

# CAULFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

39

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The Society meets on the third Wednesday of each month (except December and January) in the Committee Room, first floor, City Hall at 7.30p.m.

PATRON - His Worship the Mayor of Caulfield Cr. Nicholas Gold

PRESIDENT: Mrs. F.E. Campbell	523 9228
SECRETARY: Miss H. Ford	528 4140
TREASURER: Miss N. Ward	523 5308

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## THE ELIZABETH STREET CHRISTMAS PARTY - 1993

*The observations of Athol Reid*

A Sunday before Christmas permission has been obtained from the Caulfield City Council to close off the Street between Sandham and Bent.

One month earlier colourful, artistic invitations have been created and fed to all the residents' letter boxes.

Two talented attractive young mothers, neighbours - Diana and Robin, living diagonally opposite each other, are the leading 'lights'.

Their tree front gardens and nature strips, with B.B.Q's set up at road centre, become the scene of happy activity.

The morning of the day dawns quietly, slowly, gradually, piece by piece, card tables, chairs,

stools, beach umbrellas and whatever one sits upon, professional stand-up iron B.B.Q's appear from North, South, East and West.

The already delivered Caulfield barricades are set up and the activity becomes an exciting one - a sight to behold.

Elizabeth Street over seven decades, two generations, three recessions and a few wars has gone full cycle.

A street of young people, street cricket teams, to a street of many widows and now a return to its former glory.

The barricades are up and the road scene is one of furious movement by girls and boys of all ages and sizes on two and three wheeled vehicles of all shapes and sizes dodging one another in every direction, at break-neck speeds and without a breath test.

*continued next page*

*CHS.pm4*



measured about 10 inches across, so that Johnny could wash only one leg at a time. Toilets were in the yard. My husband built wardrobes, shelves and a china cabinet, which is in our present home to this day. He too, had now a place in our bedroom to do his drawings. To wash he went to the public baths, and I showered secretly in the tenants' rooms when they were out.

Our son, well behaved and clean, was accepted at the nearest Kindergarten on Dandenong Road, just next to the church, opposite where the New Malvern Theatre used to be. Of course, his English became fluent in no time. He was the only child there of migrant parents in those days, and we made an effort to invite his teacher, Miss Jackson, to our home, so we could make ourselves known to her. She also became a friend for many years to come.

Valerie and David Davies, a Caulfield solicitor and his wife, who lived around the corner in Hawthorn Road had their little Lindy in Kinder, and after a few weeks invited us to their home. When we arrived both Valerie and David were sitting by the fire-place studying a map of Czechoslovakia. In those days, that was quite unusual, that people were so interested in details about migrants. We were used by then to be called many names, usually being mixed up with Jugoslavia, etc. etc. or as "Balts"... The Davieses became part of our lives, but now, unfortunately they have moved from Caulfield. Lindy is a famous actress.

Nornie Gude and L. Pendlebury, her husband, both famous painters had Ann, their daughter in Kinder, and they too invited us to their home in Inkerman Street, where they lived for many years. Nornie and Laurie painted my children and my husband's portrait as a present. Ann Pendlebury is an actress on TV and in the theatre in Melbourne.

As we were trying to constantly improve our English, we used to go often to the New Malvern Picture Theatre, listening to films - in the front row - 2 shillings entrance fee. We also borrowed books from our land-lady, some of them by C.J.

Dennis, who lived for some time at *Matlock*. We fell in love with his poetry and can proudly say that we were a little instrumental in reviving C.J. Dennis, who at that time was not favoured as school literature.

With the above mentioned children from Kinder, both my children, Ann as well (she was born in 1953), went to Caulfield North State School, from where they were selected for Melbourne High and MacRobertson.

Once again, in *Matlock*, I was given more and more tasks, as the boss saw my willingness and one day, I just could not carry on. The doctor confirmed that I was overworked and it then came to some very unpleasant scenes, when our land-lady gave us notice, but insisted, that we had to leave the garage accommodation as well. Again, we did not know who could have helped us legally, as we actually paid rent.

One guest, an Ex-Service man, suggested that the Ex-Servicemen's League had a "Fair Rents Board" organisation within it, and as my husband was an Ex-Serviceman, he applied for membership and was given, by this institution, great help in persuading our boss that she could not remove us from that garage. So, instead of waitressing and cleaning all those flats, I did the 23 units only...until I became pregnant with my daughter. I then left the cleaning, and still in the garage, worked as waitress, only at lunchtime, in a Chinese restaurant past the corner of Dandenong Road in Glenferrie Road. By then we managed to save for a 1939 Austin car and started to travel throughout Victoria; we packed it with friends who, as yet, had no car, until the Austin gave up its soul.

In 1953, after four and a half years in the garage, we managed to save also for a house. Of course, we now hoped to have it in Caulfield. In that time we saved 600 pounds, the car we bought for 100 pounds, and my husband, found an extremely dilapidated house for sale in Norwood Road for which the agents asked for 500 pounds deposit and the rest, another 5,000 pounds we would be assisted with with a loan from our savings bank (this, over many years). At that time, even with

