry on the drain was concluded by the Environment Protection Authority in 1979. It found that rotting seaweed was the main cause of the smell, rather than the drain, but heavy metal pollution of the drain effluent was also occurring, and further research on the problem of controlling heavy metal inputs into Port Phillip Bay was required.

St. Kilda streets were lively on weekends after Sunday trading was endorsed by the State Government. The concession was granted after Village Belle traders were warned by Department of Labor and Industry officials that they were breaking the law by trading after 1 p.m. on Saturdays in September 1976, and several prosecutions were made. Gerhard Sawatzky, of the Cosmos Book Shop, led traders' protests that the area should be declared a tourist resort so that trade could continue all weekend, different ethnic groups could meet, and Jewish people could shop at the weekend. After persistent lobbying by traders and the Council, the State Government approved Sunday trading in St. Kilda in October 1977. Crowds came to Acland Street on Sundays, pressing their noses up against *Monarch*, *Le Bon* or *Adand* cake-shop windows; some purchasing suspender belts and other imported underwear at the *Tase Sakur*; a shirt from *Tal Lows' Menswear*; Spanish, Dutch, German, Greek, French and other imported newspapers at the Village Belle Newsagents; books in Yiddish from the Zimmerman Family at the *Balbyszski Bookshop*; or records and tapes in every language from Olga Kahofer's *Record Specialist* in Shakespeare Grove; and pickles from *Wielunski's International Delicatessen*, all trading in 1979.

There was increasing awareness of St. Kilda's heritage. The St. Kilda Historical Society collected artefacts, documents, photographs, memoirs and resources, arranged displays, and guest speakers; and members including Kingsley Evans, Les Isaacs, Cath Kelly, Nancy Newell, Molly Robarts, Don Taggart, were always willing to provide information on the past for the public. There was increasing appreciation of St. Kilda's Jewish heritage on the part of the broader community. Rabbi Lubofsky, the leader of the St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation since March 1963 after Rabbi Danglow's death in 1962, and Rabbi John Levi, who succeeded Rabbi Sanger as Senior Rabbi at Temple Beth Israel in 1974, played important roles in fostering understanding. Rabbi Lubofsky was founding president of the Jewish Museum of Australia in 1982 whilst Rabbi John Levi was a prominent historian and past president of the Australian Jewish Historical Society — a member, himself of a family steeped in St. Kilda history, including Nathaniel Levi, the first Jewish parliamentarian, and Cr. J. B. Levi, the former Mayor.

Efforts continued to conserve St. Kilda's historic buildings. Public appreciation of the opulence of St. Kilda in the nineteenth century increased when Oberwyl was opened to the public from 1974 by John Bromley who had lived there since 1935 with his aunts, the Misses Garton. Upkeep was expensive, and Bromley's offer to sell the thirty-five room mansion in 1975 to the State Government for \$120, 000 was declined. Eventually, it was sold to a private buyer in 1980, and five hundred and seventy lots of Garton Family antiques, dating from the fifteenth century, were auctioned at the same time.⁸⁰

Every time another building was saved from demolition because of resident action, like the three storey terrace at 18-20 Fitzroy Street in 1976, awareness of the value of St. Kilda's existing housing stock increased. To protect this heritage further, the Kilda City Council commissioned a St. Kilda Conservation Study in August 1981 in conjunction with the Historic Buildings Preservation Council: Nigel Lewis and Associates presented the "Area One" Report in September 1982 which covered West Ward, the hill area of central St. Kilda and part of East St. Kilda; and the remaining "Area Two" was the subject of a later study presented by David Bick. Buildings, works and precincts to be considered for inclusion on the historic buildings register or for protection by planning controls were identified, and conservation guidelines were provided for residents and owners in regard to architectural style, building materials, restoration, alterations, fences and street works.⁸¹

St. Moritz was destroyed despite efforts to save it. Patronage declined drastically with the increasing popularity of roller skating and discotheques in the late 1970s, and the property was auctioned in December 1980, complete with chairs from the Wattle Path Palais, and hand-painted movie sets of the Efftee Studio still in the basement of the rink. It was purchased for \$530,000 by a consortium of Lindsay Fox and Hudson Conway Holdings Proprietary Limited; Fox himself being brought up in St. Kilda, a former member of the Pirates Ice Hockey Team at St. Moritz and a St. Kilda Football Club player in the 1950s. Hudson Conway Holdings had undertaken flat and apartment development previously, and the consortium intended to develop the rink into a commercial-retail-residential complex. After their purchase, St. Moritz continued operating as a skating rink in 1981 after Jack Norman and Bill Normoyle retired, and was supervised by Vic Ekberg, the President of the Victorian Ice Hockey Association. However it suddenly closed at the beginning of 1982 after a year of poor trading, and Council officers issued a demolition permit in April 1982 without the knowledge of all Councillors. Cr. Jelbart expressed the concern of those Councillors who believed the building had historic and sentimental association with recreational use of the St. Kilda foreshore, who had also been unaware of the demolition move, and had seen no application for the redevelopment of the site. The Builders Labourers' Federation banned work on the site after Whelan the Wrecker had begun to demolish the interior. The Historic Buildings Preservation Council made an Interim Preservation Order, although at the meeting of 10 May 1982 Crs. Taylor, King, Browning, McGregor, Barker, Zouch and Bell carried the motion that the City Engineer oppose that order because the building did not have historic or architectural significance. The rink was offered at auction on 31 August 1981, but was passed in when bidding ceased at \$485,000. A sudden fire on 22 September 1982 reduced the interior to a pile of ash and metal; but left the facade intact, and the future uncertain.

Lindsay Fox was associated with the St. Kilda Football Club as well, which was removed from its past not only in its location at Moorabbin, but by the way VFL clubs were being run. Fox became Chairman of the club in September 1979. The Club had won three games during the year, had a net deficiency of \$835,000 and \$1.94 million in outstanding liabilities, its debt growing despite the fact that it had been the first VFL team to appoint a marketing manager in May 1976, who had boasted that marketing football clubs was just

like marketing "twelve cans of beans"⁸². Fox believed: "...the only thing for a club such as St. Kilda is to become fully commercial. They're never going to make it back to the top if they don't"⁸³. After two losses in 1980, the coach, Mike Patterson, was sacked and replaced by Alex Jesaulenko, the former Captain-Coach of Carlton, who showed how well European refugees could play Australian football. Under Fox's shrewd management, the club's yearly income was \$2.2 million by 1981, but debts of over \$1.8 million remained. When it was announced in 1982 that players were owed \$470,797, Fox applied to the Supreme Court for a moratorium on debts which would preclude creditors from recovering payment before 31 December 1986. Tony Jewell was appointed coach in 1983 and St. Kilda attempted to secure the players Silvio Foschini and Paul Morwood, who were refusing to move to Sydney with the South Melbourne team in accordance with VFL plans. Foschini submitted to the Supreme Court that he was suffering from restraint of trade under the *Trade Practices Act*, and in April 1983 Mr. Justice Crocket ruled that VFL clearance rules were a restraint of trade and invalid. After Paul Morwood played for St. Kilda, officials from other clubs failed in attempts to expel St. Kilda from the VFL and ban Ian Stewart and Lindsay Fox from football.⁸⁴

In the meantime, the St. Kilda Cricket Club, still largely the province of amateurs who played for the love of their game, was glad to end its unhappy and expensive association with the Fitzroy Football Club, which was removed from the Junction Oval.

Ironically, many of Melbourne's soccer teams were moving to the outer suburbs by then because that was where many of their supporters were now based.

Property values increased as St. Kilda became more publicly prized, gentrification accelerated and the number of massage parlours declined. By 1981, estate agents were confident that St. Kilda would be "the next place to take off", and more and more photographs of so-called "renovators' opportunities" appeared in their windows. Run down boarding houses like the forty-five square, two-storey *Woodlands* in Enfield Street were described as "very sound and pleading for the restorer's touch"; while agents predicted that seedy flats, like those at 8 Gurner Street, the former home of Henry Field Gurner, Melbourne's first Town Clerk and a Victorian Crown Solicitor, would be returned to their original state as private homes⁸⁵. More properties like these were restored to their former glory, in many

cases by people who would have regarded St. Kilda as far less appealing if it became exclusive or respectable.

The dwindling number of massage parlours in St. Kilda also indicated that its image was changing. The Vice Squad estimated that there were one hundred and forty nine massage parlours in Victoria by 1 July 1983, which was one hundred and fifteen more than the estimated number in 1973 when the majority were in St. Kilda, and of these, seventeen had valid planning permits. Their records indicated that St. Kilda had fewer parlours than the Cities of Melbourne, Prahran and Richmond and South Melbourne, and that Brighton had such a facility itself:

"Public" and "Private home" massage parlours, July 1983⁸⁶

<i>Municipality</i>	<i>Public</i>	<i>Private</i>	<i>Municipality</i>	<i>Public</i>	<i>Private</i>
Brighton	-	1	Melbourne	17	8
Brunswick	4	2	Moorabbin	-	2
Camberwell	-	1	Mordialloc	1	-
Caulfield	8	3	Morwell	1	-
Coburg	-	1	Newtown	-	1
Collingwood	3	2	Northcote	-	2
Cranbourne	1	-	Oakleigh	2	-
Croydon	-	2	Port Melbourne	1	-
Dandenong	1	-	Prahran	2	11
Fitzroy	5	2	Richmond	3	10
Footscray	4	2	St. Kilda	2	9
Frankston	1	-	Shepparton	1	-
Geelong	2	-	South Barwon	1	-
Knox	-	3	South Melbourne	22	4
Malvern	-	1			

Furthermore, the incidence of gutter crawling was being arrested by the closing of some streets to through traffic, the installation of speed traps, a determined police presence, and by careful landscaping and treeplanting.

Signs of increasing respectability were viewed with trepidation by those who feared the consequences for the poor, and St. Kilda itself, if it became fashionable again and less well-off people were forced to move away. As always, a balanced view was difficult to attain. The idea, for instance, that any attempts to beautify, conserve buildings or celebrate St. Kilda should be abandoned because they would encourage gentrification and thereby disadvantage the poor, were sometimes based on the negative assumption that the poor could only live in degraded conditions; and ideas that sleaziness was an exciting, chic backdrop were certainly not shared by many social security

recipients, tenants, unemployed, hungry, and homeless people themselves who constituted the majority in St. Kilda.

Increasing hardship in St. Kilda, and the problems of the Liberal Party both at State and Federal level made Brian Dixon's chance of holding St. Kilda in 1982 very slim. The State Labor Party was confident they could take St. Kilda and Victoria, and Andrew McCutcheon won preselection for the seat in March 1981 from a field of nine opponents. His experience and qualifications made him the most formidable candidate Dixon had yet faced, though he was not from St. Kilda. He was born on 29 September 1931, and educated at Wesley College then entered the School of Architecture at Melbourne University. He worked as a Methodist Minister in Collingwood from 1961-69, and studied urban problems in Western Australia and Victoria as a Churchill Fellow in 1968. He was a member of the Town and Country Planning Association 1965-72; executive officer of the Fitzroy-Collingwood Rental Housing Association in 1976; National Chairperson of "Shelter" for 1976-80; Chairman of the Lower Yarra Advisory Committee 1978-79; and project officer of the North Melbourne Tenants Council 1980-82. He was a Collingwood City Councillor from 1965 to 1982, the Mayor of Collingwood in 1975 and 1976, a MMBW commissioner from 1975-78, and a MMBW member from 1978 to 1982⁸⁷. As soon as he was selected, he campaigned on issues including public transport and tenancy reform.

Doubts about the future of the St. Kilda railway line jeopardised Dixon's chances of holding St. Kilda. After the Lonie Report on public transport recommended the elimination of lightly trafficked routes, including the St. Kilda-Flinders Street railway service, the ALP pledged it would reopen all services closed by the government. Dixon was openly critical of the report, and its handling by the Transport Minister, Robert Maclellan. He triumphantly announced in June 1981 that he had saved the line, but services would be reduced with no trains on Sundays, and VicRail would try to lease the St. Kilda Station site to private enterprise. Andrew McCutcheon, as President of the Save the Line Committee, led a wake in August which lamented the passing of Sunday trains on the one hundred and twenty four year old St. Kilda line, and lambasted the government for taking such a decision without consultation, and in the face of widespread protest⁸⁸. McCutcheon also argued that reduction of public transport would increase lead pollution, as lead used to boost

octane ratings in petrol was deposited as fine particles in exhaust emissions. He urged Council to press for reduction of vehicles on local roads after the Environment Protection Authority identified sites of high lead pollution in St. Kilda, including Dandenong Road, Brighton Road, Queens Road, and some schools where lead dust accumulated in July 1981.

Tenants' rights remained a problem for Dixon, as his party failed to satisfy the demands of St. Kilda tenants. It introduced a revised bill on tenancy reform in December 1979 allowing rents to be raised within sixty days, and requiring payment of bonds: of its sixty-five alterations, sixty-three were to the landlord's advantage, and some members of the Liberal Party attributed change to Cabinet hostility to Dixon because of his actions to reform the Housing Commission, after being appointed Minister for Housing. Rents increased at a greater rate than inflation in 1980 and 1981⁸⁹ and a number of rent strikes were held in St. Kilda with the support of the Tenants Union. Groups of tenants in ten blocks of flats in St. Kilda claimed landowners were increasing rents to match market prices in September 1981 and withheld increased payments while negotiations took place about maintenance and a lower increase. Further strikes occurred in Alexandra Avenue, East St. Kilda in October 1981, and Dalgety Street in November after notice of rent increases were received⁹⁰. After the *Residential Tenancies Act* took effect from November 1981, the Tenants Union organised a protest at St. Kilda Beach where Max Gillies of the Australian Performing Group appeared as Malcolm Fraser, and Mike Salvaris appeared as Sir John Kerr, and presided over the sinking of a dinghy called *The Residential Tenancies Hoax*⁹¹. McCutcheon, who had been invited by Dixon to help write the Housing Green Paper in 1979, and had withdrawn after three months in protest against the redrafting of the Residential Tenancies Bill, pledged that a Labor Government would review the Act.

Dixon tried to shore up his position in St. Kilda just as Lindsay Thompson, the new Premier, was trying to shore up the Liberal Party's position in Victoria after the Liberal MP, Ian Smith, had forced the resignation of Hamer. Dixon secured DLP preferences, and a much higher rating from the Right to Life Association for his views on abortion, and warned against Labor intentions to decriminalise prostitution. He championed a bid for Melbourne to host the 1988 Olympic Games but was dashed by the refusal of the Federal Treasurer, John Howard, to provide any funds. He also believed other budgetary policies of the Fraser government had damaged his stand-

ing in St. Kilda. For instance, the future of the CYSS in Elwood was in doubt after the Government announced in the 1980 budget that it would close. Though it remained open after a public outcry, Brian Dixon, appointed as Minister for Employment and Training in December 1980, believed he was bearing the brunt of unpopular policies and criticised the Prime Minister's stance on employment. He was openly critical of Malcolm Fraser prior to the 1982 campaign too, asking him to stay out of the Victorian campaign at one stage, preferring to campaign with Andrew Peacock.

All of his efforts were in vain. The Liberal whom many in his party regarded as a dangerous radical was defeated by Andrew McCutcheon, who gained an absolute majority in April 1982, polling 11,701 votes to Dixon's 9,406. And John Cain, the son of Victoria's last Labor Premier, won government.

The Fraser government was also defeated in March 1983. Its attempts to curb inflation and slash expenditure only appeared to be inflicting hardship in 1983, and Fraser lacked the popularity of Bob Hawke, who was hastily installed as Opposition Leader in place of Bill Hayden prior to the elections in May. Nor had bitter memories of Fraser being sworn in by Sir John Kerr as Prime Minister in November 1975 been expunged, though Fraser had been well served by Sir Zelman Cowen's success in restoring much of the credibility and authority of the vice-regal office in the public's mind.

Sir Zelman's approach had ensured that angry demonstrations were no longer part of the Governor-General's public appearances. His final duty as Governor-General was to address a gathering at St. Kilda Park Primary School to celebrate the school's centenary. He accepted an invitation to be provost of Oriel College Oxford when his term ended.

Hawke took up the theme of consensus, so dear to Sir Zelman Cowen, and defeated Fraser. The new Prime Minister made Clyde Holding, the member for Melbourne Ports since Frank Crean's retirement in 1980, his Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, and set about trying to realise his promises of national reconciliation, national recovery and national reconstruction, and an end to confrontation.

Recovery seemed a long way off, for St. Kilda remained more than ever a showplace of the effects of wider social disintegration and economic problems, as younger children were cast onto the street, and the poor struggled to exist.

The exploitation of children in St. Kilda was a sign of massive

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social problems. The term "streetkids" was used to describe homeless urchins, who often drifted into prostitution and drug use. The special Delta taskforce of the Victoria Police, established in October 1982, concluded in January 1983 that there were problems in St. Kilda of child prostitution, child pornography, drug abuse, and movement of boys and girls between Kings Cross and St. Kilda involving children under sixteen who were ineligible for unemployment benefits. The Senior Social Worker at Wellington House also observed:

- Most children on the streets of West St. Kilda are agreed to be:

- (1) runaways from suburbs other than St. Kilda, often absconders from DCWS institutions.
- (2) children from suburbs other than St. Kilda visiting the excitements and atmosphere of St. Kilda.

- Most children (up to 80%) on the streets of West St. Kilda are agreed to be runaways from the supervision of DCWS..

- The source of these children's money is ambiguous: presumably from jobs, theft, doting parents or prostitution and drugs...Because unemployment benefit is not available for younger children and Special Benefit difficult, this increases the possibility of theft or prostitution and drugs for income.

- Most girls are in massage parlours by 16 years and hence not openly visible except for the occasional street pick-up for needed quick money. Since the boys do not have a readily available secluded equivalent of the parlour, they tend to be more visible "on the beats", usually around toilets or "camp bars" if able to look over age.

...they almost never approach health and welfare services except to collect money and accommodation, legal back-up or VD cure.

The popularity of pre-pubic prostitution seems to have increased as a fad.

A number of workers have commented on the number of rich and famous personalities encountered in West St. Kilda in areas seemingly closely connected with child and adult prostitution.⁹²

The problem was so grave, a State Government Interdepartmental Working Party on the exploitation of children and young persons by adults in the St. Kilda area was convened by Ben Bodna, the Director General of Community Welfare Services in March 1983. It aimed to remove children at risk, and prosecute adults who endangered children. Council took the view too, that any action or responsible publicity which increased awareness would be a good thing, for such problems would grow worse if they were not faced.

Some children were assisted by Brother Alex McDonald, who coordinated the Open Family, a homeless youth project for the

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Society of Jesus, which ministered to wandering and homeless youth by street contact, found rooms and meals for them, and accompanied them when they made court appearances. Between 1979 and April 1983, he dealt with about four hundred young people, predominantly from the areas of Sunshine, Broadmeadows, Footscray, Oakleigh and Brunswick, who had come to St. Kilda. He said in 1981:

I speak for the voiceless..They haven't got the basic rights of life like parents a job, or love...These kids have a loss of identity. They have all an invented identity...None of the kids want to be on dope. They don't want to be into prostitution. They can't help themselves. The community is accountable. The community is answerable, I really believe that...Everyone is out to manipulate somebody...Therefore its necessary to become street wise. There are street rules, a code of operation. Its not a way of life it's a way of survival. They survive by the rules of the jungle. You must have certain skills. You must recognise certain people by their dress and mannerisms. You must know who's who.⁹³

He, and Father Maguire, expressed their optimistic belief in April 1983 that St. Kilda was a privileged place, because it had the opportunity to care for such children, and local concern could make St. Kilda streets a way out for street kids who had been dumped by society at large.

The plight of brain-damaged alcoholics, psychiatric outpatients and the physically and mentally disabled people in St. Kilda received less media attention than that of streetkids. Angela Pedicini reported the case of a rooming house in Robe Street in November 1979 where resident's pension cheques were being taken and where they were malnourished. The house was not subject to regulation by any statutory authority because it was a "fiver" with two houses separated by a fence, thereby outside the regulations governing Special Accommodation Houses introduced in 1974 when the Health Commission assumed responsibility for registration of boarding houses, housing six or more people over sixty, but only employed two inspectors for the entire state. Following the St. Kilda case, the Minister for Health, Mr. Borthwick, noted the existence of poor conditions, lack of supervision, uncontrolled medication and profiteering in other St. Kilda, Windsor and Seaford Special Accommodation Houses as well⁹⁴, and the *Health (Special Accommodation Houses) Act* (1980) altered to three the maximum number of elderly or handicapped people over sixty who could be lodged before registration was required. Angela Pedicini also drew Council's attention to the plight of some neglected psychiatric patients. After investigations, social workers estimated that there were over three thousand of them in St. Kilda in 1981, many of them

being discharged directly to St. Kilda from Royal Park, Plenty and Larundel hospitals. After submissions to the Mental Health Division, three Community Mental Health nurses were assigned to spend Thursdays in St. Kilda to provide consultation.

Assistance for migrants were still meagre, despite the length of time St. Kilda had served as the first point of call for many of them. It continued to house new waves of refugees, including Vietnamese and Africans in the 1970s, and Poles after the declaration of martial law in Poland in 1981, as well as other migrants who often sought temporary accommodation there before moving to suburbs with more homogenous ethnic groupings. In a reflection on welfare priorities, Ray Glickman, the Senior Council Social Worker concluded in 1982 that "St. Kilda, with a migrant population of 40%, some 75% of whom are non-English speaking, has very little in the way of services catering for the special needs of migrants"⁹⁵. At least the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs announced in April 1983 that the first appointment of a migrant worker would be made in the municipality, to develop counselling services for migrants, multi-lingual information services and programs to counter loneliness, particularly in elderly and female migrants who were isolated and confused.

The Community Group still lacked the resources it required to meet pleas for assistance, as new problems surfaced every day. John Enticott, the Community Group housing officer, saw over five hundred families and individuals between January and October 1982, who needed to locate housing because they had nowhere to go that very night⁹⁶. Reverend Phillip Hutchinson, the Vicar of Christ Church, and night managers of two rooming houses also reported evidence of increasing malnutrition in rooming houses in the first half of 1983.⁹⁷

Demands were so great that the Community Group was on the verge of collapse by early 1983 because it lacked the funds to provide the services required in St. Kilda where so many relied on social welfare payments (see table).

Answers had to be found so a Community Services Advisory Committee was established in April 1983 to examine welfare services, assist in policy formation and redress deficiencies and administrative problems arising from the way new services had to be tacked on to existing structures, and from uncertainty about the availability of Government grants.

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Social Welfare Recipients, St. Kilda, June 1983⁹⁸

<i>Pension/Benefit Type</i>	<i>June 1983</i>	<i>% of population</i>
Aged Pension	7,092	15
Invalid Pension	1,608	3
Widows Pension	796	2
Sole Parent Benefit	587	1
Unemployment Benefit	3,873	8
Sickness Benefit	573	1
Special Benefit	253	1
TOTALS	14,782	31

Residents showed initiative themselves. The resources and buildings of the Sacred Heart Parish were all turned to the service of the poor after Fr. Ernie Smith arrived in January 1982. The supper room of the Parish hall became a kitchen for feeding people, and by July 1983 between one hundred and one hundred and twenty people came to the hall every day for a hot meal at lunchtime. Fr. Ernie wrote: "It is not a soup kitchen. We attempt to provide a variety of meals every day of the week, seven days per week, and to sit people down at tables where they can enjoy their meal with other people". He also reported that the St. Vincent de Paul Society continued to make about thirty or forty calls every week, but every now and then an exceptional day came along such as Friday, 10 June 1983 when Society members made fifteen calls to homes which involved the distribution of four food parcels (worth about \$6 each), eleven food vouchers totalling \$95, and also made arrangements for blankets for two families, and a bed for another person."

It was apparent to St. Kilda City Council that economic recovery was a long way off and that it would have to face an even greater demand for welfare services, an expanding role for local government in welfare provision, and a probable squeeze on local government finance. It favoured entrepreneurial approaches to revenue raising, from sources other than rates, in order to meet the increasing demands it anticipated would be made upon it. Following the resignation of Bill Sisson in 18 March 1983, after twenty-eight years of excellent service to St. Kilda City Council, and the appointment of Jeremy Tatchell as Acting Town Clerk, Council began the process of restructuring its organisation. It engaged the company of the former Melbourne City Council Administrator, Peter Thorley and Associates Proprietary Limited, to report on a review of existing manage-

ment structure and recommend possible changes, and assist in the appointment of a new City Manager to head the restructure of the administration on corporate lines. Council resolved in May 1983 to offer the position to Brian Jones, Deputy Town Clerk of the City of North Sydney, and on 4 July 1983 the new City Manager attended his first Council meeting.

By then, as in 1930 when Cooper's two volumes of the history of St. Kilda concluded, St. Kilda could be seen both in the throes of an economic and social crisis, which was unevenly borne, and in carnival as it was at Festival time. However, in 1930 St. Kilda's social status and prestige was declining. By 1983, there were many signs that this trend was changing, though no single group could claim the city as its own for St. Kilda had as many faces as a hall of mirrors. A fused vision of who the city was for, and what type of city it should be, still seemed impossible. This was both good and bad, for both its fairness, or its beauty and appeal, and its unfairness, or its misery and inequity, lay in its split images.

It will be the task of another historian to record the outcome of this and so many other uncertainties in Volume IV of the history of St. Kilda.

The curtain now falls on Volume III.

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31. Quoted by David Porter, "The Peace March Slows Down", "Good Weekend" supplement to the *Age*, 4 September 1987, p.24.
32. Bob White, St. Kilda Army and Navy Club, interview 12 August 1988.
33. Quoted by Stuart Coupe, "Blues masters turn back the hands of time", *Sydney Sun-Herald*, 22 February 1981.
34. File 50617: Secretary Tramways Board to TC, 4 May 1971, SKTHA.
35. File 54761: Michael Gudinski to TC, 15 July 1971, SKTHA.
36. Lloyd Alexander, "Drugs", *GoSet*, 28 June 1967, pp.12-13.
37. E.g. *Truth*, 4 January 1969.
38. *Southern Cross*, 8 November 1972.
39. *Southern Cross*, 22 January 1969.
40. SKCC, *Minutes*, 7 February 1972.
41. Shnookal, *Op. Cit.*, p.30.
42. See Gloria Frydman, *Protestas*, Collins Dove, Blackburn, 1987, pp.29-30.
43. *Truth*, 17 May 1969.
44. *Truth*, 5 July 1969.
45. *Sunday Observer*, 28 September 1969.
46. Report of the Board of Inquiry Into Allegations of Corruption in the Police Force in connection with Illegal Abortion Practices in the State of Victoria, Victoria 1971, p.142.
47. Ratebooks noted her father's return in 1946-47 and the family's departure in 1947-48: see SKCC, *Valuation and Rate Books*, South Ward, 1938-39, p.77; 1941 - 42, p.14; 1946-47; 1948-49, SKTHA. St. Kilda Cricket Club, *Annual Reports* show that Reg Greer retained links with the St. Kilda Cricket Club, acting as team manager for the First Eleven from 1960-63.
48. See "Censorship Symposium 1969, Melbourne Film Festival 21 June 1969 at Palais Theatre"; *25th Melbourne Film Festival Retrospect: 1952-1976*, pamphlets, La Trobe Library.
49. "Karl Duldig at Scheherazade, A selection of drawings mounted to mark the 30th anniversary of the establishment of Scheherazade Restaurant, St. Kilda. May 30th, 1988." (Pamphlet); Ken Scarlett, *Australian Sculptors*, Nelson, 1980, pp.180-183.
50. Mirka Mora, interview 12 February 1988.
51. Information regarding the campaign to win a library in St. Kilda was drawn from files of the Library Establishment Committee and newspaper clippings in the possession of the Secretary, Jenny Love; an interview with Jenny Love on 17 August 1988; and R. Thitchener, *History of the St. Kilda Public Library*, Research Paper, RMTT, 1986.
52. File 55701: First Annual Report of the St. Kilda Public Library, 1 October 1970 - 30 September 1971, SKTHA.
53. *St. Kilda Today*, September 1971, p.1; St. Kilda Public Library, Building Program, p. 5, quoted by R. Thitchener. *Op. Cit.*, p. 46.
54. *Southern Cross*, 24 April 1968.
55. *Southern Cross*, 5 February 1969.
56. *Southern Cross*, 18 December 1968; SKCC, *Minutes*, 4 November 1968.
57. File 55081: Mrs McCubbin to TC, 22 November 1971, SKTHA.
58. File 54793: Correspondence between Mrs H. Halliday and TC, 23 July 1971, 3 August 1971, 11 August 1971, 17 August 1971, SKTHA.

59. File 55009: Brian Dixon to TC, 22 October 1971. Members of the steering committee were listed as Cr. Tom Tierney; Cr. Zouch, representing the St. Kilda Welfare Association; Mrs Westwood of the revived St. Kilda Benevolent Society; R. Prime of the St. Kilda Rotary Club; Cr. Richard Thomas representing the St. Kilda Lions Club; Helen Halliday representing Catholic organisations in St. Kilda; John Staughton or R. Edington to represent the Police and Citizens' Youth Club; Betty Day of the Cora Graves Centre; Mrs L. Martin of the Council for Single Mothers; Major Foster of the Salvation Army; Dr Harbison of the Committee for Social and Preventative Medicine at Monash University; and P. Harris of Program Two of the Church of England Community Centre at the corner of Chapel and Dandenong Road, which provided a free child minding service on Friday mornings for mothers of pre-school children, and youth activities; and Margaret McCubbin.
60. *Southern Cross*, Caulfield Edition, 11 October 1967; *St. Kilda Today*, August 1972.
61. These changes meant that areas of Elwood, where covenants existed, and an area in the vicinity of the Broadway near the Elwood Canal became "houses only" zones, allowing forty habitable rooms to the acre; the area south of the canal became a medium low density zone allowing fifty rooms to the acre; Ripponlea, and the area of Elwood between Mitford Street and Brighton Road, became a medium zone allowing sixty-five rooms to the acre; and all other areas were zoned either medium high density or high density.
62. File 47741: Rupert Hamer to TC, 9 December 1966, SKTHA.
63. File 48501: Royal Melbourne Yacht Squadron to TC, 17 November 1967, SKTHA.
64. File 49241: Manager, Iliad Restaurant to Mayor, 23 November 1969; Nathan Beller to Mayor, 18 November 1969; K. Rechter, Public Accountant, Strata Title Flat Management, 320 Carlisle Street to Mayor, 25 November 1969, SKTHA.
65. File 50064: Report of Water Science Laboratories, 10 July 1970; Secretary, Local Government to TC, 5 November 1970, SKTHA.
66. *Age*, 9 April 1970, 10 April 1970, 11 April 1970.
67. *Age*, 14 April 1970.
68. File 49898: A. T. Gardner, Sec., Commissioner of Public Health to TC, 28 April 1970; *Southern Cross*, 20 May 1970.
69. *Age*, 15 April 1971; *Southern Cross*, 21 April 1971; *Southern Cross*, 20 December 1972.
70. Clarke Gazzard Planners Pty. Ltd, *St Kilda Foreshore Action Area Plan*, October 1970; *Age*, 2 April 1971.
71. *Trust Newsletter*; November 1971.
72. *Age*, 1 November 1973.
73. File 56454: Noel Stone to TC, 14 November 1973, SKTHA.
74. *Age*, 23 March 1973; *Southern Cross*, 4 April 1973.
75. File 55948: Brian Dixon to Hon.W. A. Borthwick, Minister of Lands, 16 March 1973; Jim Isaac to Brian Dixon, 3 April 1973. File 55948: Jim Isaac to C. E. Middleton, Secretary for Lands, 4 April 1973, SKTHA.
76. *Age*, 1 October 1973; Subject File: Thomson-Motor Company, Armadale, La Trobe Library Local History Collection; Robert Coleman, "A merry old girl gets around", *Herald*, 17 April 1982.
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78. Quoted by Laurie Oakes & David Solomon, *The Making of an Australian Prime Minister*; Cheshire, Melbourne, 1973, p.171.
79. *Sun, Age*, 1 December 1972.

CHAPTER SEVEN: HALL OF MIRRORS 1974-July 1983

1. Valuer General's Department, "Property Sale Statistics, Victoria, 1977" cited by Peter Viola in City of St. Kilda, *Report on Social Structure and Housing in St. Kilda, Part One*, prepared by Peter Viola in conjunction with Community Representatives and members of staff, May 1979, Table 12, p.24.

2. Margaret McCubbin, Phyllis Tinney, Kim Wyman, *Child Care in St. Kilda: A Better Deal*, SKCC, December 1976, p. 19.
3. Gary Spivak, Working Paper No. 6, Table 21 in SKCC, "Working Papers" February 1988; File 59643: Report on Strata Subdivisions, SKTHA.
4. Unboxed File/Tenancy Law Reform: Hunt and Coy, Circular to All Owners. re: Residential Tenancies Bill, c. January 1979; Swann and Allen letter to owners re Residential Tenancies Bill, 31 January 1979, SKTHA.
5. ABS, *Census*, 1971, 1976, 1981; Bob Abnett, Working Paper No. 4. in City of St. Kilda, *St. Kilda Local Economy Development Strategy: The Working Papers*, February 1988, Table 13, p. 28.
6. St. Kilda Citizen's Advice Bureau, Day book entry November 1973, quoted by Fiona McDermott, "St. Kilda C. A. B.", *CAB Profile* Number 3, April 1983, Victorian Association of Citizens Advice Bureaus.
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11. Claude Forell, "The Fragile Consensus", *Age*; 13 August 1977, pp.15-16; John Larkin, "Busy man on Her Majesty's service", *Age*; 31 August 1978.
12. *Southern Cross* Balaclava-Western Edition, 31 March 1976
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16. File 62263: Report to TC by Felicity Browning, 28 November 1980.
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21. *Herald*, 13 May 1977; Ron Connelly, "Hotel Raid No 2; Drive to Combat *Vice*", *Herald*, 20 June 1977.
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A NOTE ON THE ST. KILDA TOWN HALL ARCHIVES AND OTHER SOURCES, AND A BRIEF READING GUIDE

The St. Kilda City Council has an extensive collection of primary source material in many boxes of uncatalogued material in the Town Hall. The boxes in the main passage of the basement contain thousands of documents with their own file numbers, and are referred to in the notes by that number if their box has not been numbered itself.

There is other material relating to the 1930s and early 1940s in a room at the end the passage. Over a hundred of the boxes here have been given a number, often with a "D" prefix, but some contain an assortment of material from other decades as well, and some files are unboxed. Many of these boxes also contain odd copies of local papers, newspaper clippings and assorted pamphlets.

The files of the Foreshore Committee were presumably once held in its office near "Little Luna Park", and collected by Council after that Committee wound up. These files are described in the notes by the titles used by the Secretary Frank Dawkins (e.g. Swirl Prior to 1940).

Other archival material had been extracted from the boxes by Council offi-

cers and catalogued and filed alongside Council's working files in the well-lit part of the basement. These files are those in the notes with three separate numbers.

The Town Hall does hold a reasonably comprehensive collection of *The News* (1946-1949), but no intact set of earlier local papers such as the *St Kilda News* was located. Australian Press Agency clippings of material relating to St. Kilda in the late 1970s and early 1980s are also held.

I relied on the State Library for other newspapers including the *Southern Cross* and *Truth*, and for periodicals such as *The Chronicle of the St Kilda Hebrew Congregation*.

The Town Hall basement also shelves Sands & McDougall Directories, Victorian Government Gazettes, Law Reports, Letter Books, Rate Books, Minute Books, Committee Books, electoral material, maps, photographs, many different handbills and other books and printed materials.

The St. Kilda Historical Society collection of documents, reminiscences, photographs, cuttings, notes, subject files and books is another significant local source.

Other important primary sources, such as those at the Public Records Office, the State Library, and the University of Melbourne Archives are listed in the notes, as are secondary sources. Readers with an interest in St. Kilda's history would find membership of the St. Kilda Historical Society very worthwhile, and would also find the local history section at the St. Kilda Library and the La Trobe Library, and the public index of Local History at the St. Kilda Library indispensable.

I found the following references very helpful when I began:

Artists

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Jews

Rapke, Trevor, "The Pre-war Jewish Community of Melbourne", *Australian Jewish Historical Society Journal and Proceedings*, Part 4, Vol.VII.

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Prostitution

Daniels, Kay (ed.), *So Much Hard Work*, Sydney, Fontana/Collins, Sydney, 1984.

Neave, Marcia, *Inquiry Into Prostitution, Final Report, October 1985*, 2 volumes.

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St. Kilda

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1982.

Councillors of the City of St. Kilda, 1930-1983

Names bracketed together denote that an extraordinary vacancy has occurred through the death or resignation of the first-named councillor, and that the second-named was elected to fill the vacancy. Official council records vary in format during the period covered, and this list makes no attempt to resolve the inconsistencies.

<p style="text-align: center;">1929-1930</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Mayor:</i></p> <p>George Hardy Robinson, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>North Ward:</i></p> <p>H. Moroney, J.P. R.T. Taylor J.B. Levi</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>South Ward:</i></p> <p>G.H. Robinson, J.P. R.H. Morley, J.P. Burnett Gray, M.L.A.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Central Ward:</i></p> <p>F.L. Dawkins, J.P. G.B. Renfrey, J.P. A. Jacka, V.C., M.C.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>West Ward:</i></p> <p>T. Unsworth, J.P. G. Cummings E. O'Donnell, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1930-1931</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Mayor:</i></p> <p>Albert Jacka, V.C., M.C., J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>North Ward:</i></p> <p>R.T. Taylor J.B. Levi H. Moroney, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>South Ward:</i></p> <p>R.H. Morley, J.P. Burnett Gray, M.L.A. G.H. Robinson, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Central Ward:</i></p> <p>G.B. Renfrey, J.P. A. Jacka, V.C., M.C., J.P. F.L. Dawkins, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>West Ward:</i></p> <p>G. Cummings E. O'Donnell, J.P. T. Unsworth, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1931 -1932</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Mayor:</i></p> <p>H. Moroney, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>North Ward:</i></p> <p>J.B. Levi, J.P. H. Moroney, J.P. R.T. Taylor</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>South Ward:</i></p> <p>R. Gray, M.L.A. G.H. Robinson, J.P. R.H. Morley, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Central Ward:</i></p> <p>(A. Jacka, V.C., M.C., J.P. (C.H. Nelson, J.P. F.L. Dawkins, J.P. G.B. Renfrey, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>West Ward:</i></p> <p>E. O'Donnell, J.P. T. Unsworth, J.P. H.R. Johnson, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1932-1933</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Mayor:</i></p> <p>H.R. Johnson, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>North Ward:</i></p> <p>H. Moroney, J.P. R.T. Taylor J.B. Levi, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>South Ward:</i></p> <p>G.H. Robinson, J.P. R.H. Morley, J.P. B. Gray</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Central Ward:</i></p> <p>F.L. Dawkins, J.P. G.B. Renfrey, J.P. C.H. Nelson, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>West Ward:</i></p> <p>(T. Unsworth, J.P. (A. Levy, J.P. H.R. Johnson, J.P. S. Raphael</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1933-1934</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Mayor:</i></p> <p>Burnett Gray, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>North Ward:</i></p> <p>R.T. Taylor J.B. Levi, J.P. H. Moroney, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>South Ward:</i></p> <p>R.H. Morley, J.P. B. Gray, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Central Ward:</i></p> <p>G.H. Robinson, J.P. G.B. Renfrey, J.P. C.H. Nelson, J.P. F.L. Dawkins, J.P.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>West Ward:</i></p> <p>H.R. Johnson, J.P. S. Raphael A. Levy, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1934-1935</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Mayor:</i></p> <p>C.H. Nelson, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>North Ward:</i></p> <p>J.B. Levi, J.P. H. Moroney, J.P. F.E. Dixon</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>South Ward:</i></p> <p>B. Gray, J.P. G.H. Robinson, J.P. R.H. Morley, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Central Ward:</i></p> <p>C.H. Nelson, J.P. F.L. Dawkins, J.P. E.C. Mitty, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>West Ward:</i></p> <p>S. Raphael A. Levy, J.P. H.R. Johnson, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1935-1936</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Mayor:</i></p> <p>F.E. Dixon, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>North Ward:</i></p> <p>H. Moroney, J.P. F.E. Dixon, J.P. N.F. Barnfield, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>South Ward:</i></p> <p>G.H. Robinson, J.P. R.H. Morley, J.P. B. Gray, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Central Ward:</i></p> <p>F.L. Dawkins, J.P. E.C. Mitty, J.P. C.H. Nelson, J.P.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>West Ward:</i></p> <p>A. Levy, J.P. H.R. Johnson, J.P. J. Lynch, L.L.B.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1936-1937</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Mayor:</i></p> <p>A. Levy, J.P.</p>
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<i>North Ward:</i>	<i>West Ward:</i>	<i>Central Ward:</i>
(F.E. Dixon, J.P. W.O.J. Phillips N.F. Barnfield, J.P. H. Moroney, J.P.)	A. Levy, J.P. H.R. Johnson, J.P. J. Lynch, LL.B. 1939-1940	F.L. Dawkins, J.P. E.C. Mitty, J.P. C.H. Nelson, J.P.
<i>South Ward:</i>	<i>Mayor:</i>	<i>West Ward:</i>
R.H. Morley, J.P. B. Gray, J.P. G.H. Robinson, J.P.)	W.O.J. Phillips, J.P.)	D.A. McL. Kibble, LL.B. A.J. Stevens J. Lynch, LL.B., J.P.
<i>Central Ward:</i>	<i>North Ward:</i>	1942-1943
E.C. Mitty, J.P. C.H. Nelson, J.P. F.L. Dawkins, J.P.)	(W. Buck, F.C.A. (Aust.) J.D. Minty W.O.J. Phillips, J.P. H. Moroney, J.P.)	<i>Mayor:</i> C.H. Nelson, J.P.
<i>West Ward:</i>	<i>South Ward:</i>	<i>North Ward:</i>
H.R. Johnson, J.P. J. Lynch, LL.B. A. Levy, J.P.)	A.E. Watson B. Gray, J.P. J.T. Berkley, J.P.)	H. Moroney, J.P. G.W. Minty, J.P. W.O.J. Phillips
1937-1938	<i>Central Ward:</i>	<i>South Ward:</i>
<i>Mayor:</i> G.H. Robinson, J.P. (to January, 1938) F.L. Dawkins, J.P. (Feb- ruary to August, 1938)	E.C. Mitty, J.P. C.H. Nelson, J.P. F.L. Dawkins, J.P.)	J.T. Berkley, J.P. A.E. Watson B. Gray, J.P.)
<i>North Ward:</i>	<i>West Ward:</i>	<i>Central Ward:</i>
(N.F. Barnfield, J.P. W.O.J. Phillips H. Moroney, J.P. W. Buck, F.C.A. (Aust.)	H.R. Johnson, J.P. J. Lynch, LL.B. D.A. McL. Kibble, LL.B.)	F.L. Dawkins, J.P. E.C. Mitty, J.P. C.H. Nelson, J.P.)
<i>South Ward:</i>	1940-1941	<i>West Ward:</i>
B. Gray, J.P. (G.H. Robinson, J.P. J.T. Berkley R.H. Morley, J.P. A.E. Watson)	<i>Mayor:</i> J. Lynch, LL.B.)	D.A. McL. Kibble, LL.B. A.J. Stevens J. Lynch, LL.B.)
<i>Central Ward:</i>	<i>North Ward:</i>	1943-1944
C.H. Nelson, J.P. F.L. Dawkins, J.P. E.C. Mitty, J.P.)	W.O.J. Phillips, J.P. H. Moroney, J.P. J.D. Minty (G.W. Minty)	<i>Mayor:</i> G.W. Minty, J.P.)
<i>West Ward:</i>	<i>South Ward:</i>	<i>North Ward:</i>
J. Lynch, LL.B. A. Levy, J.P. H.R. Johnson, J.P.)	B. Gray, J.P. J.T. Berkley, J.P. A.E. Watson)	G.W. Minty, J.P. W.O.J. Phillips H. Moroney, J.P.)
1938-1939	<i>Central Ward:</i>	<i>South Ward:</i>
<i>Mayor:</i> E.C. Mitty, J.P.)	C.H. Nelson, J.P. F.L. Dawkins, J.P. E.C. Mitty, J.P.)	A.E. Watson, J.P. B. Gray, J.P. J.T. Berkley, J.P.)
<i>North Ward:</i>	<i>West Ward:</i>	<i>Central Ward:</i>
H. Moroney, J.P. W. Buck, (F.C.A. (Aust.) W.O.J. Phillips)	J. Lynch, LL.B., J.P. D.A. McL. Kibble, LL.B. A.J. Stevens)	E.C. Mitty, J.P. C.H. Nelson, J.P. F.L. Dawkins, J.P.)
<i>South Ward:</i>	1941-1942	<i>West Ward:</i>
J. T. Berkley, J.P. A.E. Watson B. Gray, J.P.)	<i>Mayor:</i> J.T. Berkley, J.P.)	A.J. Stevens, J.P. J. Lynch, LL.B. D.A. McL. Kibble, LL.B.)
<i>Central Ward:</i>	<i>North Ward:</i>	1944-1945
F.L. Dawkins, J.P. E.C. Mitty, J.P. C.H. Nelson, J.P.)	H. Moroney, J.P. G.W. Minty W.O.J. Phillips)	<i>Mayor:</i> A.J. Stevens, J.P.)
	<i>South Ward:</i>	<i>North Ward:</i>
	J.T. Berkley, J.P. A.E. Watson B. Gray, J.P.)	W.O.J. Phillips, J.P. H. Moroney, J.P. G.W. Minty, J.P.)
		<i>South Ward:</i>
		B. Gray, J.P. J.T. Berkley, J.P. A.E. Watson, J.P.)

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<i>Central Ward:</i> C.H. Nelson, J.P. F.L. Dawkins, J.P. E.C. Mitty, J.P.	<i>South Ward:</i> (B. Gray, J.P. (W.E. Dickeson F.W. Binns, J.P. A.E. Watson, J.P.	1950-1951 <i>Mayor:</i> J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D., J.P.
<i>West Ward:</i> J. Lynch, LLB. DA. McL. Kibble, LLB. A.J. Stevens, J.P.	<i>Central Ward:</i> A.E. Allen J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D., J.P. E.C. Mitty, J.P.	<i>North Ward:</i> W.O.J. Phillips, J.P. P.B. Fryberg G.W. Minty, J.P.
1945-1946 <i>Mayor:</i> B. Gray, J.P.	<i>West Ward:</i> G.E. Cavanagh, J.P.	<i>South Ward:</i> W.E. Dickeson, J.P. F.W. Binns, J.P. A.E. Watson, J.P.
<i>North Ward:</i> H. Moroney, J.P. G.W. Minty, J.P. W.O.J. Phillips, J.P.	DA. McL. Kibble, LLB. A.J. Stevens, J.P.	<i>Central Ward:</i> A.E. Allen J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D., J.P. E.C. Mitty, J.P.
<i>South Ward:</i> J.T. Berkley, J.P. A.E. Watson, J.P. B. Gray, J.P.	1948-1949 <i>Mayor:</i> DA. McL. Kibble, LLB., J.P.	<i>West Ward:</i> G.E. Cavanagh, J.P. DA. McL. Kibble, LLB. A.J. Stevens, J.P.
<i>Central Ward:</i> F.L. Dawkins, J.P. E.C. Mitty, J.P. A.E. Allen	<i>North Ward:</i> H. Moroney, J.P. G.W. Minty, J.P. W.O.J. PHillips, J.P.	1951-1952 <i>Mayor:</i> W.O.J. Phillips, J.P.
<i>West Ward:</i> DA. McL. Kibble, LLB. A.J. Stevens, J.P. G.E. Cavanagh	<i>South Ward:</i> F.W. Binns, J.P. A.E. Watson, J.P. W.E. Dickeson, J.P.	<i>North Ward:</i> P.B. Fryberg G.W. Minty, J.P. W.O.J. Phillips, J.P.
1946-1947 <i>Mayor:</i> A.E. Allen	<i>Central Ward:</i> J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D., J.P. E.C. Mitty, J.P. A.E. Allen	<i>South Ward:</i> F.W. Binns, J.P. A.E. Watson, J.P. W.E. Dickeson, J.P.
<i>North Ward:</i> G.W. Minty, J.P. W.O.J. Phillips, J.P. H. Moroney, J.P.	<i>West Ward:</i> D.A. McL. Kibble, LLB., J.P. A.J. Stevens, J.P. G.E. Cavanagh, J.P.	<i>Central Ward:</i> J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D., J.P. E.C. Mitty, J.P. A.E. Allen
<i>South Ward:</i> A.E. Watson, J.P. B. Gray, J.P. F.W. Binns	1949-1950 <i>Mayor:</i> F.W. Binns, J.P.	<i>West Ward:</i> DA. McL. Kibble, LLB. A.J. Stevens, J.P. G.E. Cavanagh, J.P.
<i>Central Ward:</i> E.C. Mitty, J.P. A.E. Allen J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D., J.P.	<i>North Ward:</i> G.W. Minty, J.P. W.O.J. Phillips, J.P. P.B. Fryberg	1952-1953 <i>Mayor:</i> A.J. Stevens, J.P.
<i>West Ward:</i> A.J. Stevens, J.P. G.E. Cavanagh DA. McL. Kibble, LLB.	<i>South Ward:</i> A.E. Watson, J.P. W.E. Dickeson, J.P. F.W. Binns, J.P.	<i>North Ward:</i> G.W. Minty, J.P. W.O.J. Phillips, J.P. J.L. Darbyshire
1947-1948 <i>Mayor:</i> H. Moroney, J.P.	<i>Central Ward:</i> E.C. Mitty, J.P. A.E. Allen J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D., J.P.	<i>South Ward:</i> A.E. Watson, J.P. W.E. Dickeson, J.P. (F.W. Binns, J.P. (A.C. Watson
<i>North Ward:</i> W.O.J. Phillips, J.P. H. Moroney, J.P. G.W. Minty, J.P.	<i>West Ward:</i> A.J. Stevens, J.P. G.E. Cavanagh, J.P. DAMcL. Mc. Kibble, LLB., J.P.	<i>Central Ward:</i> E.C. Mitty, J.P. A.E. Allen J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D., J.P.

<i>West Ward</i>	<i>Central Ward</i>	<i>South Ward</i>
A.J. Stevens, J.P.	E.C. Mitty, J.P.	J.A. Mickles
P.W. Stynes	A.E. Allen	G.H. Copeman
D.A. McL. Kibble, LL.B.	J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D.,	A.C. Watson, J.P.
1953-1954	J.P.	<i>Central Ward</i>
<i>Mayor</i>	<i>West Ward</i>	E.C. Mitty, O.B.C.,
W.E. Dickeson, J.P.	A.J. Stevens, J.P.	S.B.St.J., J.P.
<i>North Ward</i>	P.W. Stynes, J.P.	A.E. Allen
W.O.J. Phillips, J.P.	H.W. Bush, J.P.	J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D.,
J.L. Darbyshire		J.P.
G.W. Minty, J.P.	1956-1957	<i>West Ward</i>
<i>South Ward</i>	<i>Mayor</i>	S. Aldous
W.E. Dickeson, J.P.	P.W. Stynes, J.P.	P.W. Stynes, J.P.
A.C. Watson	<i>North Ward</i>	H.W. Bush, J.P.
N.E. Adderley	W.O.J. Phillips, J.P.	1959-1960
<i>Central Ward</i>	J.L. Darbyshire, J.P.	<i>Mayor</i>
A.E. Allen	G.W. Minty, J.P.	J.C. Duggan, J.P.
J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D.,	<i>South Ward</i>	<i>North Ward</i>
J.P.	W.E. Dickeson, J.P.	J.C. Duggan, J.P.
E.C. Mitty, J.P.	A.C. Watson, J.P.	J.L. Darbyshire
<i>West Ward</i>	J.A. Mickles	G.W. Minty, J.P.
P.W. Stynes	<i>Central Ward</i>	<i>South Ward</i>
DA. McL. Kibble, LL.B.	A.E. Allen	G.H. Copeman
A.J. Stevens, J.P.	J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D.,	A.C. Watson, J.P.
1954-1955	J.P.	J.A. Mickles
<i>Mayor</i>	E.C. Mitty, J.P.	<i>Central Ward</i>
E.C. Mitty, J.P.	<i>West Ward</i>	A.E. Allen
<i>North Ward</i>	P.W. Stynes, J.P.	J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D.,
J.L. Darbyshire	H.W. Bush, J.P.	J.P.
G.W. Minty, J.P.	S. Aldous	E.C. Mitty, O.B.E.,
W.O.J. Phillips, J.P.	1957-1958	S.B.St.J., J.P.
<i>South Ward</i>	<i>Mayor</i>	<i>West Ward</i>
A.C. Watson, J.P.	A.C. Watson, J.P.	P.W. Stynes, J.P.
N.E. Adderley	<i>North Ward</i>	H.W. Bush, J.P.
W.E. Dickeson, J.P.	J.L. Darbyshire	S. Aldous
<i>Central Ward</i>	G.W. Minty, J.P.	1960-1961
J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D.,	J.C. Duggan, J.P.	<i>Mayor</i>
J.P.	<i>South Ward</i>	H.W. Bush, J.P.
E.C. Mitty, J.P.	A.C. Watson, J.P.	<i>North Ward</i>
A.E. Allen	J.A. Mickles	J.L. Darbyshire
<i>West Ward</i>	G.H. Copeman	G.W. Minty, J.P.
D.A. McL. Kibble, LL.B.	<i>Central Ward</i>	J.C. Duggan, J.P.
A.J. Stevens, J.P.	J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D.,	<i>South Ward</i>
P.W. Stynes, J.P.	J.P.	A.C. Watson, J.P.
1955-1956	E.C. Mitty, O.B.E., J.P.	J.A. Mickles
<i>Mayor</i>	A.E. Allen	G.H. Copeman
J.L. Darbyshire, J.P.	<i>West Ward</i>	<i>Central Ward</i>
<i>North Ward</i>	H.W. Bush, J.P.	J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D.,
G.W. Minty, J.P.	S. Aldous	J.P.
W.O.J. Phillips, J.P.	P.W. Stynes, J.P.	E.C. Mitty, O.B.E.,
J.L. Darbyshire, J.P.	1958-1959	S.B.St.J., J.P.
<i>South Ward</i>	<i>Mayor</i>	J. Macartney
N.E. Adderley	A.E. Allen	<i>West Ward</i>
W.E. Dickeson, J.P.	<i>North Ward</i>	H.W. Bush, J.P.
A.C. Watson, J.P.	J.W. Minty, J.P.	S. Aldous
	J.C. Duggan, J.P.	E.R. Gamon
	J.L. Darbyshire	

1961-1962	<i>Central Ward</i>	<i>West Ward</i>
<i>Mayor:</i>	J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D.,	S. Aldous
J.A. Mickles, J.P.	J.P.	P.B. Fryberg
<i>North Ward:</i>	E.C. Mitty, O.B.E.	H.W. Bush, J.P.
G.W. Minty, J.P.	S.B.St.J. J.P.	1966-1867
J.C. Duggan, J.P.	J. Macartney, J.P.	<i>Mayor:</i>
C. Breydon	<i>West Ward</i>	S. Aldous, J.P.
<i>South Ward:</i>	H.W. Bush, J.P.	<i>North Ward:</i>
J.A. Mickles, J.P.	S. Aldous	H.E.C. Hall-Kenney
G.H. Copeman	P.B. Fryberg	J.C. Duggan, J.P.
A.C. Watson, J.P.	1964-1965	H.W. Ireland, M.B., B.S.,
<i>Central Ward:</i>	<i>Mayor:</i>	Ph.C.
M.C. Mitty, O.B.E.,	J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D.,	<i>South Ward:</i>
S.B.St.J., J.P.	J.P.	J.A. Mickles
J. Macartney	<i>North Ward:</i>	G.A.R. Manning
J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D.,	C. Breydon	A.C. Watson, J.P.
J.P.	J.C. Duggan, J.P.	<i>Central Ward:</i>
<i>West Ward:</i>	H.E.C. Hall-Kenney	J.F. Staughton
S. Aldous	<i>South Ward:</i>	J. Macartney, J.P.
E.R. Gamon	A.C. Watson, J.P.	J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D.,
H.W. Bush, J.P.	J.A. Mickles	J.P.
1962-1963	G.H. Copeman	<i>West Ward:</i>
<i>Mayor:</i>	<i>Central Ward:</i>	S. Aldous, J.P.
J. Macartney, J.P.	J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D.	P.B. Fryberg
<i>North Ward:</i>	J.P.	H.W. Bush, J.P.
J.C. Duggan, J.P.	E.C. Mitty, O.B.E.,	1967-1968
C. Breydon	S.B.St.J., J.P. (Resigned	<i>Mayor:</i>
A.R. Judd	26/4/1965)	H.E.C. Hall-Kenney, J.P.
<i>South Ward:</i>	J. Macartney, J.P.	<i>North Ward:</i>
G.H. Copeman	J.F. Staughton (Elected 6/	H.E.C. Hall-Kenney, J.P.
A.C. Watson, J.P.	6/1965)	J.C. Duggan, J.P.
JA. Mickles, J.P.	<i>West Ward:</i>	H.W. Ireland, M.B., B.S.,
<i>Central Ward:</i>	H.W. Bush, J.P.	Ph.C.
J. Macartney, J.P.	S. Aldous, J.P.	<i>South Ward:</i>
J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D.,	P.B. Fryberg	J.A. Mickles (Resigned 18/
J.P.	1965-1966	4/1968)
E.C. Mitty, O.B.E.,	<i>Mayor:</i>	G.A.R. Manning
S.B.St.J., J.P.	C. Breydon, J.P. (Dec'd 4/	A.C. Watson, J.P. (Dec'd
<i>West Ward:</i>	4/1966)	28/4/1968)
E.R. Gamon	J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D.,	B.T. Zouch (Elected
H.W. Bush, J.P.	J.P. (Elected 18/4/1966	18/4/ 1968)
S. Aldous	for remainder of term)	E.E. Vienet (Elected
1963-1964	<i>North Ward:</i>	15/5/ 1968)
<i>Mayor:</i>	H.E.C. Hall-Kenney	<i>Central Ward:</i>
S. Aldous, J.P.	J.C. Duggan, J.P.	J.R. Staughton
<i>North Ward:</i>	C. Breydon, J.P. (Dec'd 4/	J. Macartney, J.P.
C. Breydon	4/1966)	J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D.,
A.R. Judd (Resigned	H.W. Ireland (Elected 12/	J.P.
23/4/ 1964)	5/1966)	<i>West Ward:</i>
J.C. Duggan, J.P.	<i>South Ward:</i>	S. Aldous, J.P.
H.E.C. Hall-Kenney	J.A. Mickles	P.B. Fryberg
(Elected 28/5/1964)	G.H. Copeman	I.B. Trayling
<i>South Ward:</i>	A.C. Watson, J.P.	1968-1969
A.C. Watson, J.P.	<i>Central Ward:</i>	<i>Mayor:</i>
JA. Mickles	J.F. Staughton	J.F. Staughton, J.P.
G.H. Copeman	J. Macartney, J.P.	
	J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D.,	
	J.P.	

COUNCILLORS 1939 -1983

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<i>North Ward:</i>	<i>Central Ward:</i>	<i>West Ward:</i>
H.E.C. Hall-Kenney, J.P.	J.F. Staughton, J.P. (Re-	I.S. Williams
J.C. Duggan, J.P.	signed 25/3/1971)	Hon. I.B. Trayling,
H.W.T.C.J. Ireland, M.B.	I.W. Clark	M.L.C. S. Aldous
B.S., Ph.C.	TP. Tierney, J.P.	
<i>South Ward:</i>	R.D.A. Thomas	1973-1974
G.A.R. Manning B.T.	(Elected	<i>Mayor:</i>
Zouch	25/3/1971)	I.S. Williams, BA.
E.E. Vienet, JP.	<i>West Ward:</i>	(Hons.), M.A.
<i>Central Ward:</i>	S. Aldous	<i>North Ward:</i>
J.F. Staughton, J.P.	I.B. Trayling	J.C. Duggan
J. Macartney, J.P.	I.S. Williams, BA.	J.R. Campton
J. Talbot, O.B.E., E.D.,	(Hons.), M.A.	C.J.J. King
J.P.		<i>South Ward:</i>
<i>West Ward:</i>	1971-1972	B.T. Zouch
S. Aldous, J.P.	<i>Mayor:</i>	G.A.R. Manning
P.B. Fryberg (Resigned	I.B. Trayling, J.P.	I.J. Smith
23/6/1969)	<i>North Ward:</i>	<i>Central Ward:</i>
I.B. Trayling	J.C. Duggan, J.P.	J.F. Staughton
L.H. Levy (Elected	H.W.T.C.J. Ireland,	I.W. Clark
24/7/	M.B.,	R.D.A. Thomas
1969)	B.S., Ph.C.	<i>West Ward:</i>
1969-1970	J.R. Campton, LL.B.	I.S. Williams
<i>Mayor:</i>	<i>South Ward:</i>	A.E. Bawden
J.C. Duggan, J.P.	G.A.R. Manning, J.P.	S. Aldous
<i>North Ward:</i>	E.E. Vienet, J.P. (Dec'd	1974-1975
H.E.C. Hall-Kenney, J.P.	22/8/1972)	<i>Mayor:</i>
(Dec'd 13/12/1969)	B.T. Zouch	B.T. Zouch J.P.
J.C. Duggan, J.P.	I.J. Smith (Elected	<i>North Ward:</i>
H.W.T.C.J. Ireland,	6/9/ 1972)	J.C. Duggan
M.B., B.S., Ph.C.	<i>Central Ward:</i>	G.T. Gahan
J.R. Compton (Elected	I.W. Clark, Ph.C.	C.J.J. King
22/ 1/1970)	T.P. Tierney, J.P.	<i>South Ward:</i>
<i>South Ward:</i>	R.D.A. Thomas	B.T. Zouch
G.A.R. Manning	<i>West Ward:</i>	G.A.R. Manning
B.T. Zouch	I.S. Williams, BA.	I.J. Smith
E.E. Vienet, J.P.	(Hons.), M.A.	<i>Central Ward:</i>
<i>Central Ward:</i>	I.B. Trayling, J.P.	J.F. Staughton
J.F. Staughton, J.P.	(M.L.C.)	I.W. Clark
I.W. Clark	S. Aldous	R.D.A. Thomas
T.P. Tierney, J.P. West		<i>West Ward:</i>
Ward: S. Aldous	1972-1973	I.S. Williams (Resigned
I.B. Trayling	<i>Mayor:</i>	15/1/1975)
I.S. Williams, B.A.	T.P. Tierney, J.P. (Dec'd	A.E. Bawden
(Hons.), MA.	8/5/1973)	G.C. Phillips
	I.S. Williams	H.M. Halliday
1970-1971	<i>North Ward:</i>	(Elected 20/2/1975)
<i>Mayor:</i>	J.C. Duggan	
G.A.R. Manning, J.P.	H.W. Ireland	1975-1976
<i>North Ward:</i>	J.R. Campton	<i>Mayor:</i>
J.R. Campton J.C.	<i>South Ward:</i>	I.W. Clark, Ph.C.
Duggan, J.P.	G.A.R. Manning	M.P.S., J.P.
H.W.T.C.J. Ireland,	I. Smith	<i>North Ward:</i>
M.B.,	B.T. Zouch	J.C. Duggan
B.S., Ph.C.	<i>Central Ward:</i>	G.T. Gahan
<i>South Ward:</i>	I.W. Clark	C.J.J. King
G.A.R. Manning, J.P.	T.P. Tierney (Dec'd	<i>South Ward:</i>
B.T. Zouch	8/5/ 1973)	B.T. Zouch
E.E. Vienet, J.P.	R.D.A. Thomas	I.J. Smity
	J.F. Staughton (Elected	G.A.R. Manning
	21/5/1973)	

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<i>Central Ward:</i> I.W. Clark J.F. Staughton R.D.A. Thomas	<i>North Ward:</i> E.D. Miller A.W. Gillon C J J King	<i>Central Ward:</i> M.L. Jelbart B.Slattery RN. Browning
<i>West Ward:</i> H.M. Halliday A.E. Bawden G.C. Phillips	<i>South Ward:</i> K.G. Barker B.T. Zouch G.A.R. Manning	<i>West Ward:</i> G. Irving H.M. Halliday C. Bell
1976-1977 <i>Mayor:</i> R.D.A. Thomas, J.P.	<i>Central Ward:</i> R.N. Browning R.D.A. Thomas (Resigned 3/9/1978)	1981-1982 <i>Mayor:</i> C.J. Bell
<i>North Ward:</i> J.C. Duggan (Dec'd 3/12/ 1976)	B. Slattery M.L. Jelbart (Elected 14/ 10/1978)	<i>North Ward:</i> S.D. Taylor C.J.J. King E.D. Miller
G.T. Gahan E.D. Miller C.J.J. King (Elected 14/ 12/1976)	<i>West Ward:</i> A.E. Bawden G.H. Irving H.M. Halliday	<i>South Ward:</i> B.T. Zouch K.N.M. McGregor K.G. Barker
<i>South Ward:</i> B.T. Zouch G.A.R. Manning K.G. Barker	1979-1980 <i>Mayor:</i> C.J.J. King	<i>Central Ward:</i> M.L. Jelbart B. Slattery R.N. Browning
<i>Central Ward:</i> J.F.. Staughton (Resigned 19/7/1977)	<i>North Ward:</i> A.W. Gillon (Resigned 28/ 4/1980)	<i>West Ward:</i> G. Irving D.M. Edwards C.J. Bell
I.W. Clark R.D.A. Thomas	B. Staughton (Elected 7/6/ 1980)	1982-1983 <i>Mayor:</i> E.D. Miller
<i>West Ward:</i> H.M. Halliday A.E. Bawden G.C. Phillips	C.J.J. King E.D. Miller	<i>North Ward:</i> S.D. Taylor C.J.J. King E.D. Miller
1977-1978 <i>Mayor:</i> B.T. Zouch, C.M.C., J.P.	<i>South Ward:</i> B.T. Zouch G.A.R. Manning (Dec'd 10/1980) K.G. Barker	<i>South Ward:</i> B.T. Zouch K.N.M. McGregor M.C. Niall
<i>North Ward:</i> C.J.J. King E.D. Miller	<i>Central Ward:</i> M.L. Jelbart B. Slattery R.N. Browning	<i>Central Ward:</i> M.L. Jelbart B. Slattery A.S. Moss
S.G. Jones (Resigned 14/4/ 1978)	<i>West Ward:</i> G. Irving H.M. Halliday C.J. Bell	<i>West Ward:</i> G. Irving (Resigned) A.J. Della-Porta (Elected March 1982) D.M. Edwards C.J. Bell
A.W. Gillon (Elected 3/5/ 1978)	1980-1981 <i>Mayor:</i> C.J.J. King	
<i>South Ward:</i> G.A.R. Manning K.G. Barker B.T. Zouch	<i>North Ward:</i> S.D. Taylor E.D. Miller C.J.J. King	
<i>Central Ward:</i> I.W. Clark RN. Browning R.D.A. Thomas	<i>South Ward:</i> B.T. Zouch K.G. Barker K.N.M. McGregor	
<i>West Ward:</i> H.M. Halliday A.E. Bawden G.H. Irving		
1978-1979 <i>Mayor:</i> B.T. Zouch, C.M.C., J.P.		

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