

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

FOUNDED 1974

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

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NEWSLETTER No. 19

MARCH, 1978

1. NEXT MEETINGS

APRIL

Date: Friday, 7th April, 1978.
Place: State Library Lecture Theatre
Time: 8.00 p.m.
Speaker: Mr. R.M. Gibbs
Subject: The real Poseidon: South Australians and the Golden Mile in the 1890's.

"The gold rushes" are often thought of, in connection with South Australia, as being those in Victoria in the 1850's. This talk will focus on the activities of some South Australians in the development of Western Australia's Golden Mile in the 1890's. The discovery of the Golden Mile in 1893 was partly the work of South Australians, and they remained very much involved in developments on the field in the following years. The excitement of the gold rushes was felt in many parts of South Australia, and it is interesting to note who was involved and what happened to them.

MAY

Date: Friday, 5th May, 1978.
Place: State Library Lecture Theatre
Time: 8.00 p.m.
Subject: Films of historic interest will be shown during the evening.

JUNE:

Following the June meeting, more details of which will be in the May Newsletter, will be a tram trip to Glenelg for supper and return. Bus transport has been specially arranged to the tram depot.

2. FIELD TRIP

PORT PIRIE, Friday 28th April till Sunday 30th April, 1978.

People can still book for this trip. You can join in on Saturday morning if you want. The trip has been planned by Mrs. Nancy Robinson and Ms. Helen Jones.

Highlights: Guided tour of National Trust Museum and of city's historical architectural features; a visit to Pastoralist's Point and the cemetery, especially the Italian section; a walk along the wharves; a Mayoral Reception in the Mayor's Parlour (Town Hall) and an optional dinner at \$6.00 each (excluding drinks) at the Royal Exchange Hotel and a guest speaker.

Guest Speaker: Mr. Bill Blight (W.L. Blight, retired Land Broker) is described by Mrs. Nancy Robinson, as a really reliable source of information. She says: "He went to Port Pirie as a child when the family lost its farm out Terowie way, I think during the droughts and depressions of the 90's. Worked for a while with Barwell (Henry Newman) when he was a barrister at Port Pirie. Later Blight founded his own business in real estate, a business which still exists.... He lives in a fine old home at the foothills, is looked after by his nephew (a retired inspector of schools - Norm Haines, and the nephew's wife. I could point out the home if we go out to Nelshaby for a drive, to be able to picture Eyre's conception of the area."

Costs should be borne individually. These will include transport - please arrange your own - accommodation and food.

Accommodation at the Education Centre is free, but people must bring their own sleeping bags and buy meals. Please let the Secretary of the Society know if you wish to stay there as bookings must be made soon.

Other accommodation is in hotels or hotel/motels. Please make your own bookings. The Royal Exchange Hotel is \$8.00 bed and breakfast, \$16.00 double; the International Hotel/Motel is: Hotel \$11.75 (single) and \$21.50 (double); Motel, room only \$15.00 (single) and \$19.50 (double).

If you have any enquiries or you wish to join the field trip please notify the Secretary, Ms. E. Ho, Box 203 P.O., North Adelaide 5006, or at the next meeting (April 7th).

3. HISTORICAL SOCIETY AFFAIRS

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF S.A. COUNCIL NOMINATIONS RECEIVED, 1978

President:	Mr. Ron Gibbs
Vice-President:	Mr. Ian Harmstorf
Secretary:	No nominations for Secretary or Treasurer were received. According to the Society's
Treasurer:	Constitution the Council can co-opt people to fill these positions.
Council Members:	Ms. Susan Marsden Ms. Elizabeth Ho Mr. Alan Jones Mr. Brian Samuels Mr. Dan Manning Mr. R. Kearns Ms. Alexandra Marsden Mr. Robert Fisher
Continuing as Journal Editor:	Dr. John Playford

Retiring Office-Holders:

Mr. Brian Samuels - Vice-President
Mr. Rob Muir - Treasurer
Ms. Elizabeth Ho - Secretary
Mr. Graham Loughlin - Co-Editor of the Journal
Dr. Arnold Hunt
Mr. Peter Moore
Dr. Deane Manuel
Ms. Helen Jones
Dr. Peter Howell

Those welcome suppers

Members may have noticed a very diligent and regular helper with supper at meetings - Mrs. Sally Hopton. Could we have a few more helpers, please? (and not necessarily females!). It would be nice to see a few new faces involved in helping out, not just the same people every meeting. Please 'phone Sally - with dates in mind - 31 3390.

WANTED - INVOLVEMENT!

Some members who might be interested in helping with publicity for the Society. If you can't personally assist, have you some ideas?
I would like to hear from you.

Elizabeth Ho (Secretary). Ph: 269 1951
(After hours)
(Or write to the Box Number).

TAPING OF MEETINGS

Is there a member who would be willing to bring along equipment, etc. to tape meetings? Please contact the Secretary, C/o Box 203, North Adelaide, 5006.

4. SEMINAR: THE STUDY AND WRITING OF LOCAL HISTORY JULY 7th & 8th, 1978.

This seminar is open to everyone who is interested in local history or who has been involved in local history research, its collection, writing or in local historical societies. Professor Weston Bate of Deakin University will be leader of this seminar. On the Friday night he will speak at the Society's general meeting on "Making local history as large as life."

There are four workshops on Saturday dealing with researching with local sources, the problems of writing local history, problems of publishing, oral history, and the aims of local historical societies.

A brochure will be available with the next Newsletter. If you would like further details before then please contact the Secretary of the Society.

5. H.S.S.A. GUIDESHEETS

The Guidesheet incorporated in this issue of the Newsletter is the first of what the Society hopes will be a long series. A thousand extra copies have been produced and anyone requiring some should contact Brian Samuels on 47 2577 (9.00-3.30). Brian would be very pleased to hear from anyone willing to compile further guidesheets in the same format. Several of the general subject headings used in Guidesheet No. 1 warrant detailed treatment, viz. "South Australian Church History - A Guide to the Sources" and

similarly titled guidesheets on Education and Transport. Equally, guidesheets of the "How to" variety are needed, e.g. "How to Research and Write Local History", "How to use Lands Department Records". Any suggestions for further titles are invited.

6. BOOKS

Lynton Publications have offered a special discount to Historical Society members on Martin Dunstan's Willunga Town and District 1837-1900. The recommended retail price of the book is \$9.90 - it is available direct from Lynton Publications, P.O. Box 164, Blackwood S.A. 5051 at \$7.50. The book is not a written local history, but a collection of documents and photographs relating to the history of the town and district during the stated period. It is an excellent collection, and the book is very pleasantly produced. Another book will carry on the story to a later stage. Such a collection of primary material is unusual for a South Australian town - in this case, the end result is admirable.

7. HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

These are additions to the register of South Australian historical societies published in our Newsletter of September, 1977:

Mitcham Historical Society,
C/o Mitcham Village Arts and Crafts Association Inc.,
33 Albert St.,
Mitcham, 5062
Phone: 272 4504

The Mount Lofty Districts Historical Society,
Secretary Mr. E.W. Hodgetts,
C/o The District Council of Stirling,
Box 21, P.O., Stirling, 5152

If there have been any changes, births or disappearances of other historical societies please let me know and I will publish these in future Newsletters.

8. LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"STOCK JOURNAL PUBLISHERS PTY. LTD.

January 26, 1978

Editor,
S.A. Historical Society,
P.O. Box 203,
NORTH ADELAIDE, S.A. 5006

Dear Madam,

Search for old copies of the Adelaide
Stock and Station Journal

Later in the year, this Journal will be celebrating the 75th anniversary of its establishment. Unfortunately, we do not hold all copies of the "Stock Journal" because many early records were destroyed in a fire.

The National Library of Australia in Canberra has copies from 1926 onward; the State

Library in Adelaide has a collection going back to August 22, 1906, but we are unable to find copies from August 1904 to August 1906.

It occurs to us that members of your society may have some of the missing issues which we should very much like to inspect and photograph.

Should anyone be able to assist, please write or telephone myself or Jason Hopton at 51 4481.

Yours faithfully,

RICHARD JAMES".

"The Editor,
Newsletter,
Historical Society of S.A.,
Box 203,
NORTH ADELAIDE, 5006

Dear Editor,

Please insert the following paragraph in your next Newsletter to members:

WANTED!

Aspiring Hemingway, Richardson, Churchill, Franklin, Herbert, McCullough or.....?
To write the history of Melrose - oldest town in the Flinders Ranges. All research-aid promised ... basic history and large range of taped material and photographs etc., on hand ... all help and hospitality assured. Further information and inquiries please write:

IAN R. DAVIS, P.O. Box 33, MELROSE, 5483 S.A.

Inserted on behalf of the MELROSE HISTORICAL BOOK COMMITTEE.

Many thanks,

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)

IAN R. DAVIS - Chairman"

9. CURRENT RESEARCH

The following outlines of current research have been provided as a result of my requests in recent Newsletters and in person. I am very pleased to receive these and look forward to receiving many more descriptions of research and requests for information from both members and non-members of the Society. In this way you can both help and be helped by other people interested in the history of South Australia. Newsletter correspondence may be addressed to Ms. S.E. Marsden, C/o P.O. Box 203, North Adelaide, 5006.

PETER L. MOORE,
34 Birkinshaw Avenue,
Tranmere S.A. 5073.
18 February 1978.

The Edit-person,
Historical Society of S.A.

My Dear Ms Marsden,

I would be grateful if you could acquaint your readers with my current historical research project, in the confident hope that they may be able to be of assistance to me in it. An exchange of information with interested persons could be an excellent short-cut in what promises to be a long and tedious process, to the mutual satisfaction of both parties.

The topic is, simply and broadly, the Legal Profession in South Australia. To explain, I should say that I have the commission of the Law Society of South Australia Inc. to write a history of the profession from 1836 to 1916, and, if possible, to deal with the period to 1942.

1979 is the centenary of the foundation of the Law Society in South Australia. Its early life appears to be a little barren, both of significant primary sources and of important legal issues. To chronicle the Society itself would be an altogether two-institutional approach to the Profession's life. Hence, a broader-based professional history is envisaged.

The principle approach will be biographical, acting on the premise that the profession is simply a group of persons with similar training and aspiration in their work-lives. Accordingly, I am keen to develop contacts with individuals and families who could lead me to primary sources and other information about members of the Legal Profession. Pictorial records, as well as items of professional interest, viz. law books, seals, wigs, gowns, and other legal miscellany, would be of great interest.

A second approach will be to trace the growth of professionalism - the adherence to principles of an ethical nature whereby the individual legal practitioner conducts his affairs and those of his clients with high standards of integrity, honesty, and learning. Hence, the attitudes and responses of lawyers to all sorts of social and legal questions will be canvassed.

And while I am about it, I shall continue working on the life and times of Sir Edwin Thomas Smith KCMG, and his residence "The Acacias" (now Loreto Convent, Marryatville). I would be grateful if any person who can be of assistance in this much longer-term project could make themselves known to me.

If correspondence is addressed as above, or through the Society's address, I will be happy to reply to any inquirer and arrange a convenient meeting time and place. My telephone number is 31 9256.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)

PETER L. MOORE.

BURNSIDE HISTORY

Elizabeth Warburton is preparing to write a history for the Burnside Council. She would welcome information from anyone who knew the area in earlier decades, or who belongs to old families there. Please write to: Mrs. E. Warburton, 3 Werona Place, Rostrevor 5073 or ring 337 5464.

MARION HISTORY

Alison Dolling is presently carrying out research in order to write a history of the district of Marion. She would also welcome any historical information about the area. She has also written a descriptive account of the Marion landscape recollected from girlhood and obtained from her research so far. This will be published in the next Newsletter.

If you have any information please ring her, 79 5053 before 9.30 a.m. or between 5.00 - 9.00 p.m.

UNLEY CITY COUNCIL ARCHIVES

Unley City Council is creating an Unley Archives and would like to receive donations from the public of any items from the past, especially those concerned with the history of the Unley area, and would also like to keep a register of all other such items which remain in private care.

Please contact Kevin Jones at the Council Offices, 272 2300, extension 34.

10. ARTICLES

The final part of "The Legend of George Ezekiel Mason" by Jean Schmaal.

"Lovegrove is a name which carries a story of compassion. It seems that the first Lovegrove (a publican of Wellington) one day was riding through the swamps when he heard a baby's cry. A search through the reeds brought to light a small, apparently abandoned, aboriginal baby boy. The kindly horseman gathered up the tiny woebegone bundle and took it home, where the small one grew in time into a strong young lad, graced with the name "Nipper". "Nipper" when he grew to young manhood requested that he be allowed to go to Point McLeay, to be among his own kind. Eventually "Nipper" married, and living out his lifespan at the Mission Station, handed on the name of Lovegrove to the present day. Mr. Frank Lovegrove (since deceased) was always proud of the fact that he was one of the first aborigines to be employed as a Government servant - he was a mechanic at the Mission all his later life time.

John Creed Lovegrove (a grand-son of Mason) entered the S.A. Police Department and spent many years in the Northern Territory at Newcastle Waters and Alice Springs, where a street is named in his honour. In time he was promoted to be an Inspector in Darwin where he remained until his retirement when he returned to Alice Springs.

Stories and landmarks about the district have preserved the name of Mason for over a century. At the time when consideration was being given to the building of the first bridge across the River Murray in South Australia, Mason's Crossing, not far from the native reserve, was one of the places suggested.

Mason's Lookout (from where it is said Mason watched for signs of smoke and signals from native campfires) is clearly signposted near today's Ashville on the way to Meningie.

Mason's Rock (a great mass of grey-green granite) pushes out into the water near Monteith, and Mason's Creek flows into the swamps.

Family tradition has it that, following upon his appointment as sub-Protector of Aborigines, Mason planted the first four willows on the Murray near his quarters on the aboriginal reserve. These, if not actually the first willows planted on the Murray banks, were certainly among the first. Mason's Hill is nearby.

One of the stories of Mason's police activities tells how, when escorting a native prisoner, wanted for murder, to Adelaide, Mason almost fell victim to a tomahawk attack by his prisoner, but was able to shoot and wound his would-be-assailant in the leg, after which he always slept with his gun near at hand.

A more colourful tale recounts how a Government surveyor was travelling through the district in the heat of summer and planned to swim in the river. Mason sent a young lubra with him as a guide, warning him of the treachery of the river. On reaching the water's edge, much to the embarrassment of the Surveyor, but with none to herself, she dropped her garment (made from a flour bag) and stood splendidly naked, before she dived into the cooling depths.

At Mason's death it was said "Early settlers will no doubt recall the quality of the man (the oldest settler in the district). Mr. Mason was a man of fine appearance and soldierly bearing, good address, courteous in manner and obliging by nature. Being well up in official forms and correspondence his advice was often sought and readily obtained by his neighbours. His disposition was kind and gentle and he was liked and respected by everybody. I have never heard of his quarrelling with anyone. Mr. Mason did not attain a very great age, being only 65. There is no doubt that the hardships and privations of his early life at Wellington told upon his once powerful frame and strong constitution. He has often had to live on kangaroo and such roots and herbs as the natives procure, with salt pork to give a relish to the mess and make it at all palatable. After quitting the Government service Mr. Mason turned his attention to sheep farming and spent the evening of his days in that quiet and peaceful occupation."

Perhaps it was that kindly disposition that led to the family's adoption of the small native baby found abandoned, and which was taken to the Mason home and reared by them. She assumed the family name, and from thence forward was known as Jessie Mason.

After the burning of the Mason home the family lived not far from where Wellington Post and Telegraph Office is today though no sign of it remains. Mr. Fred Mason (a son) used the place as a depot to leave parcels when on his mail trips. The building is thought to have been constructed of material salvaged from shipwrecks along the Coorong, some say from the ill-fated "Maria" itself.

A little-known facet of the Mason story is the fact that when the newly-built Wellington Hall was completed in 1901, a large stone taken from the old "Government House" building was used as a foundation-stone in the new erection.

George Ezekiel Mason, soldier, police trooper, one-time guardian of the native peoples, lives on in place names which abound in the district. His story is surely one that should be recorded for posterity.

REFERENCES

1. Obituary - "Register" 29 July, 1876.
2. Notes on Jervois - Vol. 10, Fol. 38 (Archives)
3. Proceedings Royal Geographical Society.
- 3a. Police General Orders 1840-1847.
- 3b. Garrans Almanac 1854.
4. "South Australian" 12 November, 1841.
5. George French Angas "Savage Life and Scenes in Australia and New Zealand"
- Published 1847 (p.51)
6. C.S.O. 368/1853.
7. C.S.O. 183/1854.
8. Letter January 1854.
9. Tolmer's "Reminiscences" Vol. 1, p.292
- 9a. S.A. Police Journal, April, 1970.
10. Extracts from Journal of Rev. George Taplin.
11. S.A. Register, 24 August, 1867.
12. "Advertiser" 25 Oct., 1868.
13. Letter held at Murray Bridge Museum.
14. Mrs. K. Kellett's letter 20 Oct., 1968 and newspaper cuttings.
15. Letter, Mr. Gordon McFarlane, 10 November, 1968.
16. Information from late Mr. Oliver Mould and Mr. C.G. Mason.
17. "Mount Barker Courier" 1 July, 1887 and
"Southern Argus" 8 April, 1886.

The following article is part of one of the text of a talk given by Kerrie Willats, who was one of the speakers on the historical walks conducted by the H.S.S.A. at the "Life be in it" Carnival at Bonnython Park during the Festival of Arts (March 12th).

The Adelaide Gaol 1836-1848

by Kerrie Willats

Within a few weeks of the proclamation of the colony a firm of builders tendered for the erection of a wooden gaol. Already there were some prisoners, mainly from amongst the marines, who were kept in irons on The Buffalo until it sailed in June 1837 when two prisoners were temporarily transferred to the ship the Tam O'Shanter and the Buffalo took away the worst prisoners.

A gaol was then erected on shore consisting of a tent with an outdoor airing ground enclosed with a rope around which one or two turnkeys patrolled with a Brown Bees musket. Because of the ease of escape, prisoners were kept heavily ironed and allowed little exercise. In the tent they slept on the bare ground without blankets. The settlers felt that the prison did nothing to deter offenders and the law was being made a laughing stock.

Early in 1838 the tent was replaced with a wooden lock up house of 2 compartments each 9' x 10'. Other buildings were added, the whole was surrounded by a pine fence with a wicket gate at which a sentry was stationed. The gaol was built to house 8 prisoners but in fact held 30 at times. W.B. Ashton was appointed governor of the gaol. Marines acted as warders. Escapes were frequent. The Sheriff complained one could not rely on the vigilance of the marines. The gaoler was replaced in mid 1838 and due to the rough methods of the new gaoler escapes became less frequent.

The prisoners were mostly sailors or runaway convicts. Six months after Governor Gawler's arrival 6 prisoners escaped and a larger police force had to be approved.

The register of prisoners for the week ending November 24, 1838 shows 19 prisoners, 2 of them having already been there for 4 months, for the following offences: 4 felony, 8 assault, 1 setting fire to a house, 4 sailors - neglect of duty, 1 attempted robbery, 1 horse stealing.

In August 1838 there had been 13 prisoners, 20 by December. Most of them were still awaiting trial and the next sessions were not until April. Many were sick and the sheriff complained that the colonial surgeon never went near the gaol.

The gaoler had for use in the gaol: 4 pair shackle handcuffs, 3 iron bars, 1 small padlock, 7 pair cross irons, 3 iron pots, 1 frying pan, set of iron work for stocks, 1 water cask, 2 washing tubs. Bedding: 8 beds, five stretchers, and 15 rugs. Tools: 2 shovels, 1 cross cut saw, 2 axes, 1 bullock chain.

As the economy of the colony became worse, the number of debtors in the gaol increased. Accordingly buildings were added to the original wooden structure. By 1840 the gaol consisted of a stone building for 12 prisoners, the original wooden building and a wooden building for female prisoners. There was a 5' high fence surrounding the buildings with spikes on the top. These were already disintegrating. There was no other gaol in the Province so all prisoners from country districts were sent to Adelaide.

Solitary confinement was impossible. Those sentenced to hard labour had nothing to do. An attempt to make them work at the constructions going on at the Port failed.

The inmates chatted with their friends over the 5' fence and bottles of spirits were easily smuggled in over the fence when the warder's back was turned.

In March 1840 it was decided to make some use of prison labour on the roads or public works. Chain gangs dressed in a conspicuous uniform of red cap, grey jacket with number on the back and red trousers were set to work roadmaking from sunrise to sunset at North Adelaide. The men were to get 3d. a day for good work. It was not very successful. Friends came to look on and brought refreshments and sometimes the whole gang - guards included- staggered back to the Gaol intoxicated.

The additional buildings in 1839 did not relieve the accommodation problems. Debtors had to mingle with felons and by May 1840 there were 70-80 prisoners altogether.

To be continued

