



Deb Robinson at Irene Tuckerman's grave. The unsolved story of Irene's murder is one of many in Deb's tours.
Picture: VALERIU CAMPAN

Tragic twin was just 11

IT WAS 1924, and a Caulfield medical student on his way to church made a shocking find - a girl's body, shoved in a chaff bag and dumped by the side of the road.

According to *The Argus* the grim discovery was made on Khartoum St, near the corner of Inkerman St, about 8am.

Irene Tuckerman was 11, one of twin girls, and lived close by with her mother and five siblings at 29 Crimea St.

She attended Caulfield North State School (now Caulfield Junior College) on Balaclava Rd.

According to *The Argus*, Irene's mother reported the girl missing the day before.

"There was evidence that an attempt at outrage had been made, and that the child had then been strangled," the report said.

A newspaper report at the time stated police "searched the premises occupied by Thomas Cheshire, an elderly

man, and found pieces of rope similar to that tied round the dead".

Cheshire, a newsagent, was identified by two witnesses who claimed to have seen him on a St Kilda tram with a girl matching Irene's description.

The case features in the Twisted History murder tours run by Deb Robinson, who said Cheshire was ordered to stand trial for murder but released due to insufficient evidence.

City's deep, dark secrets

Deb Robinson's Twisted History tours reveal grisly crimes most people have not heard of. **Cheryl Balfour** reports

THE world's most liveable city has a dark side that's steeped in violence and murder, says a woman who has devoted years to researching Melbourne's unsolved crimes.

Each week, Deb Robinson walks people through historical crime scenes in Melbourne's suburbs, laneways and former red light districts as part of her Twisted History tours.

"Murder seems to be one of those topics that no one wants to talk about but every-

one's interested in," Ms Robinson said.

"Most people wouldn't know about the murders that have taken place in their own neighbourhoods.

"There are lots of little clusters of crime in this city."

Ms Robinson, who is fascinated by unsolved crime, enjoys nothing more than wading through crime records and scouring inquest files, newspaper reports and mug shots to piece together untold stories. According to her, there were 961 recorded

murders in Victoria between 1857 and 1985.

"I love the research but it's also the stories - what led a person to do something like that. These crimes happened (decades) ago, but the reasons (behind them) are the same as today's."

Anyone with information about any crime, however old, is urged to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or submit a confidential report at crimestoppersvic.com.au

Factory's violent past

IN ITS heyday, the old MacRobertson's chocolate factory in Fitzroy was famed for sweet treats such as the Freddo Frog and Cherry Ripe.

But the Gore St building, since transformed into trendy apartment block, is linked to a brutal unsolved murder.

On January 7, 1913, MacRobertson salesman Arthur Trotter, 42, was shot dead after two armed intruders broke into his home, at 403 George St.

According to *The Advertiser*, Mr Trotter often stored cash at his house after hours.

He had more than £200 hidden under the mattress the night he was murdered.

Beatrice Trotter said she woke up around 1.15am and saw two men with revolvers pointed at her husband.

She said one of the men shot her husband in the head and instructed his partner to take the cash from the bed.

Newspaper reports said



detectives found fingerprints inside the Trotter home belonging to Harold Thompson, who later stood trial for the murder and was found not guilty by a jury.