

# HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

NEWSLETTER No. 4

FOUNDED 1974

JUNE, 1975

P. O. Box 203, North Adelaide, S.A. 5006

## NEXT MEETING

Date: Friday, 4th July, 1975.

Time: 8.00 p.m.

Place: State Library Lecture Theatre.

Subject: Films - "Adelaide in the 1920's" - a fascinating series of movie films to be shown by Mr. Vic Reeves.

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AUGUST MEETING - Friday, August 1st, 1975, at 8.00 p.m.

### \* Special Note:

This meeting only will be held in the S.A. Institute of Teachers Hall, 163A Greenhill Road, Parkside, S.A.

Speaker: Mr. Mel Davies (Economics Department, University of Adelaide).

Subject: "Some Aspects of Mining in 19th Century South Australia, with special reference to the 'Monster Mine'".

This address will be followed by an excellent half-hour slide/tape presentation on the history of Burra, to be given by Mr. Colin George.

This should be a highly interesting evening. Please advertise it as widely as possible.

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## LAST MEETING

The last meeting of the Society before the June Seminar was held on May 2nd in the State Library Lecture Theatre. Two of our members addressed the meeting. Mrs. Joy Chilman spoke on "The History of the Monarto Area" and Mr. Colin Sibly on "The Rise and Fall of a Colonial Port - Port Elliot 1848 - 1864".

Both addresses were illustrated, and both were most informative and interesting. Several members have already requested Society field trips to these areas - this was a natural response to an excellent evening. The Society's thanks goes to Mrs. Chilman and Mr. Sibly.

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## "RESCUING HISTORY" : A REPORT OF THE SOCIETY'S SEMINAR, JUNE 6 - 7, AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE.

Members will be interested to know that the full proceedings of the Seminar will be published at a date to be announced. This therefore represents a brief account only.

The Seminar began well with a stimulating introduction from His Excellency the Governor, Sir Mark Oliphant. He spoke in broad terms of the need to conserve our national heritage, and of the myriad difficulties involved in this task. He stressed two points in particular : firstly, the contrast between

the time required to evolve an ecological system, a culture, etc., and the short time required to destroy them; secondly, the fundamental antagonism between the desire to preserve and man's concern with commercial "progress", citing among other examples the Adelaide Hills quarry. With characteristic aplomb, he accentuated what was essentially a pessimistic beginning with a few lively witticisms which delighted the audience. The Society wishes to publicly thank the Governor for his participation.

Ron Gibbs took us from the realms of the general to the specific, with an excellent discussion of South Australia's special needs in terms of historical preservation and government support.

Judith Brine completed the Friday night talks with an outline of the historical development of interest in preservation, especially of buildings. She then turned to an explanation of the work of The National Estate Committee, of which she is a member, and the recommendations put forward in The National Estate Report.

General discussion followed and among the points raised were the following:

- (a) The need for oral history programmes.
- (b) The kind of body which is likely to evolve out of The National Estate Report, its functions, modus operandi, etc.
- (c) The problems of integrating historical buildings into the modern environment especially in terms of viable use.

The evening finished with two interesting (albeit troublesome!) films on building preservation; Le Grand Trianon in Paris, and colonial buildings in South Africa. These were kindly supplied by the Embassies of those countries.

Saturday morning covered two major areas of historical concern:

- (a) Preservation of documentary records.
- (b) Preservation of oral records; social and industrial archeology.

John Love (State Archives), Len Marquis (Newspaper Reading Room), Len Matthews (Town Hall Records), and Peter Crush (Australian Archives, S.A. Branch) gave historical outlines of their respective institutions, and explained comprehensively the problems associated with acquisition, organization and preservation of documentary records.

Graeme Pretty (S.A. Museum) presented an outline of present projects being undertaken by the Museum, in particular the new Folk Province. He stressed the need to preserve the physical environment, "the human cultural landscape", and of undertaking research projects which will attract public interest and participation.

Joy Chilman, who is specifically concerned with the prehistory of the Monarto area, followed with a brief but interesting account of examples of historical interest in the Monarto area, in particular, Aboriginal cave paintings which are in danger of destruction, and the mining history of pioneer days.

The Seminar must be regarded as the most challenging and ambitious undertaking of the Society thus far, as it is hoped that it may initiate action within the community to begin a wholehearted "rescuing of history". Members should find a following item, submitted by Brian Samuels, an important expression of priorities in such a broad project.

The Society's thanks must go in particular to Elizabeth Warburton, who spent much time organizing the Seminar, Derek Whitelock, of the Department of Adult Education, and to Bob Sharman for his chairmanship of the Seminar. Last but not least, the Society wishes to thank heartily all the speakers at the Seminar, whose participation guaranteed its success.

MEMBER PARTICIPATION IN THE NEWSLETTER

As previously stated, the Editor would be grateful for any articles or items of interest for inclusion in the Newsletter. Thus far there has been very little participation from members in providing material.

Details of any restoration projects, etc. would be gladly appreciated.

Next issue deadline: August 22nd.

The Editor: 65 Clifton Street, Prospect, S.A. 5082.

DEPARTMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION HISTORY COURSE

Members are advised of a course entitled "Issues in Australian History".

Lecturers: Craig Campbell, Geoffrey Horne.

Date: Ten Thursdays, beginning 19th June, 1975.

Fee: \$10.00

Venue: University of Adelaide.

Contact: Department of Adult Education, University of Adelaide.

CRUMBLING HISTORY RESCUED - Ian Harmstorf, Lecturer in South Australian Studies, Adelaide College of Advanced Education.

The idea of having a course in South Australian History had been discussed at the Adelaide College of Advanced Education for about three years and finally this year, a full year's course devoted only to South Australian History was introduced. Yet it was considered that to limit the course to lectures given by historians only was to inhibit its potential. Our knowledge of economics and particularly the geography of South Australia was not of sufficient depth to give the first year students, for whom the course was designed, the necessary all-encompassing view which would be required for them to gain a comprehensive in-depth understanding of the history of South Australia. Thus, historical and economic geographers have worked as a team with the historians to develop certain areas of the course. As a result of this the course has become known as South Australian Studies.

The second break with tradition was field work. If the students were to study South Australian History, then it seemed only reasonable to do at least some of the work in the field, to check much of what has been written as well as to undertake particular regional studies.

It was decided by the History Department of the College that instead of the normal four essay assignments required from first year students, two of these assignments would take the form of a settlement study. For this, one area of South Australia would be taken and a complete historical survey of the area undertaken. Preliminary excursions into the field to find a suitable place not too far from Adelaide led us to the district of Gomersal, formerly the district of New Mecklenburg (prior to January 10, 1918) and in particular to the old Schoenborn church-school and cemetery.

The school was, and still is, in a sad state of disrepair and much of the cemetery was overgrown with weeds with many of the tombstones in need of cleaning. There were a number of deserted farm houses in the district and brief enquiries revealed that the school had been closed through lack of numbers. As Gomersal is a little over one hour's drive from Adelaide and the administrator of the course had a special interest in, and some knowledge of German history, it seemed

an ideal place to start a settlement study. Initially it was envisaged that two settlement studies would be done by the students during the year in order that a comparison between different districts could be made, but more of that later.

Having discovered the area, the next problem was to make ourselves acceptable to the local community. Letters were written to the General Secretary-Historian of the Lutheran Church and we were put in contact with the cemetery curator and the wardens of the present Lutheran church in the area, as well as the local farmer on whose land the old Schoenborn Church-School stands. Personal contact was made with all these people during 1974.

Thus, when the course opened in 1975 with 23 students, all the preparations had been made including representations to the Barossa Archives and Historical Trust Inc. These preparations, although they were time-consuming, have paid dividends. Both lecturers and students have been accepted in the area and have received the utmost co-operation from the residents. No move has been made without requesting first the permission of the relevant authority and, if necessary, giving that person time to seek advice.

The practical work undertaken by the students consisted, in the first instance, of renovating the cemetery. This took the form of cleaning the tombstones with soap and water and removing the weeds. A copy of each inscription on every tombstone, back and front, and the names of each stone mason was then made. Then, as many were in German, these were translated. As well, a colour photographic print of every tombstone was taken. The students have also been conducting interviews with old identities in the district and this has provided much interesting information. The tapes have been played in tutorials, information cross-checked and interviewing techniques discussed. Other students have been asked to compile a history of the farms of the district, the school, soil use, building materials, depression years, war years, bad seasons, museums in the area, as well as culling all available information from the tombstones about calamities, longevity, places of birth and death as well as the social and religious attitudes which are revealed by many of the inscriptions and epitaphs on the stones.

This is the situation as it stands at present. Students have been given assignments in pairs and they pursue this work together, coming for advice when they feel it necessary. More general problems are discussed in those tutorials concerned specifically with the settlement study.

Tutorials also serve the important purpose of relaying information about each pair of students activity. All information is permanently posted on a notice board, so that at any time students are able to follow and to understand how their part fits into the general pattern. At the same time the lectures they are receiving on South Australia allow them to relate their practical work with the overall theoretical picture.

By the end of the year it will be possible to show graphically on a wall chart, the location of every grave in the cemetery with a photo and the inscription on the tombstone. In this way a permanent record of the cemetery will be made, that is, permanent in 1975, for already many of the stones have gone and the slate stones in particular are very difficult and in some cases, impossible to read, and this natural deterioration will continue.

The magnitude of this task has been somewhat greater than expected, and as a consequence, only one settlement study will be attempted by the students this

year, and even then, given the time at the students disposal, it is doubtful whether a really satisfactory historical picture of the area can be completed. As the students have come to realise that the history of Gomersal has to be related both to the wider history of South Australia, Australia and the world, and that the local economic well-being was not only affected by a lack of understanding of the soil, local depressions and poor seasons, but by things as diverse as the London stock market or vine diseases in the eastern states, so their determination to get to the root of every problem has grown. This has gratifyingly broadened their understanding of history and deepened their historical perspective, but it does however rather slow the writing of the history of the area. When completed the history will be presented to the local church and we hope, through it, to the Baroosa Archives and Historical Trust. The South Australian Museum has also expressed a desire to obtain a copy of the first report.

The specific history of the Schoenborn (New Mecklenburg) school will be given to the owner who, armed with this information, hopes to approach the national estate so that as soon as some sort of Covenanted Act is passed in South Australia, he may be able to obtain government assistance for restoration of this building which was erected in 1856. Its adzed rafters and mud and brick walls make it an excellent example of our early architecture and its story represents within itself the history of education in South Australia.

From this outline of the course, some of the aims are already clear but perhaps a final paragraph is necessary to clarify the situation.

It seemed to us tragic that so much South Australian history and social studies was being taught in the schools but so little was being taught in tertiary institutions. As Dr. Douglas Pike said and Mr. Ron Gibbs so aptly reminded us at the "Rescuing History" seminar, the history of South Australia is not the history of New South Wales and Victoria writ large.

Most of the students who take this subject will become teachers in time. It is hoped that with this course behind them they will be able to go into country areas and help direct the enthusiasm of many of the local country towns, or indeed some of our city suburbs, into a genuine historical approach which will breath the life of those living and working in the past into the present, so that a community may gain a real personal sense of, and identity with, their own country and traditions rather than local history being a string of anecdotes or a hall full of antiquarian artifacts. They may even be able to stop church cemeteries being bulldozed as has happened in Hahndorf and Lobethal, or old pug buildings in reasonable condition being levelled as in Tanunda, in each case to increase the parking area for the local church.

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#### THE SOCIETY'S JOURNAL

The Society's letter to the Premier asking for a subsidy to the Society for the printing of the first issue of the Journal has been replied to. No Government assistance has been offered. This will mean that our Society will be the only central historical society in Australia that does not receive a State Government grant. It also means that this Society may not be eligible for an Australian Government grant as well, since these are paid to interstate societies on a matching basis. The Council has written again to the Premier, expressing our disappointment and asking for reconsideration of our request. Members will be kept informed about this matter.

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THE SOCIETY'S RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

At the March Council meeting the following motion was passed.

"That a Research Advisory Committee be formed to foster research and publication, consistent with the aims of the Society, and specifically to coordinate, stimulate and where necessary itself undertake the following:

- (1) Maintenance of an index of current researchers.
- (2) Advice on research and writing techniques.
- (3) Compilation of research guides.
- (4) Maintenance of an index of unpublished research work held outside the State Library. "

The Council was very aware that this is an ambitious undertaking, but equally it is one that is central to the promotion of high quality research and writing. Note that the Research Advisory Committee's task is primarily to set up appropriate machinery, and to itself engage in the four tasks only if more appropriate bodies cannot be found.

Hence the only action I wish to take at the moment is to ask members to write to me c/- the Society's post office box -

- a. suggesting ways of tackling (1) and (4) and/or offering some personal or institutional assistance;
- b. offering to serve on the Research Advisory Committee, fully realizing its prime concern at this stage with setting up appropriate structure to achieve its tasks rather than engaging in any of them itself.

Due to heavy commitments I will not answer letters personally but will advise of further action in a future Newsletter.

Brian Samuels  
Convener

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PORT ADELAIDE HISTORIC STUDY DISPLAY

To stimulate public comment on the future of Port Adelaide's past, particularly its streetscapes, the Port Adelaide Historical Society has arranged a photographic display at 240 St. Vincent Street, Port Adelaide, opposite the Port Dock Railway Station. The display is part of its program under its \$4,000 National Estate Grant, and will feature the work of the consultants it has employed.

June 17th - 29th.	Weekdays	11.30 - 4.30
	Saturdays	9.30 - 12.00 noon. 2.00 - 5.00
	Sundays	2.00 - 5.00

A presentation of National Trust plaques will take place on Sunday, 29th June. Anyone with strong views on what should be preserved in the Port district should write to Historic Study, Box 254, P.O., Port Adelaide, S.A. 5015.

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OUR SOCIETY - SOME POSSIBLE PRIORITIES

A useful way to regard our Society is as a structure for exchanging knowledge, with members and their Council determining priorities as to what knowledge is exchanged and how best to exchange it. Of course, much of the most fruitful exchange takes place informally, but given the incredibly broad scope of history we need to deliberately plan to achieve some coordination of the many groups, agencies and individuals interested in the past and in making the past in the present.

During the course of the "Rescuing History" Seminar, three areas of priority for our Society became clear to me and I submit them for members comment.

1. Dissemination of knowledge. We are already fulfilling this role through our meetings, newsletters, excursions and, hopefully, more seminars. At the time of our formation there was no regular forum for those interested in the broad sweep of the State's history, although there were and are more specialized bodies and such complementary bodies as the National Trust and the Royal Geographical Society.
2. Educating the wider community. There is much goodwill towards history. Unfortunately, there is also widespread ignorance as to
  - (a) what is worth preserving, and;
  - (b) how best to preserve it.

Imaginative use of film and television could achieve much. So could a roving team of advisors (funded by the Heritage Commission?). We could also sponsor a series of advisory booklets.

3. Coordination. To assist writers and researchers, the Council has already resolved to establish a Research Advisory Committee. Its tasks include promoting the compilation of research guides and indexes of researchers and unpublished research work held outside of libraries. The Research Advisory Committee is dealt with more fully elsewhere in this newsletter.

There is a similar need to coordinate the efforts of the many organisations interested in our State's past. An appropriate way of doing this has not yet been devised. Coordinating Councils are often too clumsy, exchange of minutes unsatisfactory. If all major organisations had full-time officers who could meet together, our problems might be answered, but that is some way off.

In the meantime members who are involved in other historical bodies can assist by raising the issue of coordination with their committees and by communicating any suggestions to the writer.

Brian Samuels

A SOUTH AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL MUSEUM

The following letter was sent by the President to The Advertiser last month. It has been decided to print the full text of the letter here because

- (a) only part of it was published in the paper;
- (b) it appeared under the heading "Plea for Historical Museum on M.T.T. site", although nowhere in the letter was it stated that a historical museum should be on the M.T.T. site;
- (c) the Society's Council feels that a historical museum is needed, and that the idea should be discussed among members of the Society.

"The Editor,  
The 'Advertiser',  
King William Street,  
Adelaide, S.A. 5000

Dear Sir,

The recent discussion concerning a new site for the South Australian Museum raises another issue which deserves similar attention: the setting up in Adelaide of a large-scale historical museum.

The letter of Charles P. Mountford ('Advertiser', 3/5/75) emphasizes the need to present the culture of the Aboriginal people in a proper and dignified fashion. It would be appropriate to house this material in a new institution which would concentrate on human history in the South Australian and Australian environment. This should be planned as a world-class museum, the value of which should be seen not just as a tourist attraction, but as an important educational facility.

In overseas countries central historical museums have long been valued for their role in preserving the cultural heritage of a community. This has been the case in communities significantly smaller than Adelaide. Outstanding museums, with a limited range of themes, have been established in cities of a hundred thousand people, such as the Bourne Museum in New Bedford, Massachusetts. Winnipeg, a Canadian cultural centre, has a population of half a million - its Museum of Man and Nature is highly regarded.

It would be inaccurate to claim that South Australia's human history, as background for such a museum, lacks diversity and richness. Its Aboriginal heritage should be a vital part of the museum's display. Its history since European settlement could explain - of many possible themes - maritime, mining, agricultural and aviation history. If it did nothing else, such a display might do much to overcome the idea that the history of Australia is the history of Sydney and Melbourne writ large, an idea so ably attacked by Douglas Pike some years ago. There is, too, a strong tradition of popular support and practical achievement in this state - the six-month Exhibition in 1887-8 alone attracted three-quarters of a million people to a new permanent building of 85,600 sq. ft.

Finally, such a museum would give greater focus to the exploding interest in local history, an interest recognized in the City of Adelaide Plan, and play its part in the better conservation of the National Estate.

R. M. Gibbs,  
President,  
Historical Society of South Australia,  
Adelaide. "

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UNIVERSITY RADIO PROGRAMS

The final two programs in the current series "Profiles in History" will be broadcast over Radio University 5UV (Frequency 530, past 5CL on the dial), on 23rd and 24th June and 30th June and 1st July.

The programs are:

June 23rd	8.00 p.m.	)	Mrs. M. McGill: "Sir Henry Barwell"
June 24th	2.30 p.m. (repeat)	)	(South Australia's former Premier, Senator and Agent-General).

June 30th	8.00 p.m.	)	Mr. Colin Thiele: "Sir Hans Heysen".
July 1st	2.30 p.m.	)	

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GERMAN PLACE NAMES

The energies of the Barossa Valley Archives and Historical Trust Inc. have borne fruit. The following change of names, under the Geographical Names Act, 1949, were notified in the S.A. Government Gazette 17th April, 1975.

<u>Newly Assigned Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Former Name</u>
Kaiserstuhl	Section 842, hundred of Moorooroo, county of Light	Mount Kitchener
Gruenberg	Section 103, hundred of Moorooroo, county of Light	Karalta
Hoffnungsthal	Section 761, hundred of Barossa, county of Adelaide	Karrawirra
Krondorf	Section 634, hundred of Moorooroo, county of Light	Kabminye
Langmeil	Section 37, hundred of Moorooroo, county of Light	Bilyara
Neukirch	Section 3001, hundred of Belvidere, county of Light	Dimchurch
Schreiberau	Section 663, hundred of Moorooroo, county of Light	Warre
Siegersdorf	Section 76, hundred of Nuriootpa, county of Light	Bultawilta

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CONSTITUTION AND RULES

Members may remember that at the Special Business Meeting last September most of the details of the Constitution were decided. It was left to the Council to frame Clause 6 of the Constitution, concerning Ordinary Meetings, and to draw up necessary rules for the Society's operation. Accordingly, the following clause and rules have been drawn up and are now being notified for consideration and voting on at the beginning of the August meeting.

CLAUSE 6 (OF THE CONSTITUTION)."6. ORDINARY MEETINGS

Ordinary meetings of the Society shall be called from time to time at the discretion of the Council."

The present Clauses 6 - 19 should be re-numbered Clauses 7 - 20.

"RULES:1. MEMBERSHIP

- (a) Honorary Life Membership may be conferred on a member who has for a period of years rendered outstanding service to the Society. If a recommendation to confer Honorary Life Membership is approved by two-thirds of the Council members present and voting at a Council meeting, it shall be referred to the next Annual General Meeting of the Society for confirmation.
- (b) Junior Membership shall be open only to persons who are under eighteen years of age.
- (c) Country Membership shall be open to persons residing more than 50 kilometres from the Adelaide General Post Office.
- (d) A Family Member shall be entitled to receive only one copy of each of the publications and notices issued to members of the Society; all members of the family living in the one household shall have the same rights as ordinary members to attend the Society's meetings but no more than two members of the family may vote.
- (e) The membership category, "Associated Society", shall be open to any historical society or other interested body. An Associated Society shall be entitled: to receive one copy of the publications and notices issued to members of the Society; to send one voting member as a delegate to the Society's meetings; and to be included in a register of Associated Societies.

2. SPECIAL MEETINGS

- (a) Each member shall be given notice of any Special Meeting of the Society by pre-paid letter posted to his last known address, but accidental omission to give notice to any member shall not invalidate the meeting.
- (b) No matter of business may be decided at a Special Meeting unless that matter has been announced in the notice of meeting despatched to members.
- (c) In the event of the illness or absence of the Secretary, a requisition for a Special Meeting of the Society may be delivered to the Acting

Secretary or to the President, and a Special Meeting shall then be called within 30 days if such requisition specifies the objects of the meeting and is signed by ten members.

### 3. THE COUNTING OF VOTES

- (a) The last ordinary meeting of the Society before the Annual General Meeting shall appoint two tellers whose duty it shall be to count the votes cast in the next ensuing annual elections for the Council. A teller shall forfeit his tellership on becoming a candidate for election to the Council only if a ballot is necessary to fill the particular office he is seeking.
- (b) If either of the positions of teller remains or becomes vacant the President shall appoint a person or persons to fill the vacancy.
- (c) The President shall appoint two tellers to count the votes cast on any proposed amendment to the Constitution. "

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### NEW MEMBERS

Miss M.W. Rooney	12 Dawson Street, Fullarton, 5063.
Mr. W.A. Doyle	Flat 2, 18 Davenport Terrace, Wayville, 5034.
Mrs. V.M. Dwyer	157 East Terrace, Adelaide, 5000.
Miss V.A. Hankel	54 Brandreth Street, Tasmore, 5065.
Ms. M.J. Read	1C/58 William Street, Norwood, 5067.
Dr. J. Brine	c/- Dept. of Architecture and Town Planning, University of Adelaide, North Tce., Adelaide, 5000.
Mr. C. Sibly	c/- Strathalbyn High School, Strathalbyn, 5255.
Mr. R.F. Smallacombe	9 Chippendale Avenue, Fulham, 5024.
Dr. Thatcher	20 Watson Street, Fullarton, 5063.
Mr. J.D.W. Babbage	Appila, S.A., 5480.
Mrs. G.L. Battersby	77 Harrow Road, St. Peters, 5069.
Mr. H.A. Godson	25 King William Street, Rosewater, 5013.
Acting Director, Australian Archives,	Box 358, P.O., Kingston, A.C.T., 2604.
Officer-in-Charge, Australian Archives,	S.A. Branch, Box 115, P.O., Walkerville, 5081.
Mr. R.A. Langen-Zueff	175 North Terrace, (Room 115), Adelaide, 5000.
Mr. & Mrs. D.N. Kraehenbuehl	8 Ravensthorpe Avenue, Millswood, 5034.

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