

WHO'S WHO IN THIS STORY?

TIME OUT SPOKE TO THESE
LOCAL LUMINARIES



David Carruthers
Owner of the Dog's Bar Wine Bar and Arts Hub, and the St Kilda Memo. Former president of the St Kilda Traders' Association.



Ollie Olsen
Founding member of Those Charlatans (with Rowland S Howard), Whirlywird, Max Q (with Michael Hutchence) and the label Psy Harmonics.



Stuart Grant
Member of Primitive Calculators, Bum Steers and Ruby, now a lecturer in theatre, performance and phenomenology at Monash.



Nick Haines
Booker at the Prince front bar on Sundays; promoter of October's A Day by the Green at the St Kilda Bowlo (along with Rusty Teluk and Colin Host).



Dolores San Miguel
Former promoter at the Crystal Ballroom and other venues. Author of *The Ballroom* (Melbourne Books).



Mark Seymour
Frontman of Hunters and Collectors, former St Kilda resident.



Dave Stevens
Owner of Pure Pop, a St Kilda record shop that also comprises a bar and venue.



Serge Thomann
Deputy Mayor of the City of Port Phillip; former rock photographer. Moved to "a posh new apartment" in St Kilda in 1996.



Rob Wellington
Former member of Fiction, Little Murders and International Exile; now playing with Garry Gray. Runs St Kilda Music Walking Tours

ROBERTO SEBA



THE BATTLE FOR ST KILDA

ST KILDA HAS LONG HAD A REPUTATION AS A SEEDY SEASIDE FUNHOUSE IN WHICH ARTISTS AND MUSICIANS COULD DWELL. WITH MANY OF ITS GRAND OLD MANSIONS AND VENUES NOW REPLACED BY APARTMENTS AND HOTELS, WILL DEVELOPERS INCH OUT THE LAST TRUE BOHEMIANS? OR CAN EFFORTS BY PORT PHILLIP CITY COUNCIL REACH A COMPROMISE?

WORDS JENNY VALENTISH
PHOTOGRAPHY GRAHAM DENHOLM



ROBERTO SEBA





THE LES GIRLS TROUPE



SERGE THOMANN AND FRED NEGRO

SEA AIR AND DISGRACES

FROM PROSTITUTES TO DRAG QUEENS TO PUNKS, ST KILDA USED TO BE THE CENTRE OF AUSTRALIAN OUTRAGE. WHAT HAPPENED?

The Ballroom, some time in the mid-1980s. Singer Fred Negro is on stage, thrusting his penis into a watermelon, so as not to offend the vegetarians in the crowd who have been complaining about the frozen chickens. His band, I Spit on Your Gravy, are playing tracks from their album *St Kilda's Alright*, packed with odes to Fitzroy Street's rogues and late-night pizza joints. Their shows are attracting a growing police presence, and the band rack up fines and arrests every time they plug in. As legend has it, Negro will eventually be responsible for the closure of the Ballroom when he invites the audience on stage for a penis-measuring competition – just as the liquor licensing department turn up for a nose around

Obscenity is nothing new for St Kilda – it has long been associated with artists, and as DH Lawrence observed, obscenity “is the only stuff of art – or almost the only stuff”. Just last year, Paul Yore had his ‘Everything Is Fucked’ installation at the Linden Gallery seized by police after a complaint that it was child pornography (a child with Justin Bieber’s head was urinating through a dildo). And back in February at the Dog’s Bar a complaint about a penis in an artwork featuring pirates led to a police investigation. As Oscar Wilde said: “The sign of a Philistine age is the cry of immorality against art.”

During World War II there was an influx of sailors to St Kilda. Then came the prostitutes, trannies, the queer community (the Prince of Wales has the longest-running gay bar in Australia, dating back to 1937), artists, freaks and weirdos. Locals fondly recall drag nights such as Pokeys, which ran for 14 years at the Prince of Wales; and Les Girls at the Ritz Hotel (with the

neon ‘TITS’, standing for ‘This is the Show’. Fred Negro wrote a song about that). The gay scene continues to flourish, thanks to the good work of the GH Hotel and the annual Pride March.

For music fans, St Kilda was the pointy end of the funnel of the southeastern suburbs – with nothing else in that region but the odd beer barn pumping out pub rock. Heroin and Mandrax were plentiful, according to Monash lecturer Stuart Grant. His band, Primitive Calculators, lived in a dilapidated mansion on Clark Street in the late ’70s.

The introduction of the RSA and the regulation of the security industry was a hard blow for venues, already weathering higher taxes on booze and sharp rises in insurance. Established bars suddenly had 15 new joints on the same strip to compete with, partly due to an increase in liquor licences, but also attributable to the public’s taste

OBSCENITY IS NOTHING NEW FOR ST KILDA

for the next big drinking experience. And thanks to rocketing property prices, music fans could no longer afford to live within staggering distance of the venues – unlike the inner north, where such a sport is still possible. The area has had a boom of young professionals who can afford the rent and mortgage increases, but as Deputy Mayor Serge Thomann points out, there are still recognisable communities. . . it’s just that the newcomers are actually attracted by the sea air. “You’ve got skydivers, kite surfers, people at the skate park,” he says, “so potentially there are more sporting types than people attracted by live music.”

Ever the provocateur, Stuart Grant takes a swipe at those who refuse to accept that times change. “Nostalgia is a sickness, a memory sickness,” he says. “Algia’. That means it’s a pain.”

ST KILDA: A BRIEF HISTORY

IF THERE'S A PORT THERE'S A PARTY

- **1840s** The area is named after the Lady of St Kilda after the ship is moored there.
- **1850s** Well-appointed families take the omnibus out to St Kilda, away from the stench of inner Melbourne. The Yalukit-Willam people are driven out. The railway is built, ending at the Terminus Hotel – now the George.
- **1890s** A depression hits. Mansions are subdivided into dirt-cheap boarding houses as the rich depart for Toorak and Brighton.
- **1940s** Australian and American troops fill the local barracks. Prostitutes move in and families move out.
- **1964** Footy team the Saints leave the Junction Oval, their home since 1897. There are currently talks underway to bring them home.
- **1973** Whitlam Government doubles the dole. St Kilda bludgers celebrate in song.

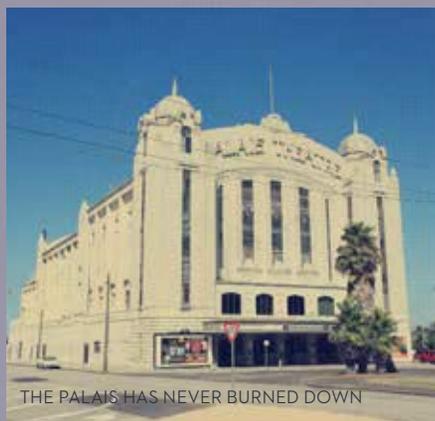


GERARD O'CONNOR'S WORK AT DOG'S BAR

PAUL YORE'S 'EVERYTHING IS FUCKED'



WHO KILLED THE MUSIC SCENE?



THE PALAIS HAS NEVER BURNED DOWN

DID IT DIE? DID IT EVEN EXIST? DOES IT KICK HARDER THAN EVER? THERE ARE SOME WILDLY DIFFERING OPINIONS

Back in the mid-'70s to mid-'80s, the St Kilda sound was so specific to the art school bands circling the Ballroom that it was as though the suburb was cut adrift from the rest of Melbourne, let alone from the city's rivalry with Sydney. For music fans, St Kilda was the pointy end of the funnel of the southeastern suburbs – there was nothing else in that region but the odd beer ban pumping out pub rock.

While in 2014, remaining venues such as the Espy (the business of which is for sale), Dog's Bar, St Kilda Memo, the Prince Bandroom, the Bowlo, Vineyard, the Palais, the GH Hotel and Pure Pop put on thousands of gigs a year between them, what's lacking is a palpable scene. Fitzroy Street was once a thoroughfare of people shuffling between venues. These days more consumers watch shows on YouTube than go to see gigs, and spend more time campaigning online for venues under threat than going to see bands in them. But when and how did it all go wrong?

THEORY 01 DEVELOPERS HAVE PRICED OUT THE MUSICIANS AND PUNTERS

Dolores San Miguel "A lot of bands left to go overseas, but it all came to a gloomy end when the owners who took over the Ballroom from Graeme Richmond and Todd Shelton let it go to seed. The health department closed it down. Then when it was bought again in the early '90s, the owner built apartments above it so there could no longer be music put on."

Stuart Grant "A bunch of [St Kilda] people moved to Fitzroy in the late-'70s for economic reasons, because Brunswick Street was all boarded up and it was really cheap to rehearse and live there."

THEORY 02 BOOKERS AREN'T NURTURING THE MUSIC SCENE

Mark Seymour What attracted Hunters and Collectors to the area was the arrival of more of an English influence. The groups that were



THE PRINCE BANDROOM WAS SOUNDPROOFED SO THAT IT COULD CO-EXIST WITH THE HOTEL ABOVE IT. IT ALSO HOSTED A PURE POP BENEFIT GIG TO FUND THAT VENUE'S SOUNDPROOFING



DOLORES SAN MIGUEL

interested in that started out in Tiger Lounge in Richmond, then moved down to the Crystal Ballroom – pretty much sponsored by this promoter named Laurie Richards. I don't know how big a deal it was in the scheme of things, but it definitely drew me to the area."

Rob Wellington "At the Ballroom you had two promoters who supported the musos. Graeme would run into the bandroom after you'd played and talk to you like a coach. Toddy would be throwing slabs in the back of a cop car so they'd look the other way. The only prerequisite for getting a gig was that you were interesting. You're on a bill with Nick Cave or Lisa Gerrard, so of course the bar was always getting raised. You'd dress up in black in tons of make-up. We laughed at the people who wore safety pins and tartan because that 'was all prefab.'"

Ollie Olsen "It comes down to promoters not

being willing to give younger, interesting bands a chance. Back in the punk days that was the case until they couldn't ignore it anymore and they had to start taking on these bands that they didn't like."

Rob Wellington "Now there's a tendency to slap bands together, whereas they used to build a scene. You'd have a young band like Hoodoo Gurus in a tiny room at the back, playing with someone who was starting to build a rep. Eighteen months later they're playing to 2,000 people in the big room – so there was a real sense of apprenticeship. The Espy treats music like McDonald's hamburgers. They just churn it out."

THEORY 03 PEOPLE DON'T GO TO GIGS THESE DAYS

Dave Stevens "Because Pure Pop are all ages, we get a lot of teenagers coming in – as it's one of the few opportunities they get to see live music. But as soon as they turn 18, they head back to Brunswick. When we put on bigger names it's a full house, which is great, but I get frustrated when we have really good new acts playing to nobody."

Mark Seymour "The idea of rooms that can pull 1,000 people and run a business five nights a week is a thing of the past; it's not particular to St Kilda. The idea that St Kilda's gone through a real estate sea change and all these cashed-up yuppies don't care about music... that's not the reason for the decline of the scene. What happened with the Ballroom was once it got a name, people started coming from all over Melbourne and it became this big suburban event. That's how big rooms survive – you can't rely on a small, discrete audience in the local area. The vitality of live music erupts in all sorts of places. There are rooms everywhere. The idea that St Kilda was this grassroots Mecca is an over-simplistic picture to paint."



DAVE STEVENS AT PURE POP WILL USE CROWDFUNDING TO HELP SOUNDPROOF HIS VENUE



DOG'S BAR



THE OLD GEORGE CINEMA IS TO BE DEMOLISHED

GRAHAM DENHOLM

DEVELOPED TO DEATH



DAVID CARRUTHERS AT ST KILDA MEMO

GRAHAM DENHOLM

NOISE ANNOYS, AS THE BUZZCOCKS ONCE DECREED, AND IT'S LIKELY TO GET WORSE THE MORE APARTMENTS THAT GO UP

St Kilda's property market is forecast to have an annual average value increase of more than seven per cent over the next five years, which will further marginalise the low-income and artistic communities. "I can only live here by virtue of being disabled," says Ollie Olsen, who's been a hugely influential St Kilda musician since the late-'70s. "And why wouldn't I? I can see the Palais and Luna Park from my window. But most people can't afford it. It's all city workers now, and they're not looking for alternative music."

An area that has for over a century been known nationwide as an entertainment district has undergone some dramatic sanitisation over the past few decades in an effort to attract developers – which in turn draws in more rates. Deputy Mayor Serge Thomann confirms: "We analysed the census and 50 per cent of the people that live in the City of Port Phillip, including St Kilda, have moved here in the last five years."

Says Gus Berger, who ran the George Revival Cinema between June 2013 to February 2014 in the Art Deco former George Cinema on Fitzroy Street before the owners reclaimed the space to build apartments and a gym: "Developers seem to have free rein not just in St Kilda, but across Melbourne. It's a sad state of affairs when local council can object to a development, local residents can object to the same development, yet VCAT approve it. Something is broken there for sure."

Having apartment blocks spring up amid its bustling hub means St Kilda is falling prey to the same problems that are occurring in the CBD. There, venues such as Cherry Bar are forced to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars in

soundproofing to appease new neighbours. "I think what's hurt St Kilda in the last ten years is that the Council has had a policy of enforcement, rather than valuing the heritage of St Kilda," says David Carruthers, who has fought against noise complaints levelled at the Dog's Bar. "If they have one complaint, the enforcement team will enact a load of legislation. The best one was during St Kilda Festival at three in the afternoon. Two enforcement officers turned up and said that they'd had a neighbour complain about live music. I suggested that it might have come from one of the Council's five open-air stages."

Dave Stevens, who has run Pure Pop on Barkly Street for seven years, will cease live music over winter and utilise the money from last year's Buy a Brick crowdfunding campaign to soundproof his

"THEY GET ONE NOISE COMPLAINT, COUNCIL ENACTS LEGISLATION"

venue after a resident objected to the early-evening shows. He's working with Council to ensure the retrofitting abides by the rules. "I find the councillors have as hard a time with the infrastructure as we do," he says. "With my struggles, they've been very enthusiastic and said that they hope I can sort things out."

Thomann hopes that the Agent of Change principle will be approved in July by the Minister of Planning. This procedure will enforce new developers to pay for soundproofing – rather than the existing venues. "For example, the Vineyard shouldn't stop operating because there's a new apartment block," he says.



OLLIE OLSEN

GRAHAM DENHOLM

SCENE BUT NOT HEARD

THESE VENUES LIVE ON ONLY IN THE MEMORIES OF THOSE WHO FREQUENTED THEM



AN UNCHAIN ST KILDA PROTEST

TRIANGLE BECOMES A HEART

IN ONE MAJOR CASE, PUBIC OUTCRY LED TO A DAVID-AND-GOLIATH OUTCOME

May, 2007. Port Phillip City Council awards to Babcock Brown Citta Property Group the development rights to a prime spot of Crown land. It comprises the Palais Theatre; the Palace (before it burned down the following month); the car park; and a further area between Jacka Boulevard and the Esplanade, known as the St Kilda Triangle.

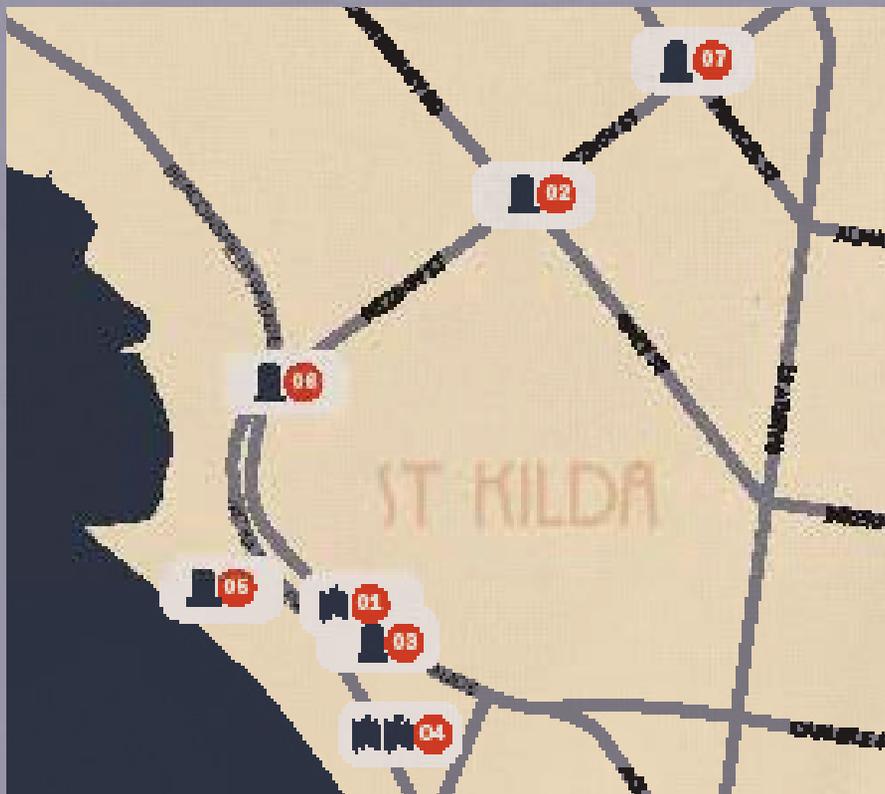
Former Acland Street Traders Association president David Carruthers tells *Time Out*, "We were told it would be an open space with a bit of retail, so we imagined a European-style plaza."

The community felt betrayed when it emerged that the developers, BBC, were planning a major entertainment retail centre, with 186 shops, five nightclubs and several other licensed venues for up to 6,000 people, a hotel, a cinema and yet another supermarket. An opposition group, unChain St Kilda, was set up, led by Serge Thomann. Not only would this development threaten the livelihoods of local businesses, they argued, but it would make St Kilda "Chadstone-by-the-Sea". The movement grew in momentum, with celebrities such as Rachel Griffiths, Dave Hughes and Jane Turner adding their weight.

At the council elections in 2008, five of the councillors in support of the BBC development were defeated. In 2009, the new council negotiated with the developer at a cost of \$5 million for BBC to walk away from the project. The council developed a new vision for the site after extensive community consultation with Capire Consulting Group. This vision was released in 2012.

Thomann believes the Triangle mark II could become St Kilda's new cultural heart. It already boasts the Palais, which, under the management of former AC/DC tour manager Neil Croker, has had a fivefold increase of annual shows since he took over in 2007. That's 250,000 patrons a year.

"Music Victoria has outlined the need for a centre of music. Why not have a Rock'n'Roll Hall of Fame in the Triangle?" Thomann asks. "And as we are losing the Palace in the city, perhaps there is room for a new venue behind the Palais. One that isn't seated."



01 BANANA'S (LATE-'70S-1982)

This bar was above the grand St Moritz Ice Rink, and you could see carefully curated bills, such as Boys Next Door with Sports. St Moritz burned down and now it's a Novotel.

02 THE BALLROOM (1978-1987)

Also known as the Crystal Ballroom and the Seaview Ballroom. It's now owned by a catering company, above the Melbourne Wine Room.

03 THE VENUE (1980S)

Formerly the 1928-built Mayfair Theatre, later known as the Earl's Court. As a nightclub it was known as Palm Grove, Sergio's, the Taxi Club and the Venue. It's been reborn as apartments.

04 THE PALACE (1971-2007)

This club was built on the site of the Palais de

Danse (1926-1968), which burned down. The Palace itself burned down in 2007 while initial plans for the St Kilda Triangle were underway.

05 BOJANGLES (1970S-1980S)

A bustling criminal hotspot, at which Chopper Read shot dead 'Sammy the Turk'. Now part of the St Kilda Sea Baths.

06 CATANI BAR (1990S)

Back in 1992, the bar refused entry to Yothu Yindi's singer Yunupingu (who had been made Australian of the Year). Legend has it the local elder 'pointed the bone' at the venue, then buried it at Gilligan's Island. The cursed Catani is now the Felix Bar.

07 THE RITZ HOTEL (1920S-1980S)

Home to the '70s show *Les Girls*, this red-light area venue is now the Elephant and Wheelbarrow.

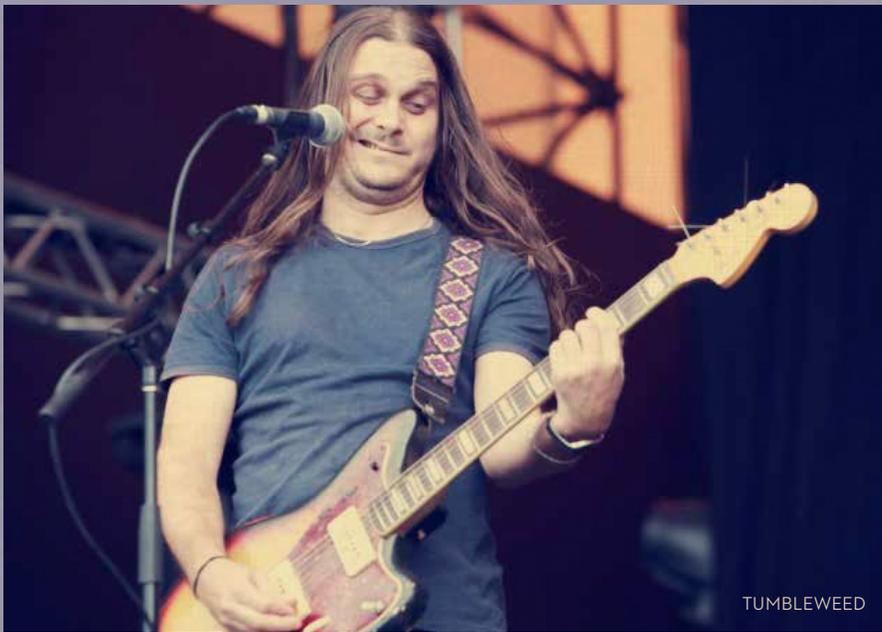


LEARN MORE

01 For more tales of fires, curses and murders around St Kilda's venue, try a walking tour from local historian Meyer Eidleseon. www.melbournwalks.com.au/crime-st-kilda/.

02 Read eBook *Pots, Punks and Punters* by Becky Aizen, which gives a history of venues past and present. www.skhs.org.au/SKSHotels/St%20Kilda.htm.

03 Watch *The Triangle Wars* (antidotefilms.com.au) and *We're All Living on Dog Food*, a doco by Richard Lowenstein about the St Kilda characters behind *Dogs In Space* (left).



TUMBLEWEED



ROCKWIZ HOST
BRIAN NANKERVIS

GRAHAM DENHOLM



PURE POP

SEAN FENNESSY

GIGS COMING UP IN ST KILDA

SUPPORT LIVE MUSIC WITH YOUR FEET AND GET OUT TO THESE VENUES

01 DOG'S BAR

This wine bar has music four nights a week and has had 250 art shows in the last six years. Sew up your Sunday with saxophonist Wilbur Wilde (*Sun Jun 1*); or some swinging jazz from Pearly Shells (*Sun Jun 22*). 54 Acland St, St Kilda 3182. 03 8534 3020. www.dogsbar.com.au.

02 THE ESPY

This 1878-built hotel is home to *RockWiz* and could rival any venue in Melbourne for the sheer number of bands it puts on, often for free. The business is for sale, but that doesn't mean the future owners will stop the music. Try the Rock and Load Festival – 30 bands, including Tumbleweed and Born Lion. 11 Esplanade St, St Kilda 3182. www.espy.com.au. \$25. Sat Jun 21.

03 GH HOTEL

While primarily a gay club, the GH has the occasional nod back to its pub rock days as the Greyhound (during which time it still put on drag shows), such as the free Elwood Blues Club every Sunday from 5pm. 1 Brighton Rd, St Kilda 3182. www.ghhotel.com.au.

04 PALAIS THEATRE

This former cinema was built in 1927, sandwiched

between Luna Park and the long-gone Palais de Danse. June shows include Davi Sings Sinatra (Sat Jun 7); Yo Gabba Gabba! Live! (Sat Jun 21); Mondo Rock (Sat Jun 28). *Lower Esplanade, St Kilda 3182. 03 9525 3240. www.palais theatre.net.au.*

05 PRINCE OF WALES

How about a double dose of pop with Kelis (*Tue Jul 22*) and Sky Ferreira (*Wed Jul 23*)? There's always plenty on in the Public Bar downstairs as well. 29 Fitzroy St, St Kilda 3182. princebandroom.com.au.

06 PURE POP

A record store with a licensed bar – genius. There's trivia on the first Tuesday of the month and gigs in the courtyard include the likes of Spencer P Jones and Hugo Race. Ben Salter plays on Saturday May 31 at 6pm, but the courtyard will be shut over winter while soundproofing commences. 221 Barkly St, St Kilda 3182. www.purepop.com.au.

07 TRY YOUR LUCK

You can catch local acts regularly at Lost (211 Barkly St); Veludo's (175 Acland St; *Thursdays from 8pm*) and the Vineyard (71a Acland St; *DJs and bands on various days*). Bar-club hybrids including 29th Apartment, Abode, Big Mouth and Cushion Lounge put on regular club nights.



WHO'S STILL HERE?

Local St Kilda residents include Tim Rogers, Paul Kelly, Sean Kelly and Andrew Duffield (Models), Ash Wednesday, Colin Hay (Men at Work), Charlie Owen (Beasts of Bourbon), Nicolette Forte, Rosie Westbrook, Genevieve McGuckin (These Immortal Souls), Penny Ikingier, Dave Moll (the Fuck Fucks), Kim Volkman (X, Love Addicts), and members of the Cat Empire, Dirt River Radio, Soul Safari, Fulton Street, Lieutenant Jam, the Mercy Kills, Sunday Chairs, Broken Sweethearts, Bitter Sweet Kicks, Dead River, the Originals, Burn in Hell, Marilyn Rose and the Thorns, Crystal Thomas, and, of course, Fred Negro.

ROUGH AS GUTS

IF YOU WERE WALKING DOWN FITZROY STREET TO A GIG IN THE '70S AND '80S, YOU'D BE ADVISED TO WALK FAST...

As local promoter Nick Haines recalls it, Michael Gudinski signed the Boys Next Door, but would never go to the Ballroom to see them because he was "too scared". Local musician Rob Wellington felt indignant when he was approached recently about the idea of erecting a statue to Molly Meldrum outside the Palais, when it was a suburb that Meldrum gave a pretty wide berth despite barracking for the football team.

"It was rough as guts on Fitzroy Street," Haines points out. "Rowland told me a story about they were all having baked beans in a café before a show – because that's all they could afford – and a man came in and shot the guy in the booth next to them, then walked out again."

At the Espy – widely considered to have been a hole during the '70s and '80s – you might catch warped country band the Dead Livers doing a residency while bikers got headjobs from local trannies. Over at the George Hotel, petty criminals drank at the Public Bar; hardened criminals drank at the Snakepit – including hardened criminals such as Chopper Read (who also famously shot 'Sammy the Turk' at nearby nightclub Bojangles in 1987).

Band booker Dolores San Miguel points out the Ballroom may have been wild, but it was also a safe haven – she took in the teenagers who might otherwise have been preyed upon by the pimps and pushers.

WHAT ELSE IS ON IN ST KILDA IN JUNE?



THE MOTION OF LIGHT IN WATER

THE ARTS ARE STILL CELEBRATED HERE, IN GALLERIES, MUSEUMS AND THEATRES

01 JEWISH MUSEUM

This June it's the annual Melbourne Jewish Writers Festival with more than 80 authors (May 31- Jun 2). The museum is also putting on Tikkun Leil Shavuot, a traditional night-time study session held on the first night of Shavuot, based on the practice of the Kabbalists (Tue Jun 3). There are two exhibitions: *In Season: Spring, Summer, Autumn & Winter* – a playful journey through a Jewish lens – and *Voices & Visions*. 26 Alma Rd, St Kilda 3182. 03 8534 3600. www.jewishmuseum.com.au.

02 LINDEN CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS

This not-for-profit gallery curates exhibitions that "encourage risk". *Innovators 1* sees artists use painting, sculpture, installation and intervention as mediums to respond to the gallery space (until Sun Jun 22). *Innovators 2* uses performance, video and installation to explore the challenges of contemporary life (Jun 27-Aug 3) 26 Acland St, St Kilda 3182. 03 9534 0099. www.lindenarts.org.



THE NATIONAL

03 NATIONAL THEATRE

It opened in the '20s as the Victory Theatre as a cinema, but in the '70s the stalls were converted to drama, opera and ballet studios. Now it houses the National Theatre Ballet School, and many other Melbourne dance schools have their performances here. In June they celebrate 30 years of the book *Wombat Stew* with the musical of the same name (Thu Jun 5). 20 Cartisle St, St Kilda 3182. 03 9534 0221. www.nationaltheatre.org.au.

ANNUAL EVENTS



01 Pride March Feb

Pride March is held by the GLBTQ community on the first Sunday of February

02 St Kilda Festival Feb

Australia's largest street party, est. 1980

03 Yalukit Wilum Ngargee Feb

An Indigenous gathering for all that kicks off the St Kilda Festival each year

04 St Kilda Film Festival May

Australia's oldest short film fest (pictured)

05 A Day by the Green Oct

A Day by the Green celebrates local musicians at the Bowls Club

05 Twilight Markets Dec-Mar

Local craftspeople show off their wares

04 RED STITCH

This independent theatre company is putting on *Grounded* – a one-woman show by George Brant, which won the Off-West End Theatre award for Best Production in 2013 and worldwide praise (for more info, see Performing Arts). 2 Chapel St, St Kilda East 3182. 03 9533 8082. www.redstitch.net. \$20-\$39. Jun 11-Jul 12.

05 ST KILDA MEMO

Crash Test Drama Melbourne (CTDM) brings together theatre enthusiasts, from playwrights to actors to directors. The whole idea is to 'crash test' new ten-minute scripts. Actors and directors are cast on the day, given two hours to rehearse, then perform in front of a live audience and a panel of industry judges. Talk about pressure. 90 Acland St, St Kilda 3182. www.facebook.com/CTDrama.Melb. 10am-4pm. \$10. Sat Jun 28.

06 THEATRE WORKS

Theatre Works. has a 30-year not-for-profit history developing and supporting Australian theatre, is hosting Elbow Room's queer sci-fi love story, *The Motion of Light in Water*. 14 Acland St, St Kilda 3182. 03 9534 4879. www.theatreworks.org.au. \$15-\$25. Jul 17-Jul 27.



THE SPIRIT OF ST KILDA

PERHAPS NOW MORE THAN EVER, ST KILDA HAS A STRONG SENSE OF COMMUNITY

When Serge Thomann put together a St Kilda version of the viral YouTube videos to Pharrell Williams' 'Happy', his aim was to celebrate the wide demographic, including more famous faces such as artists Mirka Mora and Gavin Brown, AFL Legend Ron Barassi, champion skater Renton Millar and the Saints. It's had over 75,000 hits. He wouldn't have had to dig too deep to find some proud participants, as many local groups have sprung up independently. Local traders have banded together to form the **St Kilda Village Traders' Association** (www.stkildavillage.org.au) and also the **Fitzroy Street Business Association** (www.fitzroystreetstkilda.com.au). (For more on St Kilda retail, see our Shopping section on p34.) **The St Kilda Hub** (www.stkildahub.com.au) is a creative co-working space. The **Port Phillip EcoCentre** is a community-managed environment group, while the **Veg Out Community Gardens** is an oasis for anyone to visit. The gardeners there hold a Farmers' Market on the first Saturday of each month from 8.30am at the Peanut Farm Oval. Lastly, look up 'St Kilda – images & stories' on Facebook, for locals sharing just that. ●