

HSA

istory

December 1994

WELCOME

This is the first edition of our new format *Newsletter* and I hope all members find it both attractive and interesting. It will contain details of forthcoming Society events, short articles of historical interest, snippets about the work and interests of Society members, reviews and general items about history-related current affairs. If you have any material which you think other members would be interested in, please send it to the new *Newsletter* editor, Jim Loudon, 1 Ashley Place, Ridleyton, 5008.

We have completed another year of activities. There have been some particular highlights, including the very successful State History Conference and the marvellous October evening when former Barwell boys and children from the old Goodwood Orphanage opened up their very personal experiences and lives to us. Next years program is now in the final stages of planning and I think I can promise an exciting year ahead – look for details in January *Newsletter*. Along with changes to the *Newsletter*, Councillors have decided to introduce even more variety into the annual program of Society events.

It only remains for me to wish you all the very best for the holiday season and to extend my personal thanks to those whose voluntary work enables the Society to continue along so successfully.

-Robert Nicol, President

PS Why not give an Historical Society gift subscription to your friends and relatives? They will receive a personal Christmas card and a whole year of entertainment, interest and activity.

Inaugural community history award to WA

A book from WA won the inaugural Christina Smith Community History Award, an initiative of a group of writers living in the South East.

The winning book by William Lines, which looks at the life of Western Australian botanist Georgiana Molloy, won from 30 entries from all over the country.

Called *An All Consuming Passion: origins, modernity and the Australian life of Georgiana Molloy*, the book was written under an Australia Council grant and follows
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THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC.
 Institute Building, 122 Kintore Avenue, Adelaide
 5000 (mailing address only)
 Founded 1974

OBJECTS

- To promote the collection, preservation and classification of source material of all kinds relating to South Australian and Australian history.
- To publish historical records and articles.
- To promote the interchange of information among members of the Society by lectures, readings, discussions, field trips and exhibitions.
- To arouse interest in and to promote the study and discussion of history, especially that of South Australia and Australia.
- To co-operate with similar societies throughout Australia.
- To do such things as are conducive or incidental to the attainment of any of the above objects.

COUNCIL

Patron: Sir Walter Crocker, K.B.E.
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History SA cover illustration: From *Christmas Past* compiled by Dulcie M. Ashdown, Arrow Books, London, 1977.

The deadline for all material to be submitted for the January issue of *History SA* is 11 January 1995

History award

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Lines' *Taming the Great South Land*. Both books were published by Allen and Unwin, Sydney.

Two SA books were among the other three which were short listed for the award. The late Lady Frankie Hawker and Rob Linn combined to write *Bungaree: land stock and people*, the history of the Hawker family and their sheep stud in the Mid North, and Reg Butler's book, *The Quiet Waters*

By: the Mount Pleasant district 1843-1993. The fourth book on the short list was Anne McLay's *Women Out of Their Sphere: Sisters of Mercy in Western Australia From 1846*.

The biennial competition is the only one of its kind in Australia and carries a cash prize of \$1000 and the Christina Smith Medal. The

award has been established by a co-operative of writers known as South East Book Promotions, which has about 25 members working together to encourage the writing of books in and about the region.

Secretary of the group, Judy Murdoch, says the purpose of the competition is to enhance the standard and status of community history as a branch of writing, scholarship and enjoyable reading. The award commemorates Christina Smith, an early pioneer of the South East.

Her work with the Aboriginal people, whose culture she attempted to record, made her possibly the region's first writer of community history. Her descendants have donated the award medal.

The award has received support from the History Trust of SA and assistance from a number of local government bodies in the South East and the SA Country Arts Trust - South East.

Further information may be obtained from Judy Murdoch, PO Box 1, Kybybolite, 5262, tel. (087) 64 2091 or Pam O'Connor, PO Box 274, Mt Gambier, 5280, tel. and fax (087) 39 9243.

KITH AND KIN

Appropriately for the year of the family, the State Library has published a new edition of *Kith and Kin* which enlarges and updates the first edition published in 1989.

Kith and Kin describes the Library's Family History Collection and details major SA resources such as passenger lists, indexes to births, deaths and marriages, and an important addition to the Library's resources – the International Genealogical Index on microfiche.

The new edition also features a select list of publications on family history held by the Library; a list of other SA organisations that hold records useful for family research plus a brief listing of interstate and overseas bodies; a guide to societies and research agencies that may undertake more extensive research for a fee; a list of country and regional local history societies in SA; and a full list of the State's public libraries holding district registers of SA birth, death and marriage records.

Kith and Kin may be obtained from the Publications Officer, State Library of South Australia, GPO Box 419, Adelaide, SA 5001 (tel. 207 7211, fax 207 7307). The cost is \$16 plus \$4 for postage and handling.

Urrbrae: an innovative house of the 1890s

Society members and friends enjoyed an afternoon at the newly restored Urrbrae House and its gardens in October.

The home of successful business man and pastoral pioneer Peter Waite and his wife Matilda, Urrbrae House was built in 1891 on the site of an earlier house that proved inadequate for the Waites' growing family.

It was built to the design of Charles Marryat in conjunction with E.J. Woods, as an Australian version of many houses built in England in the 50 years or so before 1914. It is thought to be the first house in South Australia to have a tiled roof (the tiles were imported from Italy) and although it predates the Federation style, its similarity is clear. It was also the SA house to have electricity installed.

Matilda Waite specifically requested that the house have a lower level that would remain cool even in the hottest weather. For this reason the supper room of the ballroom doubled as an alternative bedroom for the hot weeks of summer.

In 1913 Peter Waite decided that after the deaths of himself and his wife, Urrbrae should pass as a bequest to the University of Adelaide so that an institute devoted to the study and teaching of agricultural science could be established. Urrbrae House passed to the University in 1923 and has since continued primarily as a home, having been the residence of the first three directors of the Waite Institute, and a centre for social and cultural activities.

Letters please!

History SA welcomes Letters to the Editor. Please drop us a line about matters historical, brickbats or bouquets, bearing in mind that if the letters are too long they may be subjected to some editing.

Send your letters to History SA c/- the HSSA, Institute Building, 122 Kintore Ave, Adelaide, 5000.



The roses were at their best when members and friends of HSSA visited historic Urrbrae House, Burnside, in late October.

— photo by Peter Rice.

1995 program

Things are changing at the Society. Not only is the newsletter bigger and better (or so we hope) but next year's program is shaping up to be the most interesting and diverse yet.

Full details of speakers and their topics for the 1995 meetings will appear in the January issue of *History SA* but already we can say that the program will include such topics as history and the media, opal mining, German furniture and craft in the Barossa, the development of Colonel Light Gardens and the early days of East Torrens. Besides the meetings, there will also be an expanded program of excursions and events, including the possibility of a visit to Burra on 26-27 May to mark the 150th anniversary of the discovery of copper in the area.

The tour would be fully escorted and would involve staying overnight in Burra at the historic Paxton's cottages. The bus would leave Adelaide on the Saturday morning and return late Sunday afternoon. The estimated cost would be about \$100 per person plus the cost of lunch on both days, drinks, and the hire of bed linen.

The Burra visit will depend on the level of interest from members and friends, so readers who believe they would be likely to book for a Burra tour if it was offered are asked to let Rob Nicol know on (08) 303 3749 no later than 31 January 1995.

Politician an accidental architect

Accidental Architect is the appropriate title of a recently published book by Donald Langmead on G.S. Kingston and his many-sided career as a politician and an architect in early South Australia.

Kingston did not train as an architect, nor did he come to Adelaide to work as one, but he first architectural brief was to build no less a building than Government House.

Born in County Cork in 1807, George Kingston trained as an engineer in Birmingham. He was Deputy Surveyor General in the first official party to South Australia in 1836.

Author Langmead suggests that Kingston deserves to be remembered – over Colonel Light – as the practical founder of Adelaide. He walked the Adelaide plain to recommend a site for a city to the ailing Light and bore the brunt of laying out the town, which he did according to a plan he had prepared before he left London. Although Kingston's mark on South Australia was not as an architect, his solid, if uninspired, public buildings gave substance to the fledgling capital.

Langmead sheds new light on the local and London smear campaigns that have denied Kingston the credit for his energetic part in founding South Australia. He balances Kingston's long political career -- he was Speaker of the House of Assembly for more than 20 years and championed civil and religious liberty -- with his architectural and other activities.*

Dr Langmead is Head of the Louis Laybourne Smith School of Architecture in the University of South Australia.

Published by Crossing Press of Sydney, the soft cover book has 272 pages, is illustrated, and has appendices and a bibliography. Copies are available by writing to Marcia Dunshore, c/- the History Society of South Australia Inc., Institute Building, 122 Kintore Ave, Adelaide, 5000, or by phoning her on 208 1706 (w) or 381 7429 (h). The cost is \$36 plus \$4 postage.

Another two Crossing Press books available from the Society have an Irish theme -- *Poverty to Promise - the Monteagle emigrants 1838-58* by Christopher O'Mahoney and

Valerie Thompson, and *Irish Convict Lives* edited by Bob Reece.

Lord and Lady Monteagle helped more than 800 men and women from the Shanagolden district of Ireland come to Australia in the 20 years from 1838. *Poverty to Promise* contains copies of all the Monteagles' papers, making it a rich source for historians of Irish emigration and regional affairs, as well as of Australian settlement and pioneer families. Valerie Thompson is a Sydney writer and historian and Chris O'Mahoney is Director of the Limerick Regional Archives. The cost is \$35 plus \$2 postage.

In *Irish Convict Lives* eight essays tell us about these involuntary nation builders – who they were, the lives they led in Ireland, how they came to be transported, and how they fared in the colonies – and suggest why some prospered while others failed. Women convicts are the subject of two of the essays and all are lively sketches of the diversity of Irish-Australian convict origins and the lives the Irish led on arriving in Australia. The cost is \$32 plus \$4 postage.

* Note: Dr Langmead will speak on the life of George Kingston at a meeting of the History Society next year. Details will be published in the 1995 program which will appear with the January issue of *History SA*.

At the brickworks

The Society took advantage of an offer of free space from the management of the Brickworks Market on South Road, Thebarton, to promote its activities on Sunday 16 October.

Early afternoon brought the most response but throughout the day there were people attracted by the photographs (courtesy of the State Heritage Branch, Department of Environment and Natural Resources) or thumbing through copies of *Insight* and other HSSA publications.

Council members were on hand to answer questions and hopefully to attract new members.

Thought is now being given to the possibility of having some more substantial display materials prepared so the Society can be ready to respond to similar opportunities in the future.

DEDICATED TO THE CAR, WITH LOVE

If anyone ever doubted the passion with which Australians embraced cars and the idea of motoring, they would only have to listen to Dennis Harrison talk on the 'Romance of the Road' and the Australian love affair with the car, to have their doubts dispelled.

Dennis not only spoke entertainingly but he brought back memories of early family motoring for many at the November meeting of the HSSA. He reminded us that there were only 120 self-propelled vehicles in the whole of South Australia in 1905. Thirty years on the car had been accepted as a sophisticated form of comfortable personal transport. So much so that the young men and women of Adelaide started a movement designed to recapture the heady days of motoring. The result was the Sporting Car Club of SA, which led to the first Australian Grand Prix being held in this State.

All this motoring talk prompted member Nancy Webb to recall being in the back seat of her parents' car in the early 20s, when her father pulled up at the corner of King William St and Grenfell St to await a police signal to proceed. Immediately behind was a heavy horse-drawn van. Imagine Nancy's fright when a horse's head appeared in the back of the car with her. She straight away jumped over the seat to her parents and safety.

Joan Durdin on the other hand remembered being in the family Maxwell in the 1930s. Her mother was at the wheel and the car filled with a tribe of children. They were at the Leader St railway crossing when the gates came down and a spike went straight through the car's canvas roof, missing her mother's head by a fraction. But mother drove on regardless ('There was nothing she could do,' said Joan.)

Not long after, the hole was enlarged in a violent storm and the Durdin children would disgrace themselves (or their parents) by popping their heads up through the gaping hole in the canvas and hailing the world at large.

A PERSPECTIVE OF HERITAGE

The first in a series of articles by Hamish Angus

David Lowenthal wrote in *The Past is a Foreign Country* (1985):

We require a heritage with which we continually interact, one which fuses the past with the present. This heritage is not only necessary but inescapable. We cannot now avoid feeling that the past is to some extent our own creation.

What is the meaning of this word 'heritage'? It means different things to different people and can be expressed in a variety of ways – through our social traditions and customs, our history, or our built environment. Quoting from the *Illustrated Burra Charter*, published by Australian ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) in 1992: There are places worth keeping because they enrich our lives – by helping us understand the past; by contributing to the richness of the present environment; and because we expect them to be of value to future generations.

Our built 'heritage' can be a place of importance to the local community or significance to the whole country. It could be the corner shop valued by the nearby residents who buy their bread and milk there each morning or Old Parliament House in Canberra, where decisions about the future directions of the Australian nation were made.

It is the conservation of the built 'heritage' which is the primary focus of organisations such as the State Heritage Branch of the SA Department of Environment and Natural Resources. This responsibility includes the identification, assessment and conservation of places of heritage value to the people of South Australia.

As Nigel Dennis wrote in *Cards of Identity* (1955), p. 165:

We have developed techniques of preservation that would have dumbfounded our forefathers (and) have so devoted the resources of our science to taxidermy that there is now virtually nothing that is not considerably more lively after death than it was before.

Art Gallery of SA: European glass architecture in an Australian climate.

By Patricia Sumerling

The Art Gallery of South Australia, built in 1900 (along with the Botanic Gardens Palm House of 1877) is a classic example of a European architectural design which simply did not work when transplanted into a South Australian environment.

In the late 1890s Adelaide desperately needed a purpose-built art gallery for its growing colonial collection, which was already in its third temporary home on North Terrace. When one was finally completed in 1900, it won few votes inside or outside Adelaide either for its architectural design or gallery conduct. For many years after the construction of the first part of the art gallery, it was run in a rather casual manner with little expertise or knowledge in displaying pictures, conservation, or even gallery administration.

Harry P. Gill, the gallery's second curator from 1892 to 1909, insisted on a particular design element for the gallery ceiling. This led to years of frustrating problems that were severely criticised by the public. An obituary in the *South Australian Register* of 31 May 1916 described Gill as 'one of the most conspicuous authorities in art circles in South Australia'. When appointed Master of the School of Design in Adelaide in 1882, he came well qualified from England, having first studied at the Brighton School of Art and later becoming an Associate of the Royal College

European purchases

As curator at the time of Sir Thomas Elder's bequest of £25,000, Gill was sent to Europe in 1899 to buy suitable pictures under the bequest and returned with 89 watercolours, oils and drawings. It was then that the colonial government stepped in to provide the new gallery.

Gill's involvement in the design of the gallery was disastrous in view of the serious damage caused to half the collection before the new wing was completed in August 1937. While he knew

what was wanted for an art gallery in a northern hemisphere climate, Gill knew nothing about the harsh effects of light and reflection in an Australian climate.

Gill and the Superintendent of Public Buildings, Charles Edward Owen Smyth, both had firm ideas on how the new art gallery should be built. Owen Smyth's small budget for the gallery was reflected in the simple functional structure that was built. But Gill was concerned about Owen Smyth's lack of knowledge of the special features that an art gallery needed. As it transpired, he knew even less than Owen Smyth. He wrote to the Building Committee of the Public Library, Museum and Art Gallery, 2 February 1898, stating that 'so far as the architecture is concerned, he {Owen Smyth} intended to be boss but that so far as the galleries affected the health of the pictures, he would consider my suggestions.'

Skylight specified

Accordingly, Gill's specification for lighting in an art gallery was presented to the Board directing that 'the roof must contain a skylight by which the light is admitted through transparent glass which is vertical and is then transmitted into the gallery through a ceiling light of ground glass, placed in the curve and following the curve of the ceiling'.

Within a year of its opening, problems began with the approach of the hot weather. Not only did the glaring Australian light through the ceilings begin to affect the condition of the pictures but so did the heat generated by the cavity glass ceilings. To combat the problem, fans were hurriedly introduced but were soon found to be unacceptable.

An improvement to the ventilation system by means of passing air through zinc piping was tried next. The cavity in the ceiling was removed by taking out panes of glass to allow the flow of air. An addition to the ventilation system was placed on the roof. This comprised a motor propelled by water through vanes to operate the system, but it became obsolete when too much moisture in the air became apparent. The *Advertiser* of 12 December 1935 reported that the gallery's inefficient lighting and ventilation system caused 37 years' damage to more than half the entire

collection before it was rectified at the time of the new additions.

Although the original blame lay with Gill, by the mid-1920s, when the destructive problems had not been rectified, the blame was shifted and according to the *Advertiser* of 16 July 1924, now lay with the 'Board which has not the technical knowledge necessary to know what to do'. The same article stated that 'on cloudy days the gallery was as gloomy as a dungeon, while for nine months the light was so excessive that it had a strong bleaching effect in the pictures, especially the watercolours.'

Regular criticism

For ten years art lover James Keane of Kent Town regularly chastised the gallery administration for failing to correct adverse conditions in the gallery.

Finally, in response to Keane's continual criticisms, Alex Melrose admitted through the *Advertiser*, 11 December 1935, that 'deterioration of pictures, cracking and blistering...has long been a problem of the custodians of the gallery...It is quite true that in the past much damage has been done to valuable paintings by their long exposure to the fierce battery of heat and light...'

Earlier, H. Van Raalte, curator from 1922 to 1926, wrote a scathing report to the Fine Arts Committee, 4 May 1922, of his predecessors as administrators. He stated that Gill 'paid more attention to teaching than to the organisation of the Gallery...{and} ...this oversight was the germ of the present troubles'. When Gustav Barnes was made the next curator in 1915 there had been no curator since 1909. Six years without a curator on top of the years that Gill had failed to administrate properly, overwhelmed Barnes, especially as he was also detailed to act as an assistant to the Museum Director.

Van Raalte set about cataloguing the entire collection as well as suggesting that the gallery should collect works of 'young Australians'. He may well have stayed for many years but interference by the board, when he was away on holiday, led to his resignation in mid-1926.

The gallery, which was chronically overcrowded by the 1920s, was doubled in size when Alex Melrose made a gift of £10,000 in 1935 to be used exclusively for

the cost of enlarging the existing buildings. Director, Melbourne artist Louis McCubbin (the son of artist Frederick McCubbin), together with Melrose, heralded a new era that began with the construction of the new wing to the gallery. Their combined knowledge and expertise created an art gallery that became the premier one in Australia.

With the official opening of the newly completed gallery in August 1937, Adelaide's reputation was elevated. 'Every gallery in Australia could learn from this new wing in Adelaide,' reported the *Herald* of 28 August 1937. Basil Burdett, Melbourne art critic, who was in Adelaide for the opening, wrote for the *Advertiser*, 17 August 1937, 'Adelaide may confidently claim to possess the brightest and most up-to-date gallery of any capital city in the Commonwealth...I felt yesterday that I was really seeing the collection for the first time.' He reminded readers of earlier trends in galleries 'when a stately gloom was considered the correct atmosphere (and) the dreadful dark red {was} so favoured by Victorian gallery architects and directors'. The *News*, 28 September 1938, declared, 'Adelaide is no longer the Cinderella of the Australian art world. Rather it is a leader in all matters pertaining in the latest movements in pictorial display...Our gallery is the envy of the eastern states, not only for its spacing and light, but for its conduct.'

Recognition gained

After its rather poor start during the first 36 years of the 20th century, this at last was the recognition the art gallery needed and it has never looked back. Since the 1960s the gallery has undergone further additions and modifications to keep up with the latest technology so necessary to retain international standards and attract important overseas exhibitions. Further additions are now under way.

While the problems of the Art Gallery of SA took 37 years to resolve, the Palm House at the Botanic Gardens is a more serious problem in that it is creating problems in the present day. It is not for nothing that a glass house of such proportions is a rare architectural type in South Australia. It was soon found to be

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totally unsuitable for our climate. Not long after it was constructed, as with the Art Gallery, there was found to be too much glare and light coming through the glass. In the case of the Palm House, the glass had to be painted white, thus defeating the whole object of having a glass house in the first place. With this in mind, one can but ponder why over \$1 million is now being spent on restoring it. Analysis of this will have to await a future article.

The core sources for this article came from the records of the Public Library, Art Gallery and Museum, GRG 19 at State Records, and Ron Appleyard's 'History of the Gallery' in *Art and Australia* vol. 19 no. 1 (1981).

Patricia Sumerling is a freelance historian. She contributed another article on the Art Gallery to our 1992 Journal. (Sowing New Seed: a question of propriety, JHSSA No. 20 pp125-135)

The memoirs of J.A.V. Smith

A dreadful shock and a sister lost

We continue J.A.V. Smith's memoirs (slightly edited) with more about his family's journey of 500 miles from Mannanarie through mostly virgin country to Murat Bay on the West Coast.

We left Port Augusta West on Monday about 1 pm. We went to the main port in the morning to purchase some stores and returned about noon and recommenced our journey. Everything was new and strange to all of us and we had to be guided by reports from people we would meet on the way or at the places where we camped. Therefore we were, or at least felt, we were, advancing into the unknown. Our first stage was Lincoln Gap, a distance of 14 and a half miles, approximately four and a half hours' journey. We reached there about sundown and made camp for the night. Lincoln Gap Station is a homestead so there were no difficulties about

accommodation. We didn't see any of the residents of the station homestead that I can remember and we left in the morning at about 8 for Pandurra Station, about 30 miles. That was a long stage and I am not sure whether we made it all in the one day. I think we must have made camp about half way in open country.

Aboriginal camp

The next stage was Corunna Station homestead. I remember that place because about a mile from where we pitched our tent, there was an Aboriginal camp with most all of the natives in their birthday suits. We were a bit scared of them. The Aboriginals sent them off about their business, however, and that was the end of them. Corunna is only about four miles from the Iron Knob, the great mountain of nearly pure iron which was not known in the days of our passing.

In this part of our journey we were passing through the Gawler Ranges and, although there are good roads through the valleys, the surrounding hilly country is very rugged, consisting mainly of granite rocks. Feed for stock was good at the time and we could make camp at any place we thought fit, so we did not always call at homesteads unless we needed something. We proceeded from Nonning Station to Mt Ives, 24 miles and Mt Ives to Thargla, 17 miles. The next stage was to Yardea homestead. This was, at that time, the principal stopping place on the route. We reached there after about two weeks' travelling and Father made the acquaintance of the owners. We had permission to stay over the weekend and to replenish our stores as we were now entering the less inhabited areas of that part of the outback.

During our stay we met some interesting people. One was a man who made the journey from Western Australia to Queensland twice a year. He had a saddle horse and a pack horse and two guns. He got his daily food from the bush except, of course, his tea and flour and sugar. The rest he shot either on the wing or on the hoof as was most convenient. Game was plentiful and a good man with a shotgun would not go hungry. He it was who instructed me in the art of shooting an animal or bird without damaging the carcass or causing undue pain to the animal. I went out with him one morning

and saw for myself. He would not shoot at a sitting animal or bird. They would have to be running or on the wing and he never missed.

I had a good deal of practice in the art and became quite proficient with my muzzle loading shotgun. We had to depend upon it for our supply of meat. Vegetables were an unobtainable luxury. We baked our own bread in a camp oven. Nan was a good bread maker. We had yeast bread and soda bread. I used to make soda bread in the hot coals when away from camp overnight.

Another interesting man was the one trapping wild dogs on Yardea Station. He was a rather intellectual man who had had a good education but had 'gone bush'. I went along to his camp and had a long chat with him but I forget now what it was about. I don't remember much about the station people. Father had all the talk with them and paid for stores, etc., also horse feed, of which we had to take all we could get.

Our next stage was more difficult. We had to pass thorough 15 miles of sandhills. That is very hard work for the horses. There was some doubt as to whether there was water in the three sets of rain tanks which had been placed there by the Government to assist travellers in getting through these drier parts. We didn't know either if there would be any grass feed for the animals and so had to be prepared. We also had to be careful not to overload the wagon which would make the going harder through the sandhills.

Facing difficulties

To prepare for this difficult situation we were advised to proceed to Yartoo Dam about eight miles from Yardea homestead but right alongside our line of travel. We left Yardea on Monday around 1 pm and reached the dam at about 4 pm and prepared to camp the night.

Feed was good in the area surrounding the dam. We unharnessed the horses, hobbled them, and turned them out to feed on the long grass. The grass (spear grass) grows about two feet six inches high and is rather coarse but at the bottom, near the ground, grows a green tuft at the base of each stem. This is sweet and succulent and good for stock. When we had watered the stock at the dam, hobbled them and turned

them out, we put a bell on the neck of each in order that we might hear them as they roved. We lit our fire, had our meal, and sat around the fire talking until bed time. In the morning we were abroad early and my job was to get in the horses to feed and water. I went in search of them but they had all vanished. I came back to camp, had my breakfast and went out in further search.

Useless bells

Although we had put bells on their necks they were useless. We could hear bells everywhere in the bush but there were no horses attached to those bells. The sounds were made by a bird native to those parts called the bell bird. It is hard to distinguish the sound of the bell bird from the tinkle of a cow bell. I set out alone to find the tracks of the horses and, after circling the area, set out along a fence I found. The tracks of the horses were plainly to be seen, I began following the tracks along the fence about 10 am and at 2 pm came upon a spot where they had left the fence and gone into the scrub alongside. I followed them for about half an hour when I came to a clearing, where my six beauties were all feeding contentedly. I caught Old Johnny and hopped onto his back, having removed the hobbles from the other horses. I arrived back at the dam about 5.30 pm, very tired and very hungry.

I was more than ready for a meal but found the whole camp in a turmoil. There was great consternation. The whole family, when I hadn't turned up for lunch, concluded I was lost and at about 2pm Mary, Joe and Father set out to track me down. They had arrived at the fence where I had picked up the horses' tracks and Father sent Mary and Joe through the fence to climb to the top of the hill nearby to see if they locate me or the horses in the surrounding scenery. Then Father said he would go back to camp and Joe and Mary would come as soon as they had had a good look round. Soon after I returned to camp Joe came back and said that he and Mary had gone to the top of the hill but could see no one about and had come back through the fence but Mary told him it wasn't the fence they had gone through in the first place.

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Joe was sure that he was right and Mary was equally sure she was. Joe said he would go back to the camp his way and Mary set off through the fence and off to the top of the hill. It was nearly dark. I could see rocks and big boulders lying around and over one of these rocks hung what appeared to be light tresses of hair hanging loosely, swaying in the wind. I had a dreadful shock. I thought she had fallen amongst the rocks and there she was. I moved forward slowly and, as I approached, I could see that it was not fair tresses but a bunch of long grass that had fallen upon the rock with its ends hanging over. I returned to the camp thinking she might have turned up in the meantime. We lit a big fire on the bank of the dam and kept it burning brightly so she could see it and it would guide her hither. It was dark now and we called and coo-eeed. We didn't know in what direction she had gone. Nothing to do but keep the fire going and wait for daylight.

To be continued...

Coming events

Following are items that have come to the attention of the editor of *History SA* or have been selected from material compiled for *Community History*, a publication of the State History Centre. Corrections, updated information and new entries welcome.

1995

13 January: National Trust visit to Glenside Hospital, 226 Fullarton Rd, Glenside, to mark its 125th anniversary. For bookings phone 223 1655.

16 January: A walk around the historic Mitcham village, 7pm. Enquiries to Barbara Parker, 379 5613

26 January: Australia Day: City of Adelaide flag-raising ceremony and festivities, Victoria Square.

1-3 February: International conference on 'Dictionaries of National Biography and National Identity', National Library, Canberra. Enquiries to Administrator,

Humanities Research Centre, ANU. tel. (06) 249 2700, fax (06) 248 0054.

6-10 February: Conference of the Australasian Victorian Studies Association, 'Victorian Bodies: sexualities, health, medicine, ethnographics'. La Trobe University. Enquiries to Sue Thomas, English Department, tel. (03) 479 2412, fax (03) 479 1700.

21 February: Dr Duncan Steel of the Anglo-Australian Observatory and University of Adelaide, will address a meeting of the SA History of Science Group on a new interpretation of Stonhenge. Royal Society of SA Rooms, Plane Tree Court (behind the State Library, Kintore Ave.), 7.45 for 8pm. Enquiries to Pauline Payne, 269 6879.

22 February: Pamela Oborn will speak on 'The History of the Barr Smith Family and Ken Priess and the Torrens Park Estate' at the SA Genealogy and Heraldry Society, 201 Unley Rd, Unley.

11 March: International Penny Farthing Challenge and street fair, Strathalbyn. Enquiries (085) 362 399.

12 March: SA Police Historical Society mystery bus tour. Details and bookings, Jan Williams, 2/22 Garfield St, Klemzig.

19 March: Carrick Hill twilight opening: house open until 8pm, grounds until 8.30pm. 46 Carrick Hill Drive, Springfield.

26 March: Booleroo Steam Rally: veteran and vintage tractors, steam and traction machines and stationary engines. Booleroo Centre Oval, Booleroo. Enquiries (086) 672 127.

12-16 April: National Trust (Vic.) Heritage Festival: 'Heritage is in Your Hands'. Enquiries to Carol Barnard or Lois Chesney, (03) 654 4711.

12-15 May: Kernewek Lowender (Cornish Festival) in Kadina, Moonta and Wallaroo. Enquiries to PO Box 230, Kadina, 5554 or call (088) 212 096.

ONGOING EVENTS

DAILY (EXCEPT CHRISTMAS DAY)
Port Dock Station Railway Museum:
 Locomotives and carriages, historic goods

shed, dining car and model trains. Steam train rides at weekends. Diesel train rides during the week. Lipson St, Port Adelaide, Sunday to Friday 10am-5pm, Saturday 12 noon-5pm. Enquiries 341 1654/1690.

Signal Point: See the Murray-Darling River story, animated stories of the Dreamtime; take a video trip with the explorers; use the touch screen to discover birds, animals and fish of the river system; explore the restored Oscar W paddle steamer. On the banks of the River Murray, Goolwa, 10am-5pm.

Old Parliament House: A national heritage building. See the vivid audio-visual presentation, *The South Australia Story*, photographic panorama of the city in 1865, changing exhibitions of political and social history, Speakers Corner ('Times are Ripe, Rotten Ripe for Change - Mary Lee and votes'), Australiana book and souvenir shop, courtyard restaurant. 10am - 5pm Monday to Friday, 12 noon-5pm Saturday and Sunday. Enquiries 207 1077.

SA Museum: 'Science on a Camel's Back', a centenary survey of the Horn expedition to the MacDonnell Ranges of Central Australia, 10am-5pm. Enquiries 207 7500.

Kapunda Museum: Agricultural machinery and historic vehicles. Hill St, Kapunda, 1-4pm.

TUESDAY - SUNDAY

SA Maritime Museum: Full size replica of a sailing ketch, computerised ancestor tracing, penny arcade, lighthouse, steam tug and coastal trader. 126 Lipson St, Port Adelaide, 10am-5pm. Enquiries 240 0200.

TUESDAY, THURSDAY, WEEKENDS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Axel Stenross Maritime Museum: Boat-building workshop, relics of windjammer days, working slipway and blacksmith's shop. 97 Lincoln Highway, Port Lincoln, (086) 82 2093/1162.

WEDNESDAY AND WEEKENDS

Moonta Museum: 1.30-4pm.

SATURDAY, SUNDAY AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Market Square Museum: Burra, Saturdays 2-4pm, Sundays 12 noon-2.30pm.

Old Police Station, Clare: Furniture and clothing from Victorian era, early records and photographs of the district, agricultural machinery, horse-drawn vehicles. Cnr Victoria Rd and West Tce. Open Saturdays and public holidays, 10am-12 noon; Sundays, 2-4pm.

SUNDAY

Adelaide Goal (1841-1988): Guided tours include cell blocks, exercise yards, hanging tower and graves area. Port Rd, Adelaide. First tour 11 am then frequently until 3.30pm. Bookings essential. Contact State Heritage Branch on 297 2383 or goal manager, 231 4062.

Cummins: Historic home of the Morphet family, Sheoak Ave, Novar Gardens. 2-4.30pm.

Old Customs House and Station Masters' House: Victor Harbor, 11am-4pm.

Old Government House: Vice-Regal summer residence 1860-80, with servants quarters and Victorian garden. National Park, Belair, 12.30-5pm.

Railway Signal/Telegraph and Aviation Museum: Information and photographs of early SA aviators Ross and Keith Smith and history of Albert Park and Parafield airports, railway memorabilia, working and static displays of signalling equipment. Former West Torrens council chambers, 112 Marion Rd, Brooklyn Park. Enquiries 373 3554.

THURSDAY

Adelaide Oval: Guided tours include the Bradman Stand, Bradman photographs, dressing room, and secrets of the scoreboard. 10am from the South Gate. Enquiries 231 3759.

THIRD SUNDAY OF MONTH

Glen Osmond mine: Guided tours. Special weekday tours can also be arranged. Bookings must be made in advance at Burnside Council, 366 4200.

Fort Glanville, 359 Military Rd, Semaphore. The most complete example of a 19th century artillery fort in Australia. Enquiries 242 1978.

On the trail of four explorers

The Royal Geographical Society (SA Branch) has published an annotated bibliography on each of four Australian explorers -- John McKinlay, John McDouall Stuart, Charles Sturt and Benjamin Herschel Babbage. The bibliographies serve as guides to material held in the Society's library and include books written by and about each explorer, manuscript material such as letters and diaries, photographs and artefacts, as well as references to periodical articles and Parliamentary Papers. Altogether they are an excellent starting point for anyone researching these important figures in the history of Australian exploration.

They are available from the Secretary, Royal Geographical Society of Australasia (SA Branch) Inc., GPO Box 419, Adelaide, 5001, or call at the Society's rooms at the State Library, North Terrace, Adelaide. Office hours are 9.30am - 2pm on Tuesdays while the library is open on Mondays from 1.30pm - 5pm and on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9.30am - 5pm. The cost is \$3 each or \$10 for the set of four, plus postage.

Insights in demand

Insights Into South Australian History vol. 1 (1992) containing selected articles from the *HSSA Journal* and edited by Rob Nicol and Brian Samuels, has sold out. However, relief is in sight -- Council has agreed to the printing of another 250 copies. These should be available early in 1995 and may be obtained from the Society at a cost of \$14 each including postage (\$12 each for orders of five or more).

Included in its contents are articles on Aborigines in SA, immigration, the pastoralists of the Mid North and the South East, politics, recreation, religion, urban growth, women at work, and the Depression of the 1930s.

Copies of volume 2 (1994), *South Australia's German History and Heritage*, (ed. Ian Harmstorf) are still available at \$12 each including postage (\$10 each for orders of five or more).

Other HSSA publications

The *Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia* has appeared annually since 1975, with the exception of 1978 and 1980, when there were two issues. Back issues of all numbers except 1, 4, 9 and 10 are available at \$12 each (postage included). An index to numbers 1-20 appeared in No. 21 (1993).

Back issues of the more recent issues of the Society's *Newsletter*, which preceded *History SA*, are available at \$1 each.

The Society has prepared a number of guide sheets which are available free to the community as a means of promoting an interest in history. Copies are usually available from the Mortlock Library, the History Trust head office and the State History Centre. Those currently available are:

No. 2: Good Reading in South Australian History (revised 1987)

No. 3: South Australian History in Journals -- a select list of articles (1981)

No. 5: South Australian History in Journals (2) -- a select list of articles (1988)

No. 6: More Good Reading in South Australian History (1992)

A Glossary of Local Government Areas in South Australia 1840-1987 by E.J. and J.R. Robbins is available at \$4 including postage.

South Australian Gazette and Colonial Register, a facsimile reproduction of volume 1, 18 June 1836 to 29 December 1838, was published by the Society in association with the SA Government Printer in 1988. The price is \$35 (limp cover) or \$75 (hardback) and it is available from the Government Printer and selected Adelaide bookshops.

HERITAGE GRANTS

The National Library's National Preservation Office has announced its Community Heritage Grants program for 1995.

Grants of up to \$5,000 are available to help community organisation such as libraries, historical societies, multicultural and indigenous people's groups to help them preserve their documentary heritage collections.

Guidelines and application forms are available from Katy Bellingham, National Preservation Office, National Library of Australia, Canberra, ACT 2600. Tel. 06-262 1357, fax 06-273 4493.

For better and worse? 100 years of SA women's lives

Credits cards have replaced the visiting card, the door of the fridge is the family organiser, women are being taken seriously in sport, and we can now talk about menstruation, contraception and abortion. These are just some of the changes in women's lives over the past 100 years that are reflected in the latest exhibition, 'For Better and Worse?-- a century of change for South Australian women', at the State History Centre, Old Parliament House, North Terrace.

The exhibition covers many elements of women's lives over the last 100 years, from fashion and popular pastimes to childbirth and issues relating to work.

The outfits that were worn for a day in town remind us that fashion moves in cycles, be it in clothes, shoes or houses. Changes in the contents of a handbag are demonstrated and we are reminded of when sewing, dreaming and waiting summed up the lives of many girls.

A section on life and death covers infant mortality, death resulting from pregnancy or childbirth, maternal mortality, life expectancy and public health issues, while advertisements show the changing stereotypes of women over a century.

Attitudes to housework have changed. In the 1890s you paid someone else to do it if you could afford to. In the 1950s it was glorified and now, at least in some households, it is shared.

Dealing with women and paid work, the exhibition covers equal pay, the basic wage, the marriage bar, married women in the work force, conditions for working mothers, part-time work and the desegregation of the work force.

It is only recently that women in sport have come to be regarded as worthy of coverage in the media and newsreel clips remind us how patronising the commentaries were, revealing volumes about attitudes to women in the 1940s and 50s.

Fascinating, amusing and challenging, "For Better and Worse" is open on week days and public holidays from 10 am to 5 pm and on weekends from 12 noon to 5 pm.

HISTORY IN THE MAKING AT BANK SA

by Jan Gaebler

The institution we now know as Bank SA has had a long association with the State's financial history, reaching far back into South Australia's financial and economic development in the early days of the colony.

Bank SA sprang from the State Bank of South Australia, which in turn resulted from the merger of two of the State's traditional banking institutions – the earlier State Bank of South Australia and the Savings Bank of South Australia.

Almost as old as the State itself, the Savings Bank was established under an ordinance of the State legislature and opened in 1848. Provision for a savings bank was being made as early as 1834 along with the first thoughts of colonisation. In that year a Board of Commissioners appointed by the House of Lords made the observation, 'The economical institution which seems best calculated to promote habits of frugality and industry, and to bind the working classes to the Colony by the ties of interest, is a savings bank.' Because they had no separate shareholders or interests, the savings banks were co-operative enterprises in which the profits from investments were distributed back to depositors in the form of interest. The South Australian colonists soon acted on the advice of the Board of Commissioners and in 1841 a general meeting of citizens began operating the South Australian Savings Bank.

One-roomed premises

After six years operation under a committee it became necessary to seek legislative action. An ordinance was enacted in 1847 to establish the bank, and on 11 March 1848 the Savings Bank of South Australia opened its doors in one-roomed premises owned by the Glen Osmond Mining Company in Gawler Place.

The bank was open for the receipt of deposits on Saturdays between noon and 2pm and from 7pm to 9pm. Withdrawals could be made on Wednesdays from noon till 2pm. No more than 30 pounds could be deposited by any individual in any one year and the maximum balance at credit was limited to 200 pounds. One calendar month's notice was required for withdrawals

of up to 50 pounds and amounts more than that required three months' notice.

The bank's first board of trustees of 13 prominent citizens received no fees and were expressly precluded from depositing money or borrowing from the bank. As well, they were rostered to assist in the receipt and repayment of money. Any trustee directly or indirectly receiving any salary, allowance, profit or benefit from bank funds rendered himself liable to prosecution and a \$100 fine – half the fine going to the Crown and the other half to the informer!

Welcome status

With such stringent prerequisites, it would not have been surprising if there had not been any takers for the positions of trustee. It seems, however, that the status attached to the position was welcomed, although some had to be 'reminded' of their duties when it came to attending meetings.

As the century wound to a close, a new financial institution was initiated by the Government. The State Bank of South Australia commenced business on 1 February 1896. From its inception until 1926 the bank was restricted to making advances by way of long-term loans and to the administration of certain Acts of Parliament, the principal ones being the advances for the Homes Act of 1910. The State Bank Act 1925 opened the door for the bank to add general banking business to its functions. Soon afterwards its activities expanded with a network of country branches. Predominantly a rural bank, its traditional role was one of financing primary production within the State, such as farming, grazing, fishing and fruit growing.

Both banks were important sources of finance for homes. As technology advanced and competition increased within the financial market place the Savings Bank expanded its influence into the commercial and corporate banking sectors. At the same time the State Bank was moving towards the retail sector, broadening its role in servicing the domestic market. The sensible option to the situation of two institutions competing in the same lines of operation was to formulate their merger. This culminated in the State Bank of South Australia in 1984.

The new bank was conscious of the need to maintain the key role its predecessors had played in SA's development and undertook a 'history project' which included archival development, the collection of historical

banking memorabilia and the commissioning of an oral history that resulted in a kaleidoscope of history within living memory. Noted history author and former bank officer Geoffrey Manning was hired to catalogue the archival material.

The historical and archival materials make up part of the research holdings of the Bank SA library at 97 King William St, Adelaide, providing a useful means for contemporary management to gain insights into the long-term evolution of banking, as well as the bank's influence on and response to the various economic phases of South Australia's development. The material is also proving to be a treasure trove to people interested in genealogical research. One of the first things anyone does when they are new to a town is open a bank account – a fact that is as much the case now as it was in the early days of the colony. The bank's records include account ledgers, registers of depositors and indexes from 1848, withdrawal order books from 1850-76, and mortgage loan applications dating back to the 1850s. There is also a comprehensive collection of rules and regulations for South Australian clubs and societies from 1880 onwards.

Public access is generally allowed to the material dating up to the turn of the century. Copying for a fee is available on site. Public access is available on Wednesdays from 8.30am - 11am, when assistance is available to help people with their research. Enquiries may also be addressed by mail to the Librarian, Bank SA, GPO Box 399, Adelaide, 5001. Tel. 210 4691 or 210 4348, or fax 210 5417.

Bibliography

- Butlin, S.J., *The Australian Monetary System 1851-1914*, Reserve Bank Sydney (1986)
 Gaebler, Jan, 'The Savings Bank of South Australia' in *Savings Banks International*, autumn (3.80), pp 21-23.
The Savings Bank of South Australia: Our Century, SBSA, Adelaide, 1948

Jan Gaebler is Research Librarian and Information Manager with Bank SA.

NEW MEMBERS

The Society extends a warm welcome to the following members who have joined in recent months: Mrs D. Harper, Mr R. Hazel, Ms R. James, Mr G. Lieschke, Ms S. Piddock, Mrs A. Pope and Ms K. Round.

No home for throwers of stones



Almost 120 years of rust and accumulated layers of paint have been removed to reveal the original quality and intricacy of the Palm House at the Adelaide Botanic Gardens in a major restoration begun in February 1992.

The restoration is being carried out with a \$1.1 million grant from the Federal Government's One Nation program.

The crowning lantern of the Palm House was replaced in November and now work is proceeding on reassembling all the ironwork and the 3,808 freshly cleaned panes of glass. The Palm House was imported from Germany in 1877 by the then director of the gardens, Dr Richard Schomburgk.

There are thought to be very few palm houses remaining in the world, most of them having been destroyed in war or eaten away by rust.

The Adelaide Palm House is expected to open next spring and will house a rare collection of Madagascan flora which will thrive in the glass house climate.

Photo: The Adelaide Palm House shortly after it was built in 1877. It will soon look like this again.

A NEW ANSWER TO THE MYSTERY OF STONEHENGE?

Stonehenge and the Egyptian pyramids are surely the most famous megalithic monuments to have survived to the present day. Both are known to have been oriented according to the some astronomical design but the nature of

their purpose continues to intrigue historians, scientists and lay people to the present day.

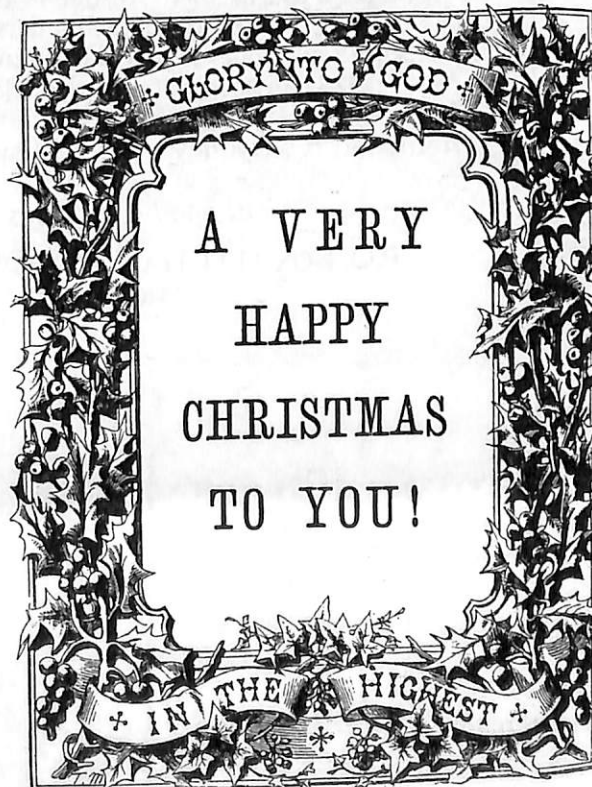
Dr Duncan Steel, an astronomer with the Anglo-Australian Observatory and the University of Adelaide, will present the latest thinking on the mystery at a meeting of the SA History of Science group on Tuesday 21 February at 7.30 for 8pm.

The group meets in the Royal Society of SA Rooms, Plane Tree Court (behind the State Library, Kintore Ave.) and anyone interested is welcome to attend.

Dr Steel says, 'The science of archaeoastronomy was born in the 1960s in the furore surrounding the suggestion by Gerald Hawkins that Stonehenge was a sophisticated observatory and eclipse predictor.

'However, the interpretations by Hawkins, Fred Hoyle and others are all predicated on an assumption which is denied by archaeological evidence.

'A new astronomical interpretation is now offered which accords with archaeological knowledge about Stonehenge and offers an insight into the origins of many ancient myths and legends. It also has implications for the design and orientation of the pyramids.'





Old Colonists and New Settlers ...
two new books on Irish emigrants in Australia

CROSSING
PRESS

ACCIDENTAL ARCHITECT

the life and times of George Strickland Kingston

\$35.00
soft cover

George Kingston was Adelaide's first architect but before chance thrust that role on him, he had walked the Adelaide plain to recommend a site for the city to the ailing Colonel Light and then bore the brunt of laying it out. *Accidental Architect*, the clearest view yet of Kingston's many-sided career, also sheds new light on his energetic part in founding South Australia. Without heroising Kingston, Dr Langmead balances Kingston's long political career with his architecture and other activities, and his personal life, thoroughly surveys Kingston's architectural and other commissions, reconstructs his library for its insights into his sources, and adds a critical survey of works attributed to Kingston.

[272 pages, illustrated, plans, appendices, bibliography, index]

Donald Langmead is Head of the Louis Laybourne Smith School of Architecture in the University of South Australia.

POVERTY TO PROMISE

the Monteagle Emigrants 1838-58

\$34.00
soft cover

Undoubtedly one of the most important recent books on the emigration process, documenting chains of migration by upwards of 800 men and women assisted to resettle in Australia by their west Limerick landlord. For 20 years Irish migrants—including a few to South Australia—came from the Shanagolden district under the Monteagle influence. All their letters home support short biographies of dozens of families and individuals: a family history 'must'.

[242pp, illustrated, appendices, bibliography, index]

Christopher O'Mahony is an archivist in Limerick and **Valerie Thompson** is a Sydney writer and historian.

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