



# AROUND THE GRAVES

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NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF CHELTENHAM AND REGIONAL CEMETERIES INC.

## More front than Myer's...

The Cheltenham cemeteries has its share of women of firsts and those who have attended our tours would have heard of Vera Scantlebury Brown, Clarice Beckett, Violet Murrell and Molly Hill. Added to this list is **Adeline May Keating** (CofE "BA" 65) who was arguably Australia's first female overseas buyer and highest paid businesswoman.

Hidden amongst the romance of the history of Myer's—which this year is celebrating the centenary of its Melbourne store—is the story of how Simcha (Sidney) Baevski Myer (1878-1934) obtained the financial assistance needed to open his first small drapery store in Bendigo. Back in 1900, when prejudices were prevalent, banks were unwilling to lend to a foreign hawker with a

funny lingo and little to offer in the way of security. So Myer turned to other financiers and money-lenders until his tenacity was rewarded. His name was 'Lucky Will' Keating who offered the loan on his own terms. *"Free of interest if you pay it back within a year—but ten per cent if you take longer"*. Myer paid it back within a year, and the rest is history.



(above)  
Grave of Adeline Keating  
(Cheltenham Pioneer  
Cemetery, CofE "BA" 65)

Though Will Keating's lavishness with money was legendary, his luck ran out and

the family fell on hard times; he died a bankrupt in 1908. Fast forward to 1914 with Adeline now residing in Prahran in near poverty with her mother **Ann Jobling née Todd** (c1855-1929). Along with many Melburnians, curiosity led Adeline to walk the distance from Prahran to see the grand opening of the new Myer's store in Bourke Street. The irony was not lost on Adeline when at the end of that day—Friday 10 July 1914—she found herself employed without any experience in the basement section as a salesperson.

By the time of her resignation in 1932, Adeline had risen through the ranks to be Myer's overseas buyer, travelling nine months of the year to Japan, China, America and Europe with as much as £30,000 in an era before electronic banking. Her prickly relationship with Sidney Myer was equally legendary...

Come along and hear Adeline Keating's story on our **NEW** "Hidden Gems, Odds and Ends" tour of the Cheltenham Pioneer Cemetery (Charman Road, opposite Cheltenham Railway Station). **Sunday 2 October 2011** at 11.00am. Cost is \$10.00 (\$5.00 members) and includes a tour pamphlet and refreshments. **Bookings are essential** and can be made on-line at [www.focrc.org/tours](http://www.focrc.org/tours) or by ringing Vivienne on (03) 5420 7671. (Source: Hellegers, J., "Against the Current. The story of Adeline Keating" (1987) p157-158)

## Newmarket Saleyards

In another milestone, the Kensington Saleyards opened 150 years ago this year in an area that was once on the outskirts of the Melbourne metropolis. Buried at the Cheltenham cemeteries are a number of drovers—those iconic and laconic Australian characters who played an integral part in the nation's history when Australia made its fortune from the land. The Saleyard was no different with drovers responsible for delivering stock as well as working in the yards for the many Stock and Station agents.

**Thomas O'NEIL** (RC "C" 25, Pioneer Cemetery)—bu 27 Sep 1902 aged 66.

**James CRIPPS** (RC "24" 17, Pioneer Cemetery)—bu 12 Sep 1917 aged 54.

**Robert Henry ELLIOTT** (Pres "156" 8, Memorial Park)—bu 14 Oct 1938 aged 73.

**Garnet ARMSTRONG** (RC "27" 60, Pioneer Cemetery)—bu 29 Jul 1957 aged 72.

**Patrick MCGRATH** (RC "145" 52, Memorial Park)—bu 24 Jan 1973 aged 78.

## Who Am I?

I was born near Warrnambool on 22 May 1902 and as a young lady was a gifted student with a fondness for dancing. I was the first woman to graduate in architecture



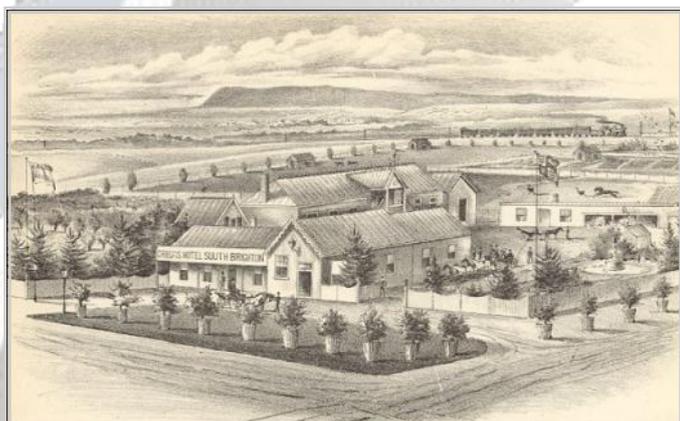
at the University of Melbourne and spent many years working with Walter Burley Griffin. I made my name as a choreographer of classical ballet and with Misha Burlakov, opened a school in Sydney—the First Australian Ballet. After our partnership dissolved, I became immersed in different techniques of the sacred Indian dance styles Kathakali and Bharata Natya.

I died at Malvern on 18 May 1979 and was buried in the Cheltenham Memorial Park with my parents. Who Am I?

(Log on to the Members' Area of our website to find out the answer—<http://www.focrc.org/members/membersaccess>)

## Gregg's South Brighton Hotel

One of the most colourful of the early hotels in the district was "Gregg's South Brighton Hotel" (1867-1925) on the corner of Nepean Highway and South Road, Moorabbin (pictured below). Purchased in 1867 by **Barry Gregg** (CofE "D" 165, Pioneer Cemetery), entrepreneur and journalist with *The Argus*, Gregg's grand plan was to turn the watering hole known as "Plough and Harrow" into a health resort unlike any other in the metropolis. It seems that after the death of his wife **Fanny** (RC "C" 14) who died in 1886 aged 51, Gregg relinquished the license, but not ownership to a Teresa M Cahill. Then after his death, the hotel and grounds were sold at auction on 16 December 1925, described lavishly as;



"Brick and weatherboard hotel containing main bar, side bar, seven rooms of varying sizes, and sleep-out; outside kitchen and two rooms, sitting-room and two bedrooms, and good stabling and loft; two large rooms, laundry, large bathroom, dairy. Also woodshed, garage...there is also a large weatherboard billiard-room".



(above)  
Grave of the Barry Gregg  
(Cheltenham Pioneer Cemetery,  
CofE "D" 164-165)

Gone was the zoo with the rare birds and animals, as well as the labyrinth ("considerably larger than of Hampton Court, London") which covered several acres and was "a never-failing source of perplexity and amusement to visitors". The grounds, which once extended as far as the Patterson railway station, had a frontage of 61 feet to Nepean Highway and extended along South Road to Corbie Street.

Curiously, Fanny Gregg is buried in an unadorned grave in the Roman Catholic section. (Source: *Allom Lovell & Associates., "City of Bayside Heritage Review. Thematic History", Vol 1 (1999) p63-64; The Argus 28 Nov 1925 p4*)

## The Case of Thomas Brasier

Often while researching one subject, an opportunity arises to cross reference names to see who might be buried at Cheltenham. **Thomas Anthony Brasier** (RC "241" 28, Memorial Park) found himself on the wrong side of the law in 1932 as a 16-year-old on a charge of larceny and placed on probation. He was later sentenced to two months' imprisonment at the Brighton Children's Court in August 1933 for breaking and entering. Committed to the Castlemaine Reformatory Prison, freedom came on 9 July 1934 after a stint in Pentridge at the Governor's pleasure. Brasier died in 1958 aged 41.



(above)  
Thomas Brasier in Sep 1933

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