

Join us to mark the "serenading" of protester Adela Pankhurst at Pentridge Gaol in January 1918. Commemorate 100 years of anti-war activism.

SERENADING ADELA

A Street Opera



Join the Serenading:

On 7 January 1918, a hot summer night during World War 1, Adela Pankhurst's supporters gathered outside the bluestone walls of the women's prison at Pentridge to "serenade" her with socialist songs, Cooees, and coloured lights.

Solidarity Forever and *The Red Flag* were sung. 300 people gathered, and there were arrests, and more singing.

Adela, from the famous UK suffragette family, had been imprisoned for her energetic anti-war campaigning.

These colourful newspaper stories inspired our project. Last year we wrote a new song telling stories of the impacts of war on local families (*see over*).

In 1917 the song will be part of a Street Opera, with choir, actors and a brass band. A series of public performances will culminate in a re-enactment of Adela's Serenading on the centenary night, 7 January 2018.

Artistic Director and composer: Jeannie Marsh

Choir outreach: Emily Hayes

Playing Adela: Lisa-Marie Parker

Band Leader: Adam Simmonds

Accordionist: Dave Evans

Serenaders, brass band and choristers: you!

Sign on to our e-news: <http://eepurl.com/b-R8Lj>

Email anti-conscription1916@gmail.com

Facebook or Wordpress: search for

Brunswick Coburg Anti Conscription

MRS WALSH SERENADED

POLICE PROCEEDINGS

With the object of serenading Mrs Walsh (formerly Miss Adela Pankhurst), who is serving a sentence of imprisonment, from 40 to 60 persons, understood to be Socialists, and a majority of them women, on the night of January 7 gathered outside the women's prison, Coburg.

The members of the choir had arrived from various suburbs, and a little before 9 o'clock they uplifted their voices in song. "Solidarity for Ever" was feelingly rendered, and this was followed by "The Red Flag" and "We'll Keep Australia Free." A large crowd quickly gathered, and when a sergeant of police and three constables arrived on the scene, shortly after 9 o'clock, there were about 300 people in front of the gaol.

The police were not long in dispersing the crowd, but two persons, Richard Land and Lillias Mary Land, were arrested. They were charged at the Coburg Court on January 8 with offensive behavior, and each was fined £5, in default one month's imprisonment. Both went to gaol.

While awaiting for the arrival of bail for the Lands, most of the original singers gathered in a small house opposite the police station, and for nearly two hours sounds of vocal revelry by night disturbed the calm of a suburb that felt too hot to become really excited about the affair.

SERENADING MISS PANKHURST.

On last Monday evening a great crowd of no-conscriptionists paid a visit to Coburg for the purpose of serenading Miss Adela Pankhurst, who is now a prisoner in the Pentridge Stockade. Songs were sung, again and the whole gathering at a given signal, joined in a "Coo-ee" which must have carried long beyond the walls of the prison where the young democrat is confined. A message was sent in through one of the gaol officials, and in the hope of catching Miss Pankhurst's eye, as well as her ear, some coloured lights were sent skywards by her admiring comrades.

(A. G. Murphy, 160 George-street, East Melbourne).

Serenading Adela:

The song:

Ghosts don't lie

Brunswick Coburg Anti-Conscription
Commemoration Campaign



In late 2016 we held a short series of workshops to create and learn a new song to commemorate peace, and mark the centenary of the 1916 and 1917 votes against conscription in the City of Moreland. The first workshops, led by well-known community choir leader and composer Stephen Taberner, shared memories of how war and conscription had affected our families and friends. Stephen then wrote and taught us a song weaving together four stories that had been shared. Each verse of *Ghosts don't lie* tells one story:

1. A tall 16-year-old was given white feathers – symbolising cowardice – by girls who took him for an adult. His sister helped him falsify his age to join up. Her grand-daughter told us his story. He was killed in World War 1.
2. A father returns from World War 2. His daughter remembers him wanting to sit alone in the garden
3. A family gathered round the TV to see if their son's birth-date was drawn in the ballot for conscription to the Vietnam War. His sister, a child at the time, recalls the tension.
4. Ceci was a member of 'Save Our Sons', who campaigned against conscription, and supported draft resisters, during the Vietnam War.

GHOSTS DONT LIE: LYRICS

Verse 1

Clarice stood 6 foot 2 in his woollen socks,
He used to go off dreaming by the docks every Sunday; he was only 16.
But when the war came, girls came,
looked him up and down, with a puzzle and a frown;
When they went away, he looked down:

Three white feathers in his hand
With shame burning in his eyes, he said:

"Sister can you help me with a little white lie?"

She took her brother by the hand,
and did what she needed to send him to a faraway land.

He never came back;
but his ghost don't lie

Verse 2

When Maurice came back from PNG
he had a gammy leg and worn-down shoulders;
his youngest son didn't recognise him.

He had 5 children, starting from the oldest:
Protestant, Catholic, Communist,

Atheist, Non-denominational
Not that he ever really knew

Cos the only place he wanted to be
Was down in the orchard with a cup of tea;
If they asked for more stories to tell,
he'd get that troubled look that they knew so well,
And he'd say no more

Chorus

*Ghosts don't lie, ghosts don't lie,
stand in the shadows and catch your eye,
They're whisp'ring to you, on Christmas night
Did you wonder, did you choose, to stay behind, to fight to lose;
these are our ghosts,
and ghosts don't lie;
And ghosts don't lie....*

Verse 3

Ceci reached under the table for her brother's hand,
it was nervous and slightly sweaty;
She looked around, everyone was there.
And on the screen a black and white drama with a small wooden barrel,

with lots of balls with numbers
Which was spun around
By a man in a fancy suit.

And when the numbers saw the light of day
Nobody mentioned how much they'd prayed;
Grandfather, brother or son,
It'd break a woman's heart to lose just one,
But everybody knows one

Verse 4

Ceci remembers the day she decided to fight
With a smile and a shrug of her shoulders
She says "what else could I do?"
She spent 3 years sheltering draft resisters under cover of darkness
and one step ahead of the law – they were the craziest of days.

I said does it occur to you
That maybe there's some ghosts that are friendly too
Cos the only things they've got to say
is that you listened to your conscience in every way
Never turned away

Chorus