



The Scene at the Cemetery

A mini-newsletter to wrap up the year.

As Christmas approaches we all seem to be busy attending end of year drinks, etc. Yesterday I attended the Cemetery Trust's Christmas function where Trust Chairman, Peter Slifirski announced that they have taken the first step in the execution of a Master Plan for the cemetery, which will include an increase in community involvement as well as capital works. So stay tuned for interesting times ahead.

Following those drinks I attended the Boroondara Council 2024-25 Annual Community Grants Celebration, the Friends being fortunate to receive a grant from Boroondara Council and the Rotary Club of Balwyn for a new website and a computer. Our grateful thanks to both organisations.



We hope you can join us for more festivities at our **ANNUAL SOIREE** to be held this coming Sunday, 15th December (5pm to 7pm) alongside the Springthorpe Memorial. The weather is looking promising so bring along your beverage of choice, a chair if you wish, and our members with surnames starting A to K have been asked to bring a SMALL plate of nibbles. It's all about the friendship – it's a very relaxed space. EXCEPT for a very quick AGM. With the gates now open to 7pm you can drive in.

If you can't be there we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a peaceful and happy New Year.

Pauline, Mary, Ann, Tim, Tony and Les,

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BRUNSWICK,**

**ONE OF THE THREE PADRES WHO
SERVED IN WW2**

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VALE CHARLES HARKIN

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The Three Padres



Naples, Italy. c. May 1944.

Three Australian padres meet in Naples after visiting RAAF personnel throughout the Italian theatre of war.

They are...

(Top:) Sqn Ldr Bob DAVIES of Newcastle, NSW (C of E)

(Centre:) Sqn Ldr J. McNAMARA of Brunswick, Vic. (Catholic) and

(Front:) Sqn Ldr Fred McKAY of Qld. Presbyterian

Affectionately known as "*The Terrible Three*", the chaplains who served in the Middle East were probably the first to develop the potential of practical high-level R.A.A.F. chaplaincy. Bob Davies

(Anglican), John McNamara (Catholic) and Fred McKay (Presbyterian) were early in the new sphere of R.A.A.F. chaplaincy in the battlefield.

These things marked their ministry ... they showed how to care simultaneously for the spiritual, physical, emotional and social needs of the men. They sought out those with whom they had a responsibility, and included the men's families in their ministry, and they were pioneers in a style that was completely ecumenical. They were demonstrating Christianity with its sleeves rolled up.

Still today, many men who were touched by these men's ministry nearly half a century ago, have spoken of their profound appreciation of that Ministry and their affection for those who offered it.



Grottaglie, Italy. 1943.

Padre J. P. McNamara, formerly Parish priest of Brunswick in the Archdiocese of Melbourne, saying Mass for Italian airmen.

Note the armed Italian guards - this photo was taken just two days after Italy had changed sides in the war and 3 Squadron had started operating from this airfield, in the 'heel' of Italy.

Newsletter of Friends of Boroondara (Kew) Cemetery



RAAF airmen with RAAF Padre J. McNamara visit the Catholic College of Propaganda* in Rome.

Rome, Italy. c. 1944.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

MEA1834

The guests are seen here being shown through the precincts of the College by Australian priests who are students there. They were attending the College at the time war broke out in Europe. Later they will return to Australia.

*The Catholic college of propaganda in Rome is the Pontifical Urban College for the Propagation of the Faith, or Pontificio Collegio Urbano de Propaganda Fide. The college was established in 1627 by Pope Urban VIII to train missionaries to spread Catholicism around the world. The college is also known as the Urban College of Propaganda.

His headstone notes that he was ordained in 1935 and was Parish Priest at St Anne's, East Kew and St Joseph's Collingwood



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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Grottaglie, Italy. 1943. Padre R. Davies of Newcastle, NSW, and Padre J. (Johnnie) P. McNamara of Brunswick, Vic, near their makeshift altar talk about arrangements to be made for church services for RAAF airmen of No. 3 (Kittyhawk).

2024 Victorian Senior of the Year Award

In October I was lucky to be invited to attend Government House for the presentation of the Victorian Senior of the Year Awards by our very own Gail White. Gail was President of the Friends from 2010 to 2012.



Following is the official acknowledgement:

After a 30-year career as a librarian, Gail continues to share her passion for lifelong learning through volunteering.

Through Family History Connections (FHC) Blackburn, Gail has supported over 2,000 people to keep their minds active, learn computer research skills and make friends with people with shared interests. As President of FHC for the last decade, Gail has engaged with various groups including Rotary, Probus and local libraries to encourage participation and continual learning.

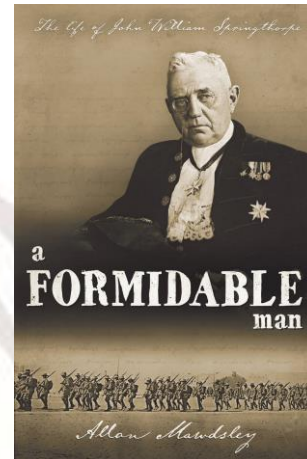
Gail has also volunteered with Friends of the Boroondara Cemetery, Knox Gardens for Wildlife, and Open Gardens Victoria.

As well as it being a thrill to see Gail receive this much deserved award, Government House didn't disappoint. Such a beautiful building.

Congratulations Gail.

A Formidable Man

by Allan Mawdsley



FOBKC are eagerly awaiting our copy of the above publication. While the Springthorpe Memorial is all about Annie, his wife, John Springthorpe was – as the title suggests – a 'formidable man in his own right.

A man of many persuasions and vast energy. *A Formidable Man* is an expansive detailing into the contributions and controversies of a combative personality...

John William Springthorpe was a prominent general physician, lecturer, and writer in late nineteenth century's marvellous Melbourne.

Springthorpe, affectionately known as Springy, took major advocacy roles in physiotherapy, dentistry, nursing, public health, child welfare, epilepsy, and mental health during his career.

His bitter criticism of the mistreatment of 'shell shock' victims during World War I was followed by advocacy for those afflicted with what's now known as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Allan Mawdsley OAM is a retired child psychiatrist. He was director of the Alfred Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service. He has been a member of St John Ambulance for more than 60 years and is curator of their museum in Victoria. He is a Knight of the Order of St John and is the immediate past. president of St John Ambulance Historical Society of Australia

Vale Charles Harkin



We were saddened to hear of the recent passing of former Trust Chairman, Charles Harkin.

Charles was a great supporter of the Friends group, pictured here with former President, Tanya Warms, at the launch of the refurbished rotunda in 2012.

He was laid to rest with his beloved wife, Jan.

RIP Charles.

And I hope this is not inappropriate, but I think Charles would appreciate the sentiment and the humour.



Thank you, Charles, for all your good work.