



# ST KILDA 'TIMES

St Kilda Historical Society Newsletter

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[www.stkildahistory.org.au](http://www.stkildahistory.org.au)

## O'Donnell Gardens

The name O'Donnell, be it the gardens or the fountain, is well known to St Kilda residents and visitors – more so than the achievements of the man they commemorate.

Edward O'Donnell was a St Kilda Councillor and businessman. He was born in county Tipperary, Ireland in 1845. The family arrived in Australia in 1855 and settled in St Kilda shortly thereafter. Edward continued to live in St Kilda until his death in 1933.

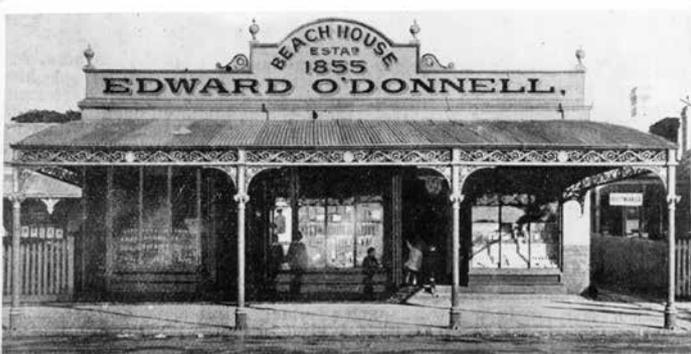


Edward O'Donnell. Image: CoPP History and Heritage collection

While still a teenager Edward commenced work as assistant to Charles Gray, licensed grocer, Fitzroy Street, St Kilda. The business was later taken over by John Fletcher before it was acquired by O'Donnell in 1868 when just 23 years of age. He later opened a second store, Universal Cash Sales, on the corner of Chapel and Wellington streets.

In 1872, Edward married Bridget Brown in St Mary's Catholic Church, East St Kilda. The couple had eleven children; eight daughters and three sons. One son, Frank, eventually managed the Fitzroy Street store and another son, Dargan, the one in Chapel Street.

Edward was elected to the St Kilda council in 1888 as a member for West Ward and served continuously for 44 years. During that time he was mayor on six separate occasions, including the war years. He was a member of the St Kilda Foreshore Committee from its inception in 1906 and its chairman from 1918. The work of the committee, led by the vision of Carlo Catani, gifted St Kilda its unique foreshore parks and gardens and the landscaped Esplanade belvedere that continue to define St Kilda 100 years later.



Licensed Grocery Business Fitzroy Street, St Kilda. Image: CoPP History and Heritage collection



O'Donnell Fountain 2018. Photo: Maureen Walker



O'Donnell Gardens c early 1930s. SKHS collections

In 1928, to celebrate his fortieth year on council, Edward was accorded a dinner at the George Hotel. The menu suggests it was a splendid affair with a style of cuisine very much of the time.

Following his death in 1933, a fountain was commissioned to perpetuate his memory in the centre of the gardens that had, by then, already started to be known by his name.

The fountain was unveiled in 1935. It was designed and built at a cost of £750 by Modern Art Co. Pty. Ltd. Of the art deco style, it is 4.5 metres high and 5 metres in diameter. The fountain's plaque says his 'record of municipal and community service will always be an example of true manhood and ideal citizenship'.

The required water supply was a subject for dispute initially, but resolved with the installation of electric pumps. However, its operation has been problematic, a challenge that the City of Port Phillip continues to work on to resolve today.

With thanks to research by Maureen Walker. ■

# St Kilda's Lost Mansions

Photographs of some of the best St Kilda houses built during the period 1850 -1872 are on display at [Port Phillip Heritage Centre](#) until 30 April.

The majesty of the mansions is captured by Donald McDonald (c.1830-1880), an important Melbourne photographer specialising in landscape and architectural subjects, whose studios were located in High Street, St Kilda from 1867 to 1880.

The exhibition, curated by Peter Johnson, highlights the growing prosperity of the colony of Victoria from the mid 19th century. This was a period of great architectural and social change. The gothic style that had been popular since the 1840's was largely abandoned. It was replaced for a short while by the new Lombardic style, using polychromatic brickwork, and then by the all-conquering Italianate style. These new houses incorporated a vast range of new products created by the technological and industrial innovations that were occurring in Britain, Europe and North America at the time.

Many of these stunning homes were demolished in the 20th century and their land subdivided for new developments.

## Euro-Reko

### 29 Burnett Street, St Kilda

Euro-Reko was built in 1866 as the residence of Peter Davis (1815-1879), a Melbourne councillor and its mayor in 1856-57. The architects Reed & Barnes designed it in their polychromatic Lombardic Style and it was the second of their houses to use cream and white bricks. Following Davis's death his three sons continued to live in the house. One of his sons, Alfred Davis, was a St Kilda councillor from 1882 until 1887. He was still living in the house in 1910.

The house and gardens occupied about 13 allotments and was demolished sometime between 1910 and 1918 for land subdivision. The



Euro-Reko. SLV Collection

house contained an important organ commissioned by Davis in 1858 and built by William Hill of London. The organ now resides in St Peter's Lutheran Church, Stawell.

## Westphalia Villa (Treceare)

### 182-190 Alma Road, St Kilda East

This large single-storey villa was built in 1870 for William Alexander Brahe (1825-1917) a solicitor and founder of the Melbourne legal practice now known as Garland Hawthorn Brahe. He also acted as the Prussian Consul until 1871, then Imperial German Consul until c.1900.

Designed by Leonard Terry (1825-1884), architect, the house stood on grounds of eight acres and had an "elegant drawing room with bay window, spacious dining room,

magnificent ballroom 24' x 36', library and three large bedrooms" (*The Argus* Newspaper, 19 Feb 1876, p12). Brahe sold the house and six acres in March 1876 for £5,000. Soon after, Sir Archibald Michie (1813-1899), a barrister and politician, bought the house, renamed it Treceare, and lived there until his death.

The land fronting Alma Road was sold early in the 20th century. The house then took the address 24 Lansdowne Road and was finally demolished for a block of flats in the 1970s.

## Charnwood House

### Charnwood Grove, St Kilda

Charnwood House was built in 1851 as a residence for Octavius Browne (d.1876), importer and land speculator. It was designed by St Kilda



Westphalia Villa. SLV Collection



Charnwood House. SLV Collection

resident and architect Samuel Jackson (1807-1876) in the Renaissance Revival style and stood in 13 acres of grounds on one of the highest positions in St Kilda at the corner of High Street and Alma Road.

In April 1854 Matthew Hervey MLC, pastoralist purchased the property for £30,000. After suffering losses from speculative ventures, he was forced to

sell the land fronting High Street and Alma Road from 1866 onwards. For a short time in 1867 Charnwood House became the governor's residence for John Manners-Sutton while Toorak House was undergoing renovations.

The house was demolished in 1963. ■

## SKHS CONTACTS

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### Inquiries/Appointments/ Membership:

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### COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT 2017-2018

President: Jennifer Stone  
Vice President: Helen Halliday  
Secretary: Helen Haliday  
Treasurer: Elizabeth Burns

### Ordinary Members:

Maureen Walker  
Ken Norling  
Phillip Stewart



St Kilda Historical Society (SKHS)  
Established 1970  
*PRESERVING THE PAST TO  
ENRICH THE FUTURE*



SKHS thanks Port Phillip City for its ongoing support and assistance

# Update on John Dudley Cullen – a St Kilda ANZAC

By Maureen Walker

Some years ago an article was written for the Anzac insert into St Kilda Historical Society's newsletter (*Issue 205 March 2011*) about John (Jack) Dudley Cullen, a young electrician who lived in Argyle Street and who, in 1914, enlisted for service. The information was largely drawn from the items contained in the Society's collection although details as to their acquisition were hazy.

Due to the wonders of modern communications, the article was read by Alison Harris in England and she advised the Society that her husband's grandmother had been the best friend of the young woman Jack Cullen had married in 1918 in Salisbury. Moreover, she had a copy of Jack and Daisy's wedding photo, which she then kindly emailed to us.

The following is the original article amended and updated to include the additional information provided by Alison Harris.

## A ST KILDA 1914 ANZAC – JOHN (JACK) DUDLEY CULLEN

John Dudley Cullen, known as Jack, was born in Brighton but when World War One broke out in 1914, he was residing with his family at 23 Argyle Street, St Kilda. At twenty-one years of age, he was one of the many young men (and some women) who readily volunteered for service in the early days of the war and enlisted on 14 August.

Jack Cullen was an electrician, having completed an apprenticeship with the Melbourne Electric Supply Company. He had also completed three years of service with the militia. Gunner Cullen embarked for overseas in October on the SS Shropshire as a member of the 5th Battery, 2nd Australian Artillery Brigade. He was paid six shillings a day, two of



John and Daisy Cullen 1918.  
*Photo: Courtesy Alison Harris, England*

which he allotted to his mother, Louisa.

Cullen arrived in Egypt and served in the Middle East but after a short period of hospitalisation in Alexandria and Port Said, due to enteric fever, he was returned to Australia, arriving home in October 1915. After convalescence, Cullen was assigned to permanent guard duties at Broadmeadows Training Camp but in late 1916 he again proceeded overseas, this time to England with the 118th Howitzer Battery on the SS Aeneas. It appears that Cullen's service was confined to England prior to him again being returned on health grounds, this time with a bronchial condition. In June 1918 he was discharged.

In the previous February however, while still in England, Jack Cullen married, at Amesbury, Miss Daisy Elizabeth Davis of Durrington (near Salisbury). Besides the amendments made to his will and the allocation of his pay, Cullen's pay book also records the cost of a cable (£1/5/-) to Australia – presumably to advise his family of the event. Cullen's file also contains a request, in January 1919, for a refund of his wife's passage to Australia.

It is extremely likely that Mrs Cullen



Medallion presented to  
Gunner J.D. Cullen –  
a St. Kilda '1914 ANZAC'.

*Source: St. Kilda Historical  
Society Collection*



was among the family and friends gathered at the St Kilda Town Hall on 14 May 1919 for the second of the special Welcome Home ceremonies held to honour the city's '1914 ANZACS'. Although the first was held the previous December, the second was postponed as a result of the Spanish influenza epidemic and the consequent ban on public events. On both occasions Mayor Sculthorpe presented the men with special St Kilda ANZAC medallions. Each was inscribed with the recipient's name.

The Cullens returned to England on the Euripides in 1921. They continued to live there until Jack's death (probably 1945). He and Daisy, who died in 1983, are buried in the Durrington cemetery. They had no children.

It would seem that Mrs Cullen donated the above medallion together with her husband's Discharge Certificate, pay books and service medals to the St Kilda Historical Society prior to her death. ■

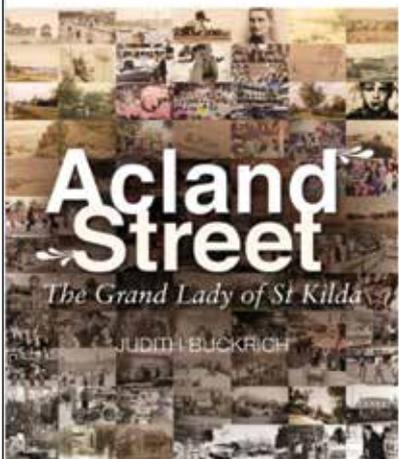
## Upcoming Events...

### Sunday 15 April

Don't miss the opportunity to chat with historian Judith Buckrich about her research process and journey to publish the history of Acland Street.

4.00 pm, St Kilda Army and Navy, 88 Acland Street, St Kilda.

**INVITATION - Sunday 15th April**



St Kilda Historical Society presents  
**Judith Buckrich**

noted historian and author discussing all things "Acland Street: The Grand Lady of St Kilda" including her research process and journey to publication.

Join us on Sun 15 April at 4.00pm. Your ticket includes a glass of wine/beer/soft-drink & nibbles.

**BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL**

SKHS current members: \$5.00  
Non-members: \$10.00

**Book your tickets here**

**Sunday 15th April**  
**4.00 - 5.30pm**  
**St Kilda RSL - 88 Acland St**

- Enter via Acland Street
- Upstairs with wheelchair access via lift
- Judith's book will be available for purchase & signing

## Pencil in these dates to remember Carlo Catani...

### July 2018

Throughout the month of July, we celebrate Carlo Catani with an exhibition in the St Kilda Library foyer.

### Sunday, 26 August 2018

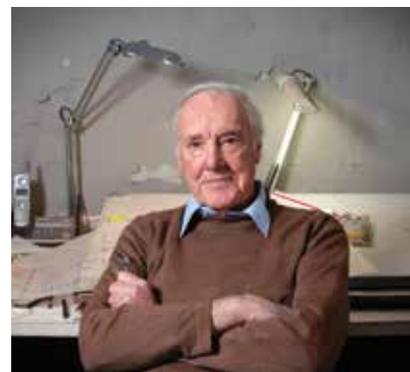
Daniela Riachi, author of "From Tuscany to Victoria", will talk about the life and work of emigrant Carlo Catani, who defined the everlasting beauty of St Kilda's foreshore. *(more information in our next issue)*

### Sunday, 16 September 2018

Councillor David Brand, heritage architect, will take us on a journey through the Italy that inspired Catani's Vision for the St Kilda foreshore. *(more information in our next issue)*

## NEIL CLEREHAN 1922-2017

By Phillip Schemnitz,  
Architect



Neil Clerehan, The Age

Neil used to love to tell his friends how, as a schoolboy, he caught the tram that ran from Elwood to St Kilda Station, via Broadway, Mitford Street, Barkly Street and Grey Street and how he was fascinated to watch certain buildings in St Kilda under construction at the time.

Many years after he had become a prominent Melbourne architect, he became a frequent visitor to the St Kilda Sea Baths. Such was his devotion to swimming and to the Baths, that at the age of 82, this national treasure with a patrician manner, had his home telephone number tattooed across his chest, so that his family could be contacted if anything happened to him while he swam his laps.

Up until just before his death, he wrote many wonderful house reviews for *Melbourne Weekly*, drawing on his deep knowledge of architectural styles in Melbourne and employing acid diplomacy, as the architectural historian Philip Goad, noted in the obituary that he wrote for Neil that was published in *Architecture Australia* and later modified for publication in *The Age*. ■