

Carlton Community History Group

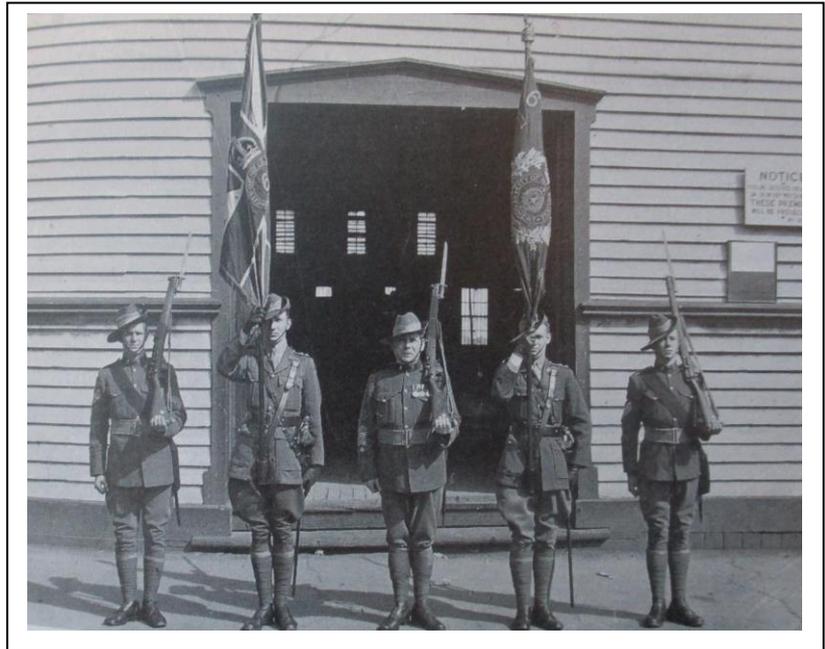
Carlton Chronicles

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Drill hall in Grattan Street

In the August 2020 edition of this publication there was an article that talked about the drill hall that used to be in Grattan Street, Carlton, on the south side between Lygon and Drummond Streets. The only illustration of the hall that we could find at the time was an aerial photo that just showed its roof. Since then a number of other illustrations have come to light, including the two reproduced here. The top photo shows the main door of the drill hall on the Grattan Street frontage of the building. Standing splendidly to attention in front of it on Anzac Day, 1934, are the Colour Party of the 6th Battalion. The lower illustration is from a set of plans of the drill hall



recently unearthed at the National Archives of Australia office in Melbourne. (We have Patrick Ferry of NAA to thank for this). Dated 1888, this once again shows the Grattan Street frontage. The front door shown in the photo appears to have been a later change, as it is only marked lightly in pencil on this drawing. The smaller building attached to the left of the main hall is a set of offices, and that to the right is the Caretaker's cottage. There was an earlier drill hall on the site, built in the early 1860s but demolished in the late 1880s. It was replaced by this large wooden hall, opened in September 1889. This drill hall was used by a number of different military units for over 70 years, until it in turn was demolished in 1963 and replaced by a three-storey office block currently used by the Melbourne University Regiment.



Walter Powell - The Chemist of Hopetoun House

Walter Powell was an early chemist in North Carlton. Originally from Bristol in England, he acquired a shop and residence at 779 Nicholson Street, between Pigdon and Park Streets, in 1889. He and his family moved to larger premises next door at Hopetoun House (number 781) in 1892. He was to remain living and working there for 35 years until his death in October 1927, while the adjacent property he owned was rented out.

As a chemist, Walter Powell was a well-known member of the community. In March 1895, he wrote a letter to the editor of *The Argus*, advising readers how to detect spurious coins (which were in circulation in Carlton at the time) with the application of 'lunar caustic' (silver nitrate), a product that he sold in his chemist shop. From late 1899 to early 1901, Walter Powell's testimonial was used to advertise a somewhat spurious therapeutic product – Zoophyte – which claimed to cure colds, influenza and hydatids, a serious parasitic tapeworm disease. In 1891 the product disappeared without a trace from the advertising pages.

In 1901, Walter Powell was the victim of a young swindler named Edward Harding, a fellow Bristolian he met while travelling to Sydney on the steamship *Burrumbeet*. On his return home, Powell received a telegram from Harding asking for money. Like the online scammers of today, Harding claimed that he was 'stranded' and needed money to pay for his passage back home. Walter Powell booked a passage for him to London and gave him some cash, on the understanding that the amount would be reimbursed by Harding's 'father', of the Bristol firm Colthurst & Harding. He then found out that there was no family or business connection between the young Edward Harding and Mr Harding of Bristol. Subsequent enquiries revealed that Harding had left the ship in Adelaide and cashed in the balance of his passage. He had no intention of returning to England. Harding was arrested in Sydney and escorted to Melbourne, where he was sentenced to one month's imprisonment on a charge of obtaining £30 by false pretences.

The following year, in April 1902, Walter Powell and his wife Phyllis were victims of a home invasion in the early hours of the morning. A young man entered the premises via a rear window, and went upstairs into the bedroom. Walter managed to chase the intruder down the stairs, but he escaped. All that was taken was a box of cough drops from the bedside table. A few days later, Constable Clark apprehended a young man who was acting suspiciously and who matched the description of the man who had entered the Powell premises. Constable Clark then took him to be identified by Walter and Phyllis. Samuel Jamieson was charged, but he was found not guilty on the ground that he had an alibi at the time of the alleged offence. A young woman, claiming to be his wife, said he had been at home with her all night. After this unpleasant experience, Walter Powell was very much aware of the role played by police in protecting people and property. In 1904, when the local police constable was removed from evening patrols, he penned a letter to the editor of *The Argus*, noting the increase in youth crime and antisocial behaviour.

Walter Powell was known as an upstanding and respectable citizen. However, an assault charge in December 1913 saw his personal life revealed in salacious detail. Walter's wife Phyllis died in 1911 and in 1912 he began courting Evelyn Solomon, a wealthy widow from Brunswick. Walter visited Evelyn regularly, sometimes staying overnight, and wrote her romantic letters. They were engaged



Court artist's sketch of Walter Powell. (Image source: Truth, 28 March 1914, p. 5)

to be married, and a condition of their marriage was that Evelyn would pay Walter £1,000 and they would make wills nominating each other as beneficiaries. But Walter reneged on his marriage proposal and in December 1913 he was charged with assaulting Evelyn at her home in Brunswick. During court proceedings, scandalous allegations were made against Evelyn, including a claim that she had given Walter 'a disease'. Walter Powell was found not guilty of assault causing actual bodily harm, but guilty of the lesser charge of common assault. He was fined £20 and placed on a bond of £50, with a surety of £50, to keep the peace for twelve months.

For the remainder of his life Walter Powell stayed mostly on the right side of the law, apart from a couple of minor convictions in 1925 for after-hours trading, and supplying a dangerous drug more than once on the same prescription. He died at Hopetoun House in October 1927 and was buried at Boroondara Cemetery in Kew. His estate was valued, for probate purposes, at £2,828 pounds, 14 shillings and 2 pence, with the proceeds going to his surviving children. His daughter Sophia placed memorial notices to her father in newspapers from 1927 to 1951 inclusive.

A PURE HERBAL TONIC.
An Invigorating Beverage with
Extraordinary Medicinal
Efficacy in cases of
COLDS, INFLUENZA or
HYDATIDS.

Mr Walter Powell, of Carlton, as above, Victoria (Queen's Prizeman for Chemistry), writes:—"Having analysed your ZOOPHYTE HERBAL TONIC, I can confidently recommend it as a Pure Herbal Decoction of Native Bitter Herbs. Its tonic qualities are great, more especially after an attack of influenza."

Advertisement for Zoophyte. (Image Source: Rutherglen Sun and Chiltern Valley Advertiser, 25 May 1900, Supplement, p. S2)

Pillar Box Man

An historic pillar box in Rathdowne Street, North Carlton, has recently had a makeover, with its paintwork restored to original colours of red and gold on a black base. The restoration work was done by a pillar box enthusiast, who initially began his work on a voluntary basis and is now paid by Australia Post. The pillar box is located directly outside 428 Rathdowne Street and this building has historic connections with early postal services in the area, being the site of the North Carlton Post Office from 1896 until 1913.

Prior to the opening of a new purpose-built North Carlton Post Office at 546 Rathdowne Street, postal services were provided at several different locations in North Carlton. The first North Carlton Post Office premises, recorded in the Sands & McDougall directory in 1888, was a shop at 783 Rathdowne Street, near the Macpherson Street corner. Miss Eliza White was the postmistress and she shared the premises with Mrs G. White, a stationer. Miss and Mrs White remained at the address until 1892, when both moved to 797 Rathdowne Street, a short distance north of the Macpherson Street corner. The next move occurred in 1896, to 428 Rathdowne Street, on the east side, and the last recorded listing at this address was in 1913. The North Carlton Post Office, on the corner of Richardson and Rathdowne Streets, was closed in October 2022 and relocated to 607 Lygon Street, Princes Hill.



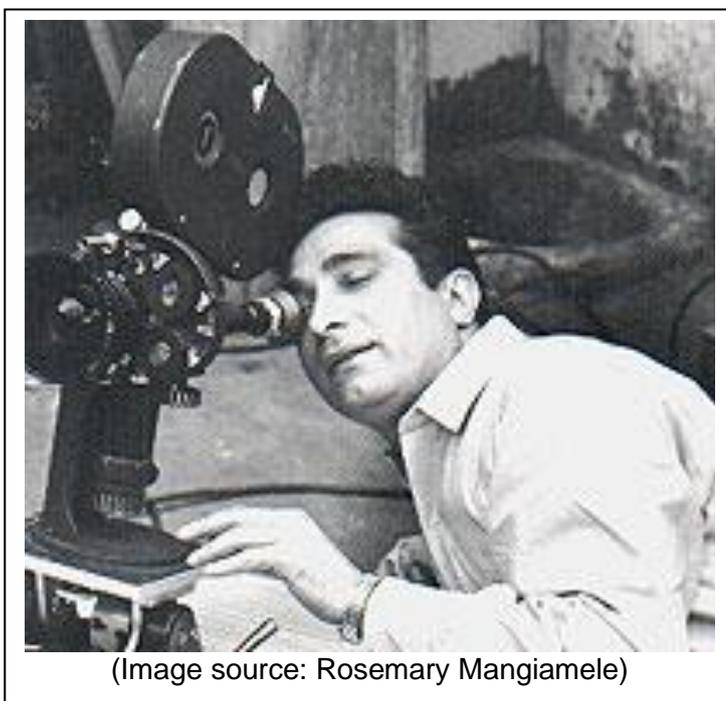
Restored pillar box outside 428 Rathdowne Street, North Carlton. Note that part of the 'fist' door handle is missing on the right-hand side. (Image source: CCHG)

Carlton Personality – Giorgio Mangiamele

Giorgio Mangiamele was a Carlton-based filmmaker and photographer, who made pioneering feature films that influenced the direction of the emerging Australian film industry. Although his films achieved only limited public recognition in his lifetime, interest in his work is now steadily growing as it reaches new audiences.

Born in Catania, Sicily in 1926, Giorgio was the son of a toymaker. After leaving school he studied fine arts in Catania, and later became a police photographer capturing images of crime scenes. He also learned the essentials of filmmaking by shooting 16mm surveillance footage of demonstrations and riots intended for screening to magistrates in court. Later he studied journalism at Rome University. In 1952 Giorgio migrated to Australia. At the Rushworth Migrant Camp he met German-born Dorotea Hofmann, whom he married. Giorgio's initial job in Melbourne was as a typist at the Italian Consulate. But his weekend work taking Italian community wedding, party and portrait photos proved so successful that within two years he was running a full-time photographic business in Carlton.

A year after he arrived in Australia, Giorgio began making an ambitious, hard-hitting feature film based on the experiences of his fellow migrants. The film (*The Contract*) was very different from those being made in Australia at the time. His most impactful films were on themes of the isolation, loneliness, racism and claustrophobia felt by many of Australia's Italian migrants. After making five films on these subjects, he sought after 1963 to tackle broader topics. These would consolidate his reputation as a film artist and help rebuild a viable Australian feature film industry.



(Image source: Rosemary Mangiamele)

In 1965 one of his films (*Clay*) was chosen for competition at the Cannes Film Festival, where it was acclaimed for its visual potency. Back in Australia, *Clay* won the Silver Award, the Silver Medallion and Kodak Silver Trophy at the 1965 AFI Awards. But in the face of film trade apathy, *Clay* failed to find an Australian commercial release, and it was Giorgio himself who in 1966 rented the St Kilda Palais Theatre to give *Clay* its sole Australian public season.

For a number of years, Giorgio and Dorotea Mangiamele with their daughters Suzanne and Claudia lived above his photographic studio at 344 Rathdowne Street, North Carlton. In 1977 Dorotea and Giorgio were divorced, and seven years later Dorotea died from cancer. While living in North Carlton, Giorgio met occupational therapist Rosemary Cuming. In December 1979 they were married – in Papua New Guinea where Giorgio was working at the time. He spent three years in Papua New Guinea making documentaries for the PNG Office of Information and training a PNG filmmaking crew who later formed the basis of an ongoing PNG government film unit.

In 2000 Giorgio contracted motor neurone disease and on 13 May 2001 he died. After his death his widow, Rosemary, who was herself a highly regarded abstract painter, continued to promote his work, until she herself passed away in July this year. Rosemary Mangiamele was an active member of the Carlton Community History Group.

A Greek childhood in Carlton

In this article on his Greek childhood in Carlton, Andrew Athanasopoulos remembers activities at the Greek Church of Saint John the Baptist in Lygon Street, North Carlton.

The original St John's Church, known as 'the old church', was in Drummond Street. But in 1968 it moved to its present location in Lygon Street near the corner of Pigdon Street. It was the main place of worship for my family.



(Image source: Holy Church of St John the Baptist, North Carlton).

At Easter we would usually go to Thursday night mass, called the '12 Evagelia', with my Mum. This was a tradition of ours. On Friday night, 'Epitaphio' is a procession around the block, symbolic of Jesus's death. I went on many processions. We would all hold candles hoping nobody's hair or clothing got burnt. With friends and family, it often felt like a silent protest march. Police often escorted the Friday night Easter procession around the block, like crowd control. I remember once being at the back of the procession on Good Friday with my friends and we were quietly chanting 'What do we want?', 'Jesus Resurrected', 'When do we want it?', 'Now!'. Fun times. On Saturday there

was midnight mass, 'Anastasi', Christ has Risen. We would usually get to church at 11:40pm and at 12 midnight the priest would proclaim 'Jesus has risen'. The bell would be rung on Saturday midnight mass. Once the bell ringer locked himself in the bell tower and continued ringing until 1am. We would go home and sometimes there would be fireworks. After we went home, we would have a celebration by sharing a traditional meal, crack red eggs, and eat meat after fasting for the week. I remember people throwing firecrackers at church near unsuspecting people, and once even onto a tram.

St John's was the central place of worship for the neighbourhood and community. My parents were married in the old church, and I was baptised there also. I was married in St John's on Lygon Street. My dad's funeral was in this church as well.

Membership fees for 2024 are now due

Help finance the preservation of Carlton's history by becoming a financial member of the
Carlton Community History Group

The membership fee is \$20 for a calendar year, and can be paid by cheque, or bank transfer:

BSB: 06 3014 Account number: 10198637

Name of account: Carlton Community History Group

Cooperation with the Chinese Museum

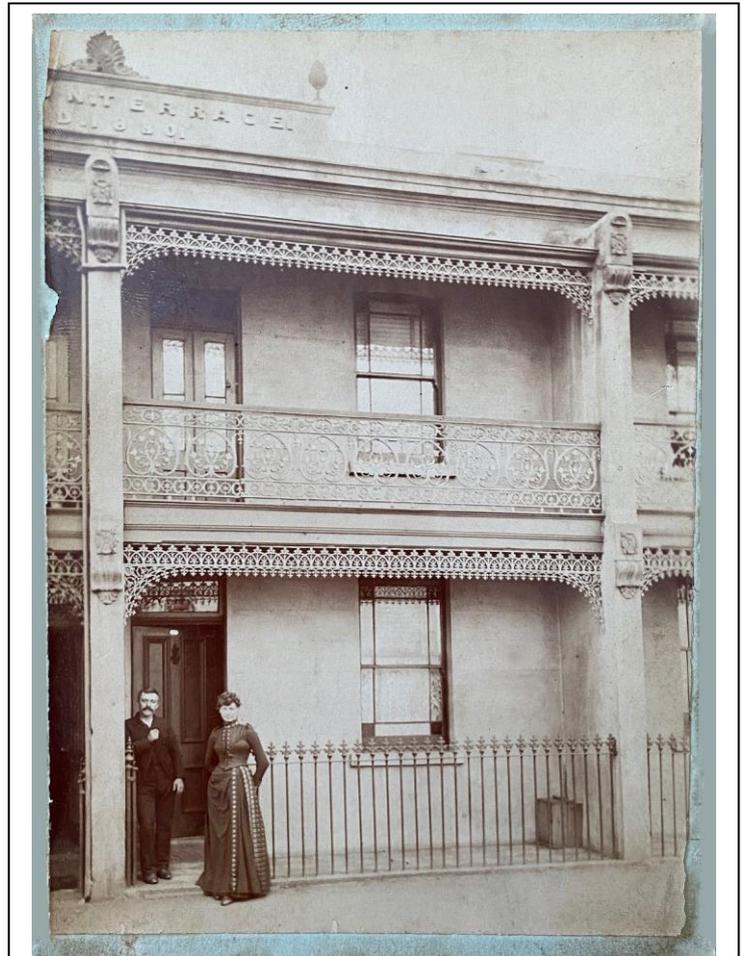
In September, three of our CCHG committee members met with Mark Wang, the CEO of the Museum of Australian Chinese History to discuss how we could help with one of their projects - stories about Chinese in Melbourne suburbs in the 19th century. We were able to supply some information about Chinese in Carlton for them to follow up, but more importantly, it was great to meet with people who are equally passionate about local histories as we are, and to share information. It was agreed to further co-operate in the future with more information exchange.

60th Anniversary of the Carlton Mosque

On Saturday 25 November, the Albanian Australian Islamic Society celebrated the 60th Anniversary of the establishment of their Mosque in Drummond Street, North Carlton. It was a joyful occasion with many of their congregation attending along with invited guests, including CCHG members. The celebration began with a chant from the Holy Kuran by the current President of the Society, followed by addresses by notable leaders in the Islamic community. Mr. Ali Ymer, historian, gave a very interesting illustrated history talk, describing how the Society came into being, and most importantly, how the Mosque gradually developed after acquisition of a property in 1963. Mr. Ymer was presented with an award by the Society's President for his efforts. Many historic photographs, documents and maps were on display for perusal and enjoyment by those present, which added to the knowledge of how wonderfully cosmopolitan the history of Carlton really is, and how much we can all still learn from each other. The presentations were followed by a delicious spread of food courtesy of the Ladies' Committee of the Mosque to the enjoyment of all.

Slum Clearance in Carlton

The Shaw Davey Slum Hotel, on the corner of Elgin and Drummond Streets, has been re-branded as Ballers' Clubhouse. The term 'Shaw Davey Slum' is a misnomer. It is a reference to two Housing Commission officers named Shaw and Davey who in a 1960 report identified slum areas in Carlton that were to be demolished. But the hotel was not within a prescribed slum clearance area, and only residential properties were subject to Housing Commission orders. The hotel was first licensed as 'Curtain's Hotel' to John Curtain in February 1866 and he remained licensee until 1871. The hotel has gone through various changes of name and licensees, with Baller's Clubhouse being the most recent incarnation.



A Mystery to be Solved

Can you help CCHG identify this terrace in the photo, taken in about 1890? We know, from what appears on the pediment, that the two-storey terrace was built in 1880 and has a name ending in the letter 'N'. We have already established that it is neither of the two terraces known as 'Grattan Terrace' – one in Grattan Street, Carlton, and the other in Canning Street, North Carlton. Email us at cchg@y7mail.com if you have any information that will help solve this mystery.

This publication, Carlton Chronicles, is produced and distributed four times a year.

If you would like to be put on the mailing list, email the

Carlton Community History Group

at cchg@y7mail.com or visit our website www.cchg.asn.au