



# Friends of the Auburn Tower Newsletter

Winter 2022

## *The Majestic Tower*

by Evie (Evangeline) Flynn

5,000 bedroom windows  
Gaze out upon  
A red brick tower and its church  
On the southeast bank of the Yarra River  
Lying in the near distance among verdant  
parklands  
Green and lush  
Such wisdom stored  
In each painstaking carving,  
In each intricate iron column, all 32  
Cared for and deeply loved decade after  
decade.  
Its tower with the birds flies.  
And its balconies every night  
Grace the moonlit sky.  
How long it has lasted  
A witness of history  
A survivor of the past  
For 132 years it has watched  
Tall, modern buildings  
Be built up around it  
Dwarfed by the skyscrapers in the city  
So different from  
The elegant Victorian streetscape  
It started amongst;  
Stately houses with wrought iron fences  
And the classical pink, black, and brown  
Of Hawthorn brick.  
It will always comfort the children of  
Boroondara  
Who look out on it before bed  
A part of their dreams, guiding their sleep

And when they wake up  
In the morning  
They don't need to think or stare  
They know it is there.  
How could some people dare  
Underestimate  
The power and importance  
Of these storied structures?  
They are part of our view, our  
neighbourhood, our life,  
These buildings are part of us.  
Even though they may be brick and  
mortar  
They still have personalities and souls:  
Carried out  
In the people they surround  
They are ambassadors from a different  
time  
With cornerstones firmly laid down  
Not only on our land  
But also in our hearts  
They are architectural inspirations and  
gems  
The tower and its church is still here  
Its spire a beacon of hope  
Its stained glass windows a symbol of  
peace  
Standing strong and proud  
Worth preserving and conserving,  
without doubt.  
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One of the visitors to our Autumn Tower Open Day was Evangeline (Evie) Flynn, a student in Year 7 at MLC. Evie was so impressed with the Tower she went home and composed a poem in honour of the occasion. We are delighted that she has given permission for us to reproduce it for a wider audience.

*Friends of the Auburn  
Tower Inc*

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of the Auburn Tower Inc.**

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## Vale Brian E Krahnert or The Life of Brian\*\*\*

**Alan Chuck, Secretary of the Friends, writes:**

Brian Eric Krahnert was born in Brighton, Victoria, on 14 June 1929, the second son of Carl and Margaret. The family moved to Sale in 1939, returning to Melbourne in 1946, where Brian completed his Matriculation year at Melbourne High School. Despite the Depression, his parents managed to fund piano lessons for Brian, the foundation of a lifetime love of music.

Brian attended the University of Melbourne, graduating B A, B Ed. He became a secondary teacher, with his first posting being to Maryborough (Vic) Technical College in 1951. Here he not only developed his teaching career, but participated fully in the life of the local Methodist Church, and met his future wife Ruth, née Hedges. They were married in 1954, and had three daughters: Suzanne (dec), Brenda (dec) and Alison.

In 1955, Brian successfully applied for the post of Organist and Choir Master at Auburn Methodist Church, and the family moved into a home in Urquhart St. Both Brian and Ruth participated fully in the life of the Church, holding almost every office between them at various times. Brian continued to work as a teacher and later an Inspector for the Education Department, returning by request to the chalkface as Principal of Rosanna East High School in his last years before retirement in 1987.

Sadly, Ruth died in 2009 after they had moved to Lara to be closer to their surviving daughter Alison. They were both founding members of the Friends, and took an active interest in our activities until the end. Brian had a particular love for the Auburn organ, the re-building of which he oversaw in 1967. He wrote the definitive history of the instrument, published in **Organo Pleno** in Spring 2004.

Brian was succeeded as Choir Director by Mr Bruce Macrae in 1991, and as Organist by Ms Margaret Pettitt (née Paul) in 1996.

Brian died on 15 February 2022, aged 92. Although in residential care, he remained mentally active, keeping abreast of current affairs and playing chess. He could be relied upon for an informative telephone conversation.

\*\*\*The Monty Python reference is deliberate – despite his occasionally schoolmasterly demeanour, he had a wry sense of humour, and loved Monty Python and Spoonerisms (“he rode a well-boiled icicle”).

**The Rev Dr D’Arcy Wood adds:**

Brian was a good teacher, an encouraging mentor and a committed church musician.

At his funeral a friend commented: “that was a very Brian service!” as it was orderly and warm-hearted. The music was chosen with care and was well executed by choir and organist - a tribute to Brian in the best possible way.

Brian was chosen for the position of organist and choir master at Auburn Methodist Church against a strong field of applicants. He was young, enthusiastic and was establishing his family in Hawthorn.

Singing bass in Brian’s choir was a pleasure and an education for me. The choir was a happy place to be. The choice of music was a blend of Tudor, 19th century and 20th century. Brian worked us hard. Occasionally some older members would object when the rehearsal went a bit too long! Brian always pushed us to reach the standard that he wanted.

*continued page 3*



**Brian and Ruth - 40th Wedding Anniversary**

## *Life of Brian (continued)*

When the Australian Hymn Book Committee was formed in 1968, Rev Dr Harold Wood nominated Brian as a Methodist representative. This committee worked with great commitment until 1976 and the book was published in 1977, selling over a million copies. Brian enjoyed the work. His knowledge of both words and tunes was a strength to the committee.

Brian's commitment to music continued to the end. Among other things, he wrote an excellent history of the organ at Auburn Church.

I shall certainly miss him as a mentor and a friend.

D'Arcy Wood

### **Mr John Maidment OAM, editor, *Organ Historical Trust of Australia*, adds:**

Brian and Ruth were frequent participants at OHTA annual conferences and were known to many of our members. Brian's funeral took place at St Paul's Geelong on 25 February 2022. The service included excellent choral and organ music under the direction of Tom Healey, much of it selected by Brian.

John Maidment



Ruth and Brian Krahnert

## **NOTICE**

The Friends' membership is coming up for Annual Renewal. Check your Inboxes in the next week or so. Electronic renewal is preferred but, of course, if you prefer to pay by cheque our ExecOfficer will be checking the Post Office box regularly.

There are a number of events coming up. We look forward to getting together again soon.

## *Friends' AGM Guest Speaker, Linton Lethlean*



Keep the date free: The 2022 Annual General Meeting of the Friends will be held on **Wednesday 26 October at 8pm.**

After the AGM, our guest speaker will be Linton Lethlean OAM. From 1983 to 1988 he was Chairman of the Exhibition Trustees,

the government authority responsible for the management of the Royal Exhibition Building. From 1987 to 1996 he was Chief Executive of that Authority and during that time managed the restoration of the Great Hall built in 1880.

In the 1997 Australia Day Honours list he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for services related to the restoration of the Royal Exhibition Building and to the horticultural industry. Linton is also the honorary Consul-General for the Republic of the Maldives in Melbourne.

At our AGM Linton will speak on the restoration of the Royal Exhibition Building and its accession to the World Heritage List.

### *More from Evie Flynn*



In her message to the Friends, Evie adds: "My favourite subject at school is definitely English. I also really like gymnastics and drama, and I play the violin.

My parents grew up in Melbourne, so we moved back to Australia from New York City just to be closer to our family. Incidentally, there is quite a nice view of the Tower from the MLC sports oval!"



## Friends Calendar of Events until the end of 2022

TBA	The next Tower Opening will be in the Spring, when we will experiment with targeted groups by invitation, rather than a general opening to the public.
Sunday 4 September 2022, 3.00pm	Friends Concert - Bass Luke Severn and pianist Elyane Laussade will take you on a musical voyage. Bookings <a href="https://www.trybooking.com/CAWRX">https://www.trybooking.com/CAWRX</a> (see below)
Sunday 2 October 2022, 3.00pm	Mark Slavec, Assistant Organist at St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, will present an organ recital at Auburn Uniting Church.
Wednesday 26 October, 8.00pm	Friends AGM followed by a presentation from Linton Lethlean OAM. (see page 3)

## Forthcoming Friends' Concerts in 2022



Bass **Luke Severn** and pianist **Elyane Laussade** are much loved by Australian audiences for their sensitive communication as a duo. After two years of travel restrictions, they find solace in this program entitled **Wanderlust**. From the Dvorák **Gypsy Songs**,

to the Schubert **Wanderer Fantasy**, and finally to the Vaughan Williams **Songs of Travel**, this is a musical voyage that will replenish your soul!

**Sunday 4 September 2022, 3.00pm**

Auburn Uniting Church, Oxley Rd/Hepburn St Hawthorn

Followed by afternoon tea in the Hall.

**Ticket price range:**

\$35 Adult    \$30 Concession    \$25 Friend  
\$2 discount for online booking.

Online bookings now open:

<https://www.trybooking.com/CAWRX>



**Mark Slavec**, Assistant Organist at St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, will present an organ recital at Auburn Uniting Church. (Mark was to have been the associate artist at a Friends concert by the Camberwell Salvation Army Band, but this had to be cancelled due to COVID.) Mark will be joined by two trumpet soloists to present the Melbourne premiere of Dr June Nixon's new work for organ and trumpet, **Intrada – St Anne**, commissioned by the American Guild of Organists for its national convention in 2020. Online bookings will open shortly.

This edition of the Friends' newsletter is brought to you by In (my) House Publishing, Bonitas Partners and Action Printing:

