

Ghosts of a weird era

Tragic pioneer deaths revealed

Lisa Edgerton

WHEN Frankston trains rattle through Cheltenham station every 10 minutes it disturbs a lot of ghosts who are resting in the pioneer cemetery next door.

Each headstone at the graveyard represents the memory of a loved one but scarce are the stories of those who died in the 1920s.

Fortunately at the Cheltenham Pioneer Cemetery, many tales collected from early last century have been preserved, eager to be narrated.

Friends of Cheltenham and Regional Cemeteries Inc will hold two tours of The Tragic '20s on Sunday, March 1 at 2pm and Sunday, May 17 at 11am.

Friends' president Travis Sellers said the tour will feature stories about residents from Bentleigh to Bonbeach.

"The 1920s was a decade of enormous change," Mr Sellers said.

"Electricity from Yallourn was first connected to the city and powered new electric trains and trams, motor vehicles transformed the character of the city, while more citizens died from crime, suicide and accidents.

"The feared underworld also became increasingly public in its wicked activities," he said.



Travis Sellers at the grave of pioneer Ethel (Violet) Murrell at Cheltenham Lawn Cemetery.

N35MS912

In the 1920s, Cheltenham was a quaint, semi-rural town rather than the suburb of Melbourne that it is today.

Tragic deaths were accepted as a part of life.

Originally called the South Moorabbin and Mordialloc General Cemetery, the Cheltenham Pioneer Cemetery is the final rest-

ing place for many of the region's pioneers. One of the finest monuments at the cemetery is the grave of John Ormond Robinson, from Sandringham.

The unlucky 20 year old accidentally shot himself while on the toilet with his pants down.

Also buried there is Royal Walsh, one of the many market gardeners

of the 1920s, who was struck from behind while driving his cart, filled with vegetables, on the way to the Queen Victoria Market.

» To explore the cemetery grounds as part Friends of Cheltenham of The Tragic '20s Tour, log on to focrc.org or phone 9542 0761. Bookings for the two tours are essential.

Police beat

Did you see them?

POLICE want to talk to two men who tried to steal money from a security van at Southland Shopping Centre.

On Thursday, February 12, about 9.30am the men approached the security personnel during a delivery near the Westpac bank at the level 2, Karen St entrance.

Police have released two images of the suspected offenders. One man is believed to have been involved in the attempted robbery while both were seen sitting in an early model blue/grey sedan just before the incident. The men are believed to be in their mid-20s. Contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.



Victim critical

TWO men have been charged with assault after a vicious attack in Oakleigh South last week.

The men, a 31 year old and a 37 year old, both from Oakleigh, were charged with serious assault after a man was found unconscious outside the Safeway supermarket at the corner of Warrigal and North roads on February 19. The victim, a 36-year-old East Bentleigh man, was taken to the Alfred hospital with serious head injuries and remains in a critical condition. The men have been bailed to appear at the Melbourne Magistrates' Court in May.

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40.6x121.8cm	\$ 23.95	91.4x182.9cm	\$ 59.95
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