



## The Scene at the Cemetery

How lovely to feel the warmth of the sun after such a bitterly cold winter?

This newsletter has been a very slow burn as for the first time in many years there was a complete lack of anything newsworthy. Eventually stories have made themselves known and we're pleased to be able to bring you some fireside reading and hope you enjoy it. If you have a family story you'd like to share of someone residing in the Boroondara cemetery we'd love to hear about it. Email Pauline at [kewcem@gmail.com](mailto:kewcem@gmail.com).

Several walks have been held this year which were disappointing as far as numbers attending. The content of the Valentine's Day walk in February was really good (if I do say so myself) – sadly only three were there to hear it. I will try again next year so keep an eye out for that one. Another walk is scheduled for October for Seniors Week – see page 6 for further details. We also did a walk at the request of the Boroondara Council for a group of residents who have a mixed range of mobility. The walk was customised to accommodate their needs and was really well received.

Many thanks to our many loyal supporters who have renewed their membership this year. As I've said many times your support of our small group is greatly appreciated and we value each and every one of you.

I have attached a membership/renewal form at the end of the newsletter if you'd like to continue to support the Friends.

You may have noticed our new, fresh format for the newsletter. It was time for an update – hope you like it.

I can't believe how quickly this year has flown. Everyone I talk to feels the same. I went looking for a suitable quote and found this:

*"Time is a sort of river of passing events, and strong is its current; no sooner is a thing brought to sight than it is swept by and another takes its place, and this too will be swept away."* - Marcus Aurelius.

Pauline

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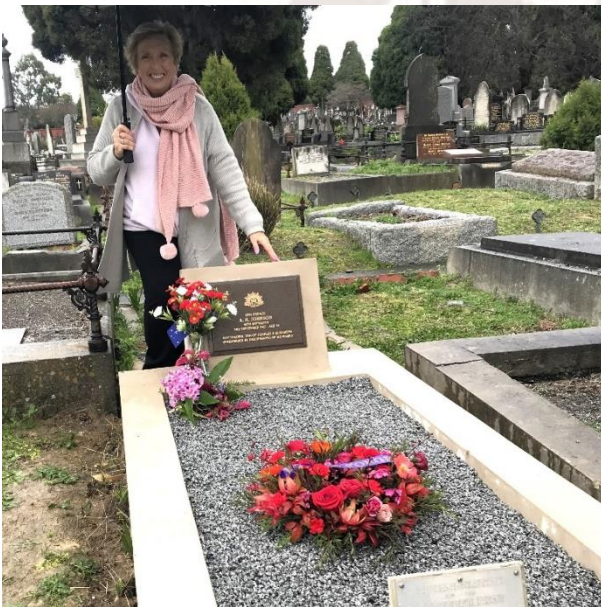
# Newsletter of Friends of Boroondara (Kew) Cemetery



On Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup> July, I was invited by Deb Williams to attend a family gathering at the cemetery. They were there to pay their respects at the newly constructed War Grave for

## ARTHUR ROY JOHNSON.

It was one of those freezing, rainy days in Melbourne, so after a quick acknowledgement graveside, Deb enacted Plan B which was to conduct a formal tribute to “Roy” at the Kew RSL. We all congregated and admired the grave, then scuttled off to the RSL where a beautiful tribute was accorded **ARTHUR ROY JOHNSON**, Boy Soldier.



Following is a precis of Deb’s tribute at the RSL.

**Arthur Roy Johnson** – Roy, as he was known – was the third child born to Charles Henry Johnson (right) and his wife, Elizabeth Whitehead (left), in Richmond, Victoria, on 3<sup>th</sup> March 1903.



When WW1 broke out on 28<sup>th</sup> July 1914, life was tough for the family. Roy was 11 at the time and fascinated by the war, as were many young boys.

Maybe he was a wilful child, maybe not, and there is some indication that he may have run away on previous occasions, but at the tender age of thirteen and a half he ran away from home with the intention of joining up. His parents were desperate for news of him and reported him missing to the police.

Deb’s grandfather, Horace, (Roy’s elder brother) recalled that his parents finally received a postcard some months later from Egypt telling them that he had run away to fight the war in Europe.

You can only imagine their distress. Roy enlisted on the 24<sup>th</sup> December, 1917. He lied about everything on his application form, saying he was 18 years and 11 months and that he was born in Yorkshire, England. Only his brother, Horace, named as next of kin, was correct on the paperwork.

Roy’s rank was private, service no. 3325. He was initially with the 39<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, but moved later to the 4<sup>th</sup> Australian Division. He officially joined his unit on 4<sup>th</sup> January 1918. Roy did some basic training at Broadmeadows for a month, then was shipped out of Sydney on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 1918. How exciting this must have seemed for a young lad.

Roy disembarked in Alexandria in Egypt on 11<sup>th</sup> March and camped and trained there until 20<sup>th</sup> March (which is where he probably sent the postcard). He then was sent to Southampton in England whereupon he was sent to Fovant in Wiltshire,

Roy was sent to France on 15<sup>th</sup> July where it’s believed he saw some action and was gassed in the trenches. Roy was shipped home on 20<sup>th</sup> July 1919 and discharged three months later on 4<sup>th</sup> October 1919.



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On his return Roy struggled with his health and often took fits as a result of the gassing. He would just drop and faint with epileptic-like seizures.

He applied for Government war pension/assistance for his incapacity but as his symptoms weren't obvious his claim was rejected. He was apparently very bitter about this rejection.

Roy was very good at drawing and on his return he got a job with the Argus newspaper as a cartoonist. Deb has quite a few of his drawings, several of which I have included here.



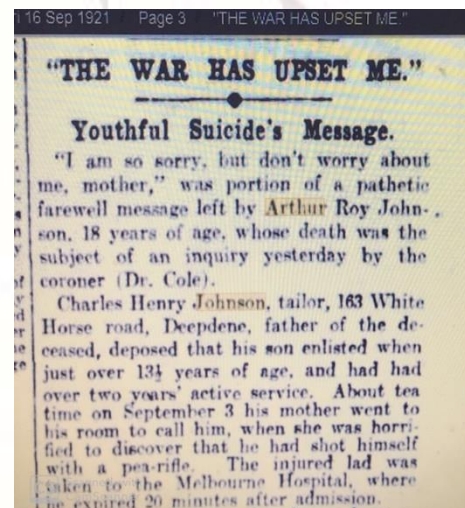
Roy had a girlfriend named Marge O'Connor who lived in nearby Auburn and family word was that they intended to marry. But Roy was worried he may not be able to support Marge properly because of his health issues. His seizures and depression over the war clearly pushed him over the edge. On 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1921, at age 18, following a possible argument with Marge, Roy was in the bedroom of his parent's house in Balwyn when he used a pea rifle to shoot himself in the head.

His mother came to call him for dinner and found him unresponsive. Roy was rushed to a

Melbourne hospital but died 20 minutes after his arrival.

A suicide note was found beside him. Unbelievably this note was printed in the newspaper of the day. It read ..

*Goodbye everybody. I am so sorry, mother, but don't worry as I will be happy where I am going. I will never be any good and it is best for me to be gone and rid of the world. I was never a very bad boy, but the war has upset me ... well, goodbye mother dear, give the letter to Marge. I love her dearly but we can never marry now.*



The Coroner's report into Roy's death said that it was a wonder to him that the authorities had accepted the deceased for active service and believe the war had accentuated the young man's mental weakness.

A finding of self-inflicted wounds was brought down.

In 2021 Deb was successful in having Roy's name added to an official list of "Boy Soldiers" even though his life wasn't lost on the battlefield. She has also been able to claim his medals.



## The History of 20-26 Liddiard Street, Hawthorn

The unusual façade of this property has always intrigued me. This is a place I've driven past many times and wondered what it was in its heyday. There's an appealing archway with a cobblestone driveway leading through to the back of the property, pointing to days of horse drawn carriages. Its architectural style is described as 'a fusion of American Romanesque and Queen Anne-British Freestyle detailing'.



The former Farey Brothers' Bakery at 20-26 Liddiard Street, Hawthorn, was constructed in 1915 to a design by architect F.G. Leslie Allen for brothers William Alfred, James Harold and Leslie Francis Farey.

The Liddiard Street buildings housed a wholesale bakery, with goods sold through the brothers' retail outlets on Burke Road, Glenferrie Road, and Burwood Road, Hawthorn. The site was used as a bakery until 1970, and at the end of that decade it was converted to offices and workshops.

The site holds a complex of single and double-storey red brick buildings with cement dressings and tiled gabled roofs. Three principle volumes survive: a two-storey gable-fronted wing with a large arched carriageway through it; a wider section with a transverse gable roof on the west side but set back somewhat from the street and distinguished by a massive double chimney; and a plain, single-storey, gable-fronted building adjoining it on the west side with the same front setback. There is a remnant front wall to the site which was once part of a single-storey building with a low transverse gable roof.

## Why is it significant?

The Farey Brothers' Bakery is historically significant as one of the small number of pre-WWII industrial buildings to survive in Boroondara. While the former cities of Camberwell and Kew tried to exclude most industry from their boundaries, Hawthorn was the centre of manufacturing in Boroondara for over a century, beginning in the 1840s and '50s with noxious trades, claypits and brickyards.

The Farey Brothers' Bakery is a very skilful industrial building. Located off the commercial spine of Glenferrie Road, on a narrow residential street, it has been designed in such a way with variety in massing and details, so that it forms a focal point for the street instead of overwhelming the single-storey villas that surround it. The Bakery complex is a fine example of the Federation Free Style, expressed as two-storey architecturally expressed volumes flanked by single-storey utilitarian bakehouse buildings.

Source: Heritage Council



Miss Jane Elizabeth (Jean) Pearson is second from the left. From c1927 - c1950 Miss Pearson had the cake and confectionery shop at 147 Union Road. It was later a milk bar,

next to Henry Jamieson's radio and electrical shop. Miss Pearson sold **Farey's** cakes which were very popular and in a trellised-off section also served morning and afternoon teas. Her sisters often helped. Silversticks, White Knights and liquorice straps were among a wide selection of sweets to be bought for 1d. – or even ½d.

From

<https://victoriancollections.net.au/items/5ae6991321ea6b17dc5ebbd4>



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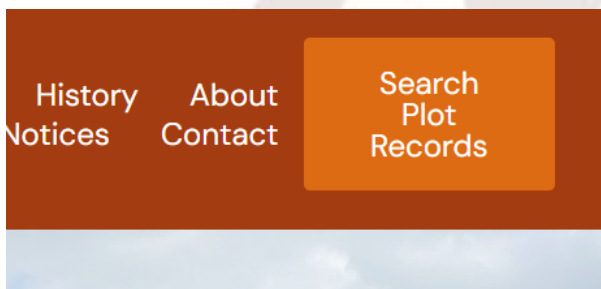


## New Grave Search Tool

If you have ever needed to look for a grave at the cemetery, you may have used the kiosk on the exterior of the gatehouse. In the absence of an alternative option, it was useful – to a point. The grave numbering evolved like pixie over the years making searches fraught with frustration.

You will be excited to know that there is a new search function on the Kew Cemetery website which makes this pursuit a whole lot easier. You can search at home or, if you are at the cemetery, a search via your mobile phone will also give you the ability to be guided to the general vicinity of the grave.

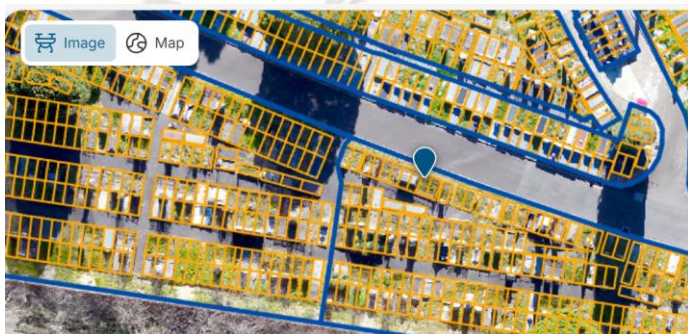
The software used can be accessed on the Cemetery's home page in the top right-hand corner.



Click on this link and it will take you to a website hosted by DiscoverEvafter

<https://boroondaracemetery.discovereverafter.com/>

Scroll down to enter the name of the person you're looking for. When the list of possibilities comes up, check the date of death and click to **"View"**. Choose "Image" and you get a birds' eye view of the location.



You can zoom in and out to give a better idea of the location. A huge advance in searching for that elusive location.

## Working Bees

Our bi-monthly working bees continue to maintain and enhance our beautiful garden cemetery.

Anne Miller, Les Littlechild and Pauline Turville attended the Boroondara Volunteers Expo early this year and we were fortunate to once again attract some new volunteers.



*Pauline and Anne at the Expo*

However, as the area under our care increases so does our need for more hands, so even if you don't have a 'green thumb' you can always be put to good use. We work on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday and the time is flexible – any time you can spare. We usually start at 10:00 am and work through to 1:00 ish. Come the warmer weather we'd like to expand that to 2:00 when we will stop for a break about midday for lunch and a chat. Email [kewcem@gmail.com](mailto:kewcem@gmail.com) if you want to join our wonderful group of volunteers.



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*When conducting walking tours at the cemetery I often say that the graves we visit and whose stories we tell are the ones we know about. But EVERYONE in the cemetery has a story to tell – if only we knew it.*

Working at a recent working bee I happened to read a plaque as the word 'artist' jumped out at me. On further investigation I noticed the surname was "Moclair". Being a regular 3AW listener I wondered if there was any relation to the wonderful midday host, Tony Moclair. As you do, I 'Googled' and sure enough it was Tony's mother.

I then found a website <https://speakola.com> where they say – "We'd love this to be an international library of great speeches," Tony's brother conducted the eulogy at the service and posted his speech on this website, giving permission for it to be shared.



Now, when reading this you have to keep in mind that the family is Irish with a very dry sense of humour. She sounds like a real character and an amazing mother.

Pauline Turville

## Rita Monica Moclair

Departed this mortal coil  
on Tuesday February 8, 2022

The youngest of nine. she grew up in rural Galway in the West of Ireland in the 40's and 50's.

She and her siblings lived in the toe of an old boot on the side of a boreen (A narrow, frequently unpaved, rural road in Ireland, often characterised by a ridge of grass growing in the middle).

She had to ride 64 miles on the back of the postman's bike to fetch water from the nearest well and she walked barefoot to school every day in snowdrifts neck deep.



She was doted on as the youngest and loved her siblings fiercely in return. She missed them terribly when she moved to Australia.

Despite obtaining her GCE in Ireland, she returned to high school in Mildura as a mother of 8 and enrolled in a number of HSC subjects, excelling in Australian History which she read avidly up until the time she died.

She worked in London in the 50's but her work there is still so controversial and sensitive that legislation prevents me from identifying it because- even at a remove of 60 years - Empires could be undone if it were to be revealed.

The 60's were spent raising the first 6 of her 8 children in Belfast, Athlone and Killarney before moving to Mildura in January 1973 where Joe and Romy were born.

She was a model of resilience her entire life and she soon adjusted. Things took a turn for the better when she discovered an Edward Beale salon in Moonee Ponds and managed to get a decent haircut in the Australia of the 1970's, notwithstanding that it involved two overnight trips on the Vinelander there and back, covering a distance of 1200 kilometres.

In 1981 she supported us by opening a shop that sold religious artefacts, importing crates of tea and fabrics from Sri Lanka. She also managed 17 acres of vines, producing walthams, sultanias and currants for sale.

At the end of that year we piled in to our old Holden station wagon and made for Melbourne with Joe as her co-pilot manually operating the high beam by banging a button on the floor of the driver's side. Mum supported us by delivering groceries and cleaning at half-way houses before securing work at the ATO where she made friends for life in Ranjanee and, later, Christine. The development of Menieres disease forced an early retirement.

One of the most formidable of her many qualities was the unstinting commitment she had to securing first rate educations for her children despite her inability to fund them. She coaxed Xavier College into taking Tony by reminding it of its core Jesuit charter of caring for orphans and widows. When she was called to Whitefriars to discuss Joe's sub-stellar academic progress she chided the school for its inability to recognize the rare jewel she had entrusted to it. She



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auditioned a number of equally prestigious institutions such as Siena, Preshill and Sacre Couer who vied for the privilege of educating her precocious and brilliant progeny. She wouldn't hear of payment.

She returned to Galway in 1984 and rented a house in Renmore. The Ireland she returned to was not the one she had left and that period was tough, although she was buoyed by the release of The Smiths second single which became a staple of her limited pop repertoire and, amongst her children, her most popular cover, totally eclipsing Betty Davis' Eyes.

She returned to Melbourne in 1986 and lived in Blackburn before moving to Burwood. The backyard was always full of friends, friends of friends and partners and she was always cooking elaborate meals.

She left the city and moved to Timor in 2001. She described these 20 years as the happiest of her life. She lived on her own and committed herself to recreating Monet's Giverny, a Sisyphean task she was never going to complete. Having complained bitterly in the late 90's of how, despite raising 8 children of her own, she had not been provided with a single grandchild, a flood of fecundity soon ensued. Rebekah was the first in 2001.

Once the flood gates opened, Gabriel, Charlie, Maisie, Max, Frances, Eloise, Lucien, Dan, Raphy, Pippa, Ines, Claudia, Helena, Rita, Michael and Lucinda followed like machine gun fire and she was often glad of the geographical distance she had established.

She loved travelling and managed to see some of the world's great gardens in Kent and Normandy and Tuscany and Ubud and Kyoto and Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie and Fitzroy Crossing. All of these were fed into her life's work in Timor. She was a fiend for gazebos and pagodas and rockeries and Japanese bridges and ornamental totems.

In recent years she had eased off travelling and had stopped driving. She remained formidably curious and physically active, but she was deaf as a post. We, as a family, are deeply appreciative of the care for her provided by her neighbours in Timor.

She was a champion. I can't believe she's gone, but she was ready. Physically she had declined, but mentally she was as acute as ever. Living on her own

terms was non-negotiable. She valued her independence above everything. She lived for her garden

Ensuring grandson Gabriel attended the Australian Open was an unflagging priority and she hounded me to secure a ticket to the men's final for him. One of the last things she did on earth was to sit and watch Rafa snatch his 21st slam knowing that Gabriel was at the venue watching it live thanks to her intervention.

What lessons do we take from mum's life? Money comes and goes, it's not important and shouldn't guide your decisions. Do what you love and success will follow. Be the first to give.



Join us for a Cemetery Walk

as part of the Seniors Festival

## Untimely Ends

We all hope to live long and full lives, but sometimes tragedy strikes and in the blink of an eye lives are snatched away when least expected.

When: Sunday, 27<sup>th</sup> October at 11:00 am

Bookings essential:

Email [kewcem@gmail.com](mailto:kewcem@gmail.com)

Call or text 0417 278 950

Cost: \$10.00



**FRIENDS OF BOROONDARA (KEW) CEMETERY INC.  
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION /RENEWAL**

**Subscriptions for the 2024 - 2025 financial year are due by 30<sup>th</sup> June**

- **Payment by direct credit to our account**  
**Bendigo Bank BSB 633000 Account No 128983517**
- **Cheque**

- [ ] Join me up as a new member of the Friends of Boroondara (Kew) Cemetery = \$15 (Concession = \$10)
- [ ] Renew my membership = \$15 (Concession = \$10)
- [ ] Join me up as a working bee member of the Friends of Boroondara (Kew) Cemetery = \$10
- [ ] Renew my working bee membership = \$10
- [ ] I would like to receive future copies of the Newsletter by email

**Membership** \_\_\_\_\_

**Donation** \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL ENCLOSED/ELECTRONICALLY DEPOSITED** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact details:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Boroondara (Kew) Cemetery is located at  
Cnr Parkhill Rd & High St, Kew**

**Postal address: PO Box 348, Kew East 3102**

**Visit us at [www.fobkc.org](http://www.fobkc.org)**

**We appreciate your support of a very important community asset**