CAULFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Editor: Gladys Vallati

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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

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.

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The throng gradually builds up, with shy anticipation. They come with party dresses, summer hats, and their baskets, bread and rolls, chops, steak and lolly water. Bowls of exotic salads appear from the heavens.

The preliminaries are of recognition, introductions where necessary, and stick-on name and street number tags. After half an hour of warming talk one can sense that it will be a good day of happy friendship, continuing till day-light saving sunset and beyond.

Forget about the clean-up, that is for next day, when the garden furniture disappears. There seems to be sixty per cent moving, happy thirsty children and forty percent contented parents and visitors.

Thanks to the two hostesses who are well supported by several enthusiastic, glamorous, young mothers and their partners, all pulling their weight.

During the years these people co-operate as a group, minding children, ferrying them to kindergarten and school, in every way being true neighbours. It was a delight to be able to enjoy the company of so many neighbours on that day in December.

SPRINGTHORPE RESERVE GATES

These gates were the original lodge gates erected at the Melbourne Hospital prior to 1806, and in 1910 they were presented to Dr. J.W. Springthorpe, a physician at the Hospital, who had them erected at his home *Joyous Grange*, in Murrumbeena. They were later donated by Mrs. Springthorpe to the Caulfield City Council and installed at this location on the suggestion of Councillor S.W. Tyers in 1934.

(By Sheila Emelhain)

The Lechte memoirs published by the City of Caulfield and made available from the three public libraries has proved very popular with over 160 people requesting a copy.

AN IMMIGRANT'S STORY (cont'd.)

My husband stayed in that job for 3 years. In between cleaning machines, he sketched down his ideas for new machinery and passed it on to the boss. One day a client came and said that he wished to invest money into the means of mechanically harvesting seaweed from the ocean with the view of utilising it as a food product. My husband offered to try to develop something with his knowledge as food-machinery/chemical machinery expert. He was offered wages, equivalent to "overtime" payments, and left the night-job at Holdens, to work at home on these drawings without a drawing-board, and other necessary facilities.

Our windowless room was too small for all this: one day my husband noticed that one of Matlock's garages, was not occupied by a car, but with old broken furniture and rubbish gathered over many years. It was twice as large as our room. He approached our land-lady and asked whether he could clean it out and rent it for us as living quarters? She agreed, and for days we moved and shifted that rubbish out. One of the staff knew a Mr Winkler who lived in Albion Street, South Caulfield, who was a master builder with "Golden hands" She said that he was a kindly man and for a small fee could help us make some partitions to change the garage into a living area. We approached Mr. Winkler, who came within a few days, bought cheap wood, and in a few days erected two rooms, with a tiny recess for kitchen and bath sink.

He, his wife, his daughter Louise, and sons, all members of the Church of Christ in Caulfield became life-long friends. Of course old Mr & Mrs Winkler passed away, but Louise writes to me from New South Wales, remembering the days, when we were asked to their home. I must add here that in those days, we were waiting and waiting for the promised 'supper', which, as the custom was, was served just before the visitors left.

So, we had a dolls house, decorated with some ornaments which we brought from Prague. Johnny had a tiny room, and in the 'kitchen' was a 1-ring electric cooker, and the wash sink which

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 insitution, 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

those low-sounding wages, our debt was incredibly minimal and created no problem.

Our house in Norwood Road today is still the nicest house in the whole street!!! Ask the neighbours...

After finishing his Sea-weed dredge (we never heard what happened with those drawings) my husband started a little work shop with another engineer in Neall Street, Carlton, and in 1958 established EFCA ENGINEERING PTY. LTD. and FRED CAPEK & ASSOCIATES, in which we both worked most successfully, until his untimely death in 1979.

Then we could proudly say that we achieved the standard that we wished for, without borrowing, or owing money in our business. Our house in Norwood Road, became my husband's antique-collection hobby and was always admired for its charm and taste. The house is on blue stone foundation, and over a century old...

My own activities in Caulfield, Melbourne and Victoria, are mentioned in the Caulfield Heritage book, and as a life-long worker for the migrant community, there was hardly a minister or politician, including Councillors and Caulfield Mayors, who did not visit our HOME, for discussions on migrant issues, and continental dinners...

An anecdote comes to mind, from the first days of our life in the garage in *Matlock*, Dandenong Road, Caulfield North:-

A friend from Prague found out that we were in Australia and came to visit us. His first words were: You very wisely chose Caulfield as your home.

And, as one of Caulfield's councillors, prior to my Council election, told me:- If you want to serve the community as a Councillor, you must know every street in Caulfield.

As a Councillor, on my first race meeting at Caulfield in 1977, Idid NOT wear that "silverfox" but I DID sit next to Sir Rupert and Lady Clarke.

My husband's ashes are in his beloved Caulfield,

in our garden... Some people kindly called our house "the Trianon" of Caulfield, I call it my Strength, my T A R A.

Both my neighbours on either side (third to fourth generation) Caulfieldians, must be the nicest neighbours in the whole world.

PORT PHILLIP SEA PILOTS (cont'd)

Prior to 1901 sailing pilot cruising cutters were Boomerang, Corsair, Anonyma, Proserpine, Rip, Mavis, and Hawk. In 1901 the pilots took delivery of their first steam powered pilot cutter Victoria, 46 metres in length built at Williamstown. Victoria was followed by Alvina, Akuna, Akuna11 and in 1953 Wyuna, a twin screw diesel electric pilot cutter 63 metres long. Wyuna served until November, 1979 and was then sold to the new Nautical College at Launceston for use as a training ship.

The system for getting pilots on and off ships at sea was for the ship to stop dead in the water with the wind and sea broad on the beam. The pilot cutter would round the ship's stern, manoeuvre into the lee and lower the 18ft. workboat which with a crew of two transferred the pilots to or from thie ships.

In the early 1970's with a view to the replacement of Wyuna a study was made throughout the world for a better system for putting pilots aboard ships. In 1972 the Service purchased a 12 metre G.R.P. (fibreglass) twin screw diesel launch in England to assist in servicing the new tanker port at Westernport. Pilots here were gaining experience with this and also experimenting with helicopters, initially landing on the ships and later winching the pilots on and off.

A decision was eventurally made in favour of the launch system and new ones were ordered 13 metres in length. With the launch system in operation the pilot boards directly from the launch with the ship steaming at about 7 knots.

Further information on the Port Phillip Sea Pilots is available in the Society's room at the City Hall.