

## Dusk tours of Cemetery a success!



Held on Friday 18 March and Tuesday 12 April, it was absolutely fantastic to be able to hold tours again.

The participants found plenty of interest and one person had an interesting experience when the tour was over—"I did get a slight fright when everyone had left and we were still walking around and a rabbit popped out of one of the graves."

You never know what you'll find on one of our tours...

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## A Word from the President

Hello FOCCers!

As pandemic restrictions ease the Friends of Coburg Cemetery tentatively organised a couple of tours, fingers crossed they wouldn't be cancelled like the last two, three, or was it four times? So glad we did! Both evening tours were raging successes! The tour team (including Gerry, Colleen, Yvonne and Margaret) introduced people to a bunch of new stories behind some newly researched people buried at Coburg.

Despite a soaring death rate, the restrictions on our movements seem gone forever so we will no doubt be organising more tours. Stay tuned!

Apart from the tours, the reinstatement of a Coburg

Cemetery gravestone discovered in Brisbane kept a couple of members busy, engaging with the Friends of Balmoral Cemetery to get the stone back where it belongs. You can read about this mystery and how cooperation between volunteer groups can move mountains on page 2 of this newsletter.

Our membership is growing, more people are engaging with the cemetery and the landscape within its fences is attracting attention, interest and wildlife.

There will be an AGM meeting in July when we will organise some activities and air some ideas, so I hope to see you soon. I hope you all stay warm and well.

*Julie, May 2022*

## Lost and found — From Brisbane back to Coburg

Several years ago a shield-shaped gravestone was found in the middle of a road that circles Balmoral Cemetery in the inner east of Brisbane.

As many of Brisbane's suburbs do, Balmoral enjoys leafy greenery, a glimpse of the Brisbane River and the city skyline. The cemetery itself is green, lush and backs onto the bushy Balmoral Park.

The Friends of Balmoral Cemetery are a group of gardeners, historians and passionate volunteers who run tours, encourage the community to enjoy the cemetery and admire the magnificent memorials with a view across Brisbane.

They maintain a Facebook page and clean up many of the graves with a magical chemical mix that seems to dissolve mould while protecting the stone. (We must get some of that stuff!).

They also enjoy a positive, constructive relationship with the Brisbane City Council who own and manage the cemetery. So when the shield with George and Ebenezer Shade's names carved into it was found, the council entrusted it to the Friends to find where it belonged.

They quickly found it wasn't local. Several researchers dug deeper. It wasn't even from Brisbane. Nor Queensland! Some serious sleuthing by some Balmoral Friends found its home at Coburg Cemetery!

George and Ebenezer were brothers who had lived in Northcote. Both died quite young. Ebenezer, a baker, was aged 46 and George was only 32. The team at Balmoral also found a great-niece, Jenny, who had no idea her great-uncles were buried so close to where she'd grown up. Jenny's friend John had been researching her family tree and posted his work on a genealogy site where one of the Balmoral crew spotted Ebenezer and George's names.

Sue Speed, one of the Friends of Balmoral Cemetery, brought the stone with her to Victoria in March where she and Jenny reinstated it back onto George and Ebenezer's grave. When affixing it onto a paver, Sue and Jenny found the markings on the back of the stone fitted exactly to the original concrete plinth still standing at the grave.

No one knows how it came to be so far from home, and we probably never will. The Friends of Coburg Cemetery are grateful for the efforts of the team in Balmoral. Coburg Cemetery is better off for their research, hard work and serious determination.



**Pictured top:** Julie Stratford of FOCC, Jenny Coppen, great-niece and genealogist John McLean.

**Pictured bottom:** Sue Speed from Friends of Balmoral Cemetery, helping to replace the plaque.

## John Paul Sennitt

Famously remembered for the image of a polar bear licking an ice cream, Sennitt's ice cream had its origins in the 1870s in a South African ice works when John Paul Sennitt began a long and productive career in ice manufacture. From the mid-1890s, well before household fridges existed, John used a newly invented refrigeration system to make and sell ice and later ice cream to thousands of Melbournians.

John was born in Stretham, Cambridgeshire, England in 1851. As a young man he left for South Africa where he established the first Transvaal ice works. He married Harriet Coulbeck in 1875 then migrated with his family to Melbourne in the late 1880s.

John started work at the Cold Accumulator Company and soon took over the business. From 1898, when his son William joined the business, Sennitt's ice was promoted as clean and healthy, building the Sennitts a reputation as 'benefactors of humanity'. By 1899, the plant and machinery expanded to occupy half an acre as ice was distributed around Melbourne by 20 drivers, horses and carts. They manufactured ice cream from 1904 and the J P Sennitt and Sons Ice and Refrigerating Company was formed in 1906.

John was a Master Freemason at the Admiral Collingwood Lodge. In May 1902 he was elected unopposed to Fawkner Ward in the South Melbourne Council, retiring in 1909. He was a Justice of the Peace and a council member of the Honorary Justices' Association. At one time he sat on the local Court of Petty Sessions. He died in 1922 and



is buried here in Coburg Cemetery. Sennitt's ice cream continued for another forty years under William's management until its sale in 1961 to Streets.

Sources:

<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/sennitt-john-paul-13190>

Argus, Melbourne (<http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>)

## Around the Cemetery



### Join FOCC and get involved!

We are a small group with some big ideas! If you'd like to get more involved in FOCC activities we are always looking for more members and people who can research, write stories, take photos, present on tours, hunt up funding sources and promote FOCC activities.

Contact us to find out more:  
[focc.group@gmail.com](mailto:focc.group@gmail.com)

## How a hunch about Squizzy Taylor's family led me to Coburg Cemetery

Taylor is a common name, so when I came across a reference to an Isaiah Taylor of Coburg in the course of other research, I wasn't sure it would take me very far. But very soon it had taken me back to an early resident of Campbellfield and forward to Joseph Theodore Leslie Taylor, the infamous 'Squizzy' Taylor. And the connection involves burials at Coburg Cemetery.

Joseph Taylor, the great-grandfather of Squizzy Taylor, was a carpenter from Lancashire who arrived in Melbourne in August 1853. He and his wife Ann (nee Pearce) settled at Box Forest, Campbellfield, which is also described as Fawkner in some documents. Joseph farmed here on his 'Greenholm Farm' until his death in 1882, aged 74. He the farm to his widow and his son Isaiah. His son got the northern 50 acres, his widow Ann got the southern 50 acres plus all the household effects. They shared the stock. But it all went to Isaiah if she remarried.

And the connection to Coburg Cemetery? When he died, Joseph Taylor was buried at the Cemetery with a family named Smith. I'm not absolutely certain why John Smith and his family are buried in the same grave as Joseph Taylor and his grandson Arthur Cyrus Taylor, but John Smith died a few weeks before Joseph Taylor, they both came from the Campbellfield area and there were family connections through the marriages of Katie Taylor, Arthur's sister and Alexander Smith, a son of John and Ann Smith and another son Charles Smith, who married Isaiah Taylor's step-daughter Eleanor Leach.

Joseph Taylor's son Isaiah (Squizzy's grandfather) arrived in Victoria in 1858, five years after his father had settled at Campbellfield. He was a policeman and first worked at Sandhurst (Bendigo) before relocating to St Kilda in the late 1860s. It seems he worked as a policeman until he retired and his farm provided some extra income. He may not even have lived on the property. He was living in Sandhurst when his first child Isaiah Benjamin Taylor was born in 1862, then was transferred to St Kilda where he lived with his second wife and their children until he moved to the Fawkner farm some time in the late 1880s. By this time he was partner in a Brighton coachbuilding business with his son Benjamin Isaiah, Squizzy's father. Isaiah bailed out his son when he struck financial problems but the business appears to have collapsed during the 1890s Depression. One son, Arthur, died at Coburg in 1898 and is buried with the Smiths and his grandfather Joseph Taylor at Coburg. Benjamin died in 1901 aged 37 and is buried at St Kilda Cemetery.

By 1906 Isaiah Taylor, retired policeman and grandfather of a notorious criminal, was living in Davis Street, Coburg where he died in 1922 aged 90. He is buried at St Kilda Cemetery. Several of his children remained in the Coburg/Brunswick area, his daughter Katie Smith dying in Brunswick East in 1966 aged 97. Her cremated remains are interred at Fawkner Memorial Park next to her husband Alexander.

Joseph Theodore Leslie ('Squizzy') Taylor was killed in a shootout with another gangster, John ('Snowy') Cutmore on 27 October 1927. He is buried at Brighton Cemetery, Cutmore at Coburg Cemetery, as is one of Squizzy's victims, William Haines, murdered in 1916.

And of the Smith family, buried with Joseph Taylor and his grandson Arthur at Coburg Cemetery, much more can be said. To hear more about Jessie and Mary Ann Smith and their deaths in a local waterhole on 29 July 1880, you'll have to join my 'Lucky Dip' tour, scheduled to take place later this year. All I'll tell you now is that the records show that they 'drowned together hand in hand.'

Cheryl Griffin, May 2022



Smith family grave in which Squizzy Taylor's great-grandfather Joseph Taylor and his uncle Arthur Cyrus Taylor are also buried. Image courtesy Lee Anthony.

### Friends of Coburg Cemetery Inc.

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