

# HSA *istory*

Newsletter of the Historical Society of South Australia

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## When cows grazed in rural Thebarton

Pauline Payne, a member of the Council of the Historical Society of SA, is researching the history of Thebarton for a book commissioned by Thebarton Council and the University of Adelaide, which has a campus in this old-established suburb.

Speaking to Messenger Press journalist Rachel Palmer, Dr Payne agreed that to walk through present day Thebarton, amid warehouses and hotels, it is hard to believe the suburb was once largely rural and cows grazed on the nearby parklands. Yet these images are still within the memory of older residents when they recall the Thebarton in which they grew up.

'They talk about their childhood down by the river catching yabbies, and about the cows being kept in the parklands,' she said.

'Their recollections show a close community where a child could live safely and go off on adventures.'

A lecturer and freelance historian, Dr Payne is well into drafting her history of Thebarton and is hoping to have it finished by December.

With careful and patient research she is piecing together the suburb's past, drawing on primary and secondary sources, including tapes of interview, census reports and previous research.

She says, 'Prominent people once connected with Thebarton include the wine maker Thomas Hardy, the Michell family, which still has a leather plant in the area, and the writer Barbara Hanrahan.

'It's intriguing to unravel details of a world once thick with tanneries and brickworks, and where determination and luck were the hallmarks of success. Thebarton was very much a place for

working people who struggled hard to survive. 'Sometimes it's frustrating to start finding things out about people because you usually end up wanting to know a bit more about them. It's really useful to get out into the district and walk around and see how it has changed.'

Dr Payne said the support she had been receiving would give the project 'a community feel' and she hoped the book would be enjoyed by a wide audience.



— Photo by Messenger Newspapers  
Dr Pauline Payne working on her history of Thebarton.

## In this issue

SteamRanger appeal.....	p. 3
Kapunda conference .....	p. 3
Annual dinner speaker .....	p. 3
Elliston Massacre myth .....	p. 4
Mortlock acquisitions .....	p. 6
What's on where .....	p. 8
Queen's Theatre visit .....	p. 11

## 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 promote the study and discussion of history, especially that of South Australia and Australia.
- To cooperate with similar societies throughout Australia.
- To do such things as are conducive or incidental to the attainment of any of the above objects.

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## The Irish and Australia

Papers delivered at the 1993 Irish-Australian conference are now available under the title *Irish-Australian Studies*. Among the published papers is one on the Adelaide Irish and St Patrick's Day politics 1900-1918 by Clement McIntyre. Copies of *Irish-Australian Studies* are available from the publishers, Crossing Press, PO Box 1137, Darlinghurst, NSW 2010, at \$24 a copy, post free.

Newsletter of the Historical Society of SA

## To the editor

Sir,

Two editorial alterations to the text of our article on H.P. Gill (*History SA*, July 1995) require correction. On page 9 (first column) we wrote '12 and 11 December 1935 (in that order) not '12 and 13 December 1935'. More importantly, the last sentence of our article (page 10) was in no way conditional: we wrote, 'Later generations have good reason to be thankful to Harry Pelling Gill.'

R.G. Appleyard and G.L. Fischer,  
Lyndoch.

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## An apology

Apologies to Geoffrey (not Peter) Manning of Grange, whose correct name should have appeared at the end of the article on football in Port Adelaide in the July issue of *History SA*.

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## New from Oxford University Press

Recent books from Oxford University Press in the field of Australian history include:

*The Right Road? A history of right wing politics in Australia* by Andrew Moore, Lecturer in Austrian History, University of Western Sydney.

*Communication Traditions in Twentieth Century Australia* by Dr Graeme Osborne and Dr Glen Lewis, both of the University of Canberra.

*Bold Experiment: A documentary history of Australian Immigration Since 1945* edited by John Lack and Jacqueline Templeton, both of Melbourne University.

*Anzac Memories: Living with the legend* (paperback edition) by Dr Alistair Thomson, Centre for Continuing Education, University of Sussex.

Due for publication in coming months are *Sex, Power and Justice: Historical perspectives on law in Australia 1788-1990* edited by Diane Kirkby, Senior Lecturer in History, La Trobe University, and *Monarchy to Republic: Australian republican government* by George Winterton, Professor of Law in the University of New South Wales.

## \$50,000 appeal for SteamRanger move to Mt Barker

The Friends of SteamRanger need \$50,000 to enable the SteamRanger activities to relocate to Mount Barker following standardisation of the rail gauge between Adelaide and Melbourne.

The Mount Barker station building is being restored and the new operating depot will enable SteamRanger's popular 'Southern Encounter' service to Goolwa and Victor Harbor to resume in May 1996.

The train rides provided by SteamRanger are an attraction unique to South Australia and there is a danger they will be lost forever.

The urgent need for under cover storage for the steam locomotives and vintage carriages at the proposed new operations centre at Mount Barker has prompted the Friends to launch a public appeal for funds. Donations may be made at branches of the ANZ Bank or placed in tins at all BP service stations and BP Food Plus stores.

Also: Before moving to Mount Barker, a fully restored 'F' class suburban tank locomotive and carriages are running on Adelaide suburban lines every Sunday until the end of November. The 'F' class locos were introduced in the 1920s and were last seen about 35 years ago.

The train leaves the North Terrace station to go to Blackwood or Port Dock in the morning and to Noarlunga or Gawler in the afternoon. For bookings and enquiries call SteamRanger on 231 1707, fax 231 5542.

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## A new life in Melrose?

Like to live in a picturesque, friendly country town? You're a superannuated retiree looking for a new interest?

If so, you might be interested to know the Melrose branch of the National Trust is looking for a permanent resident manager for the town's Courthouse Museum.

For further details contact the chairperson, Denise Davis, on (086) 66 2044 (a.h.), the secretary, Helen Warman, on (086) 66 2104 (a.h.) or the assistant secretary, Petra Michael, on (086) 66 2070.

## Community history under spotlight at Kapunda conference

The fourth State History Conference will be held at Kapunda over the weekend of 14-15 October under the auspices of the State History Centre and the Kapunda Historical Society.

On the program are discussion sessions on a range of topics, including project funding, recruiting new blood, and heritage issues. There will also be practical workshops and tours of the town.

The keynote speaker will be David Hilliard, Reader in History at Flinders University, who will ask, 'What should the priorities be for community history?'

The Director of the History Trust of SA, Dr Peter Cahalan, will officially open stage two of Bago's Fortune Mining Centre before the conference dinner on the Saturday evening

For more information and registration call the State History Centre, 207 1077, the History Trust, 207 7550, or the conference organiser in Kapunda (085) 662 657.

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## Annual Dinner speaker a woman of firsts

Justice Catherine Branson, a judge of the Federal Court of Australia, will be the guest speaker at the Historical Society's Annual Dinner on Saturday 9 September.

Justice Branson was appointed a Queen's Counsel in 1992 after having already created a name for herself as the first woman to head a State Government Department when she was appointed Chief Executive Officer of the Attorney General's Department in 1984, and the State's first woman Crown Solicitor. She is also a member of the Council of the University of South Australia.

At the annual dinner Justice Branson will speak on South Australia and female suffrage. The dinner will be held at the Public Schools Club, a distinguished older building at 207 East Terrace. Bookings and enquiries are being received by the treasurer, Avis Huckel, tel. 277 2953.

# The myth of the Elliston Massacre

## The value of memory

by Pat Sumerling

Historians concerned to put the record straight with regards to early violent clashes between Europeans and Aborigines have begun analysing them and rewriting what really happened. This has happened with the Rufus and Myall massacres. Also, as though to make amends, there have been moves to erect memorial at the sites of some of these events, including the one that supposedly took place at Elliston on Eyre Peninsula in 1848. Through lack of conclusive evidence that a massacre happened at all, a request in April 1970 for a memorial at the supposed site of the massacre at Elliston was diplomatically refused by the local council.

While research is being undertaken to bring to light more details of some of the earlier clashes, which in some cases have been covered up entirely, the opposite has happened in the region of Elliston, where a series of small separate incidents has been cobbled together into one story that has taken on mammoth proportions. The 'manufacture' originated from a newspaper article in 1880, when a series of incidents dating from 1848 and 1849 were manipulated to appear as the one event which culminated in 100 Europeans driving the same number of Aborigines over cliffs near Elliston.

Since its publication this story has become embroidered in the telling. It is retold by people who will tell you they had an ancestor involved in the so-called massacre, or they were told of someone who knew some old local who was there, and so on. What ancestors have passed on to each generation is of such potency that it is unlikely the myth can be easily disentangled from folk lore without emotional opposition from local people who firmly believe it happened.

Public and private records exist in which one can follow the events and see how the 'manufactured' story has evolved. But even when one expects to gain the facts from official documents, one can see how a bureaucrat's grammar led to him writing a report that has been misinterpreted to make the story even more bizarre. (The Commissioner of Police, reporting to the Colonial Secretary, wrote that the

natives had 'sawed their victim's head into two pieces with a handsaw, which was found in the hut with the blood and hair adhering to it'. Written like that, it could be read to mean that the head was found in the hut and not the saw, as was intended – so the story became distorted.)

The story first appeared in the *Observer* on 14 August 1880, 31 years after the events of 1848-49. Reminiscences by one 'HJC' of Port Lincoln told of a massacre by making three incidents part of one event that took place on a day in 1848. It is possible from the descriptions as told in this first publication to find all three of the events of 1848-49 referred to in police records.

HJC says that when he first arrived at Port Lincoln 'the settlers ... were not a numerous body. I do not think there were a dozen on the whole peninsula'. It is worth remembering that the myth refers to about 100 men supposedly having been involved in the massacre – a far cry from the HJC's estimates of the peninsula's white population at the time.

According to HJC's story a Captain Beevor was attacked and killed at his station by Aborigines. In leaving the station the Aborigines, led by one called Multulti, left a trail of stolen flour that leaked from their blankets. HJC says the Aborigines were so crazed by their kill that they then went to Lake Hamilton where a shepherd's wife, Mary, on her own, was attacked and killed, together with her small child. (Her name was actually Mrs Annie Easton.) Multulti is then supposed to have continued from the scene of this crime to a third place, where a hut keeper, John Hamp, was cutting wood with a crosscut saw. JHC says the Aborigines attacked Hamp and, while he was still alive, tried to cut his head in half. After this, Multulti and his group retreated with their booty to precipitous cliffs nearby.

Meanwhile, JHC recounts, Mary's husband had returned and discovered her body and when he went to get help, he ran into a group of ten men who had discovered Hamp's body. These men were joined by another party who had been following the tracks of Captain Beevor's intruders. By now there were 25 men on the killers' trail, and the number was growing. Next morning they followed the Aborigines' tracks until Multulti and his group, including 20 children, were found camped upon the cliffs. The number of Aboriginal adults was not given but when the posse began firing at them, several were killed. Those that were left were driven

over the cliff, while Multulti, four followers and a boy escaped. They were hunted until the four followers were captured by police. Two of them died in Adelaide Gaol and two were condemned to be hanged at the scene of one of their crimes – outside Captain Beevor's hut. Multulti was captured some years later.

When the story first appeared in 1880 it prompted neither denials nor confirmations of the massacre, so the distorted story sank into oblivion for 40 years, but not without taking root in the minds of the local people. In 1926 the story was resurrected by *South Australian Register* journalist A.T. Saunders, who tried to reassess the 1880 version by giving the correct story, using the official records. His findings caused controversy and Eyre Peninsula locals wrote to the paper to dispute his story. By this time the 1880 story had become internalised into the local folk lore. One local was Jack Beviss, 'a self-confessed liar', who found importance in retelling the tale as it had been told to him by one of the victim's relatives, who would have been a small boy in 1848-49.

Reminiscing in the 1920s, especially as South Australia headed for the celebration of its first 100 years of European settlement, became a matter of urgency as early pioneers began to die. This prompted members of the rising generation to ask their elders what the pioneering days were like. Responses were often colourful, larger-than-life stories of frontier life. It was with much authority that some remembered 'something' about the massacre, with all its gory details as told to them by someone they knew or were related to 'who was there'. By the 1920s early pioneers of Eyre Peninsula were old and frail. For instance, a 70-year-old in 1920 would not have been born until 1850 (after the event) and an 80-year-old would have been eight years old in 1848. Someone born in 1830, who may have heard something about the event when young, would have been in their 90s in the 1920s and possibly too frail to relate the story accurately. In other words, the 1920s were ripe for the myth to grow and take root in a community at a time when age and memory were at their most precarious.

Those who were small children in 1848-49 could hardly be relied upon in 1920 to give accurate accounts when their own versions came from whatever fragments they may have overheard from adults, or what was told by them was garbled in the retelling. In the 1930s, when the

story once more began appearing in the newspapers, no first-hand witnesses were left. With one generation removed, hearsay and handed-down stories of the incidents became more distorted in the telling.

Although one can prove how the story has developed, there will always be an element of doubt as to whether in fact there may have been an entirely different incident that has gone unrecorded officially but has survived in the oral tradition. In recent times evidence of other massacres around Australia has been found to be part of cover ups, so we can never be sure that another incident did not happen near Elliston.

In August 1993, while at a writers workshop in Port Lincoln, I asked a couple of local Aborigines attending about their views of what happened near Elliston. They related that they were both told of a massacre that had taken place in the Elliston region where Aborigines had been chained together and thrown over the cliffs. As the Aboriginal oral tradition is of crucial importance to their culture, with stories handed down from generation to generation, one cannot dismiss their disturbing claims.

Their claims about the Aborigines in chains added a new dimension to the story because until then I had never heard or read of Aborigines having been chained and thrown over cliffs in the so-called Elliston massacre. Confronted with this unexpected information, one is forced to reconsider the region's history. While I believe the story that is well known throughout SA as the Elliston massacre was manufactured, I also accept there may have been another incident that has been covered up. Ideally Aboriginal elders on Eyre Peninsula and the Far West Coast should be interviewed to find out what the general beliefs are of the early quarrels between their ancestors and Europeans.

#### Newspaper sources

*Advertiser*: 23 (6)/9/1937, 15/10/1937

*Chronicle*: 3/12/1917 p. 43.

*News*: 19/2/1926, 4/10/1937, 16/8/1937, 2/4/1970. 15/4/1970.

*Observer*: 14/8/1880 p. 281, 13/3/1926 p. 60, 20/3/1926, 2/11/1929 p. 54.

*Port Lincoln Times*: 22/5/1931.

*Recorder*: 13/9/1937

*Register*: 29/9/49

SA Police Historical Society files relating to Elliston massacre, article dated 22/4/1970, unidentified but either from the *Advertiser* or the *News*.

## Familiar items in Mortlock acquisitions

Recent acquisitions received by the Mortlock Library include several which relate to items that have been reported in History SA over recent months – the souvenir program of Terowie Remembers 6-7 May 1995; the report of the archaeological excavation of the Rural Deanery Hotel site at Stirling; and the 1995 publication, *The Barossa Folk: Germanic furniture and other craft traditions in Australia* by Dr Noris Ioannou.

Another acquisition is *At the End of the Road: Society and the disposal of human remains in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries* by HSSA president Dr Robert Nicol.

Other items of interest to historians include: *SA Convicts Sentenced to Transportation 1837-1851* by Graham Jaunay, *Cherry Gardens History* by Christine and Jeffrie Jones, *Observations of an Early Colonist 1850-52* edited by Eleanor Wells, *Irish Female Immigration to South Australia During the Great Famine* by C.W. Parkin, *The Cornish in South Australia* by P.J. Payton, *Australian Colonial Art 1800-1900* by Ron Radford and Jane Hylton, *White Man's Dreaming: Killalpaninna Mission 1866-1915* by Christine Stevens, *The Adelaide Gentry 1880-1915* by D. van Dissel, a 1995 source guide for the research of buildings and sites in the City of Adelaide Heritage, *The Scottish in SA* by M.J. Burns, *The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Woodville, 1954-94* by I.L. Forbes, *From Powder Monkey to Governor: The Life of Rear Admiral Sir John Hindmarsh, first Governor of SA* by F.S. Hindmarsh, *South Australia Police 1838-1992 Vol. 1* edited by T. Pope and R. Thompson, a computer file giving a statistical and documentary history of prisoners held at Redruth Gaol, Burra, 1853-94, and *Shipwrecks and Groundings on the Troubridge Shoals* by G. Scarce.

The oral history collection acquired recorded interviews concerning the Thebarton area made by Susan Marsden, Ingrid Srubjan, Jean Durban and Eric Were and *Once Upon a Wireless*, a history of Australian commercial radio with interviewer Paul Linkson.

Offbeat items included the script of *Be Your Age*, an Adelaide University Footlights Club revue of 1954 and a recording of Winky Dink's Easter message of 1970.

Among the videos was *As the Crows Fly*, a review of the Crows' 1992 season.

For information about all publications, archival donations and oral history tapes acquired by the Mortlock Library, please call (08) 207 7360 or fax (08) 207 7247.



Dr Noris Ioannou signs copies of *The Barossa Folk: Germanic furniture and other craft traditions in Australia* after a meeting of the HSSA. Dr Noris's book is one of the recent acquisitions of the Mortlock Library.

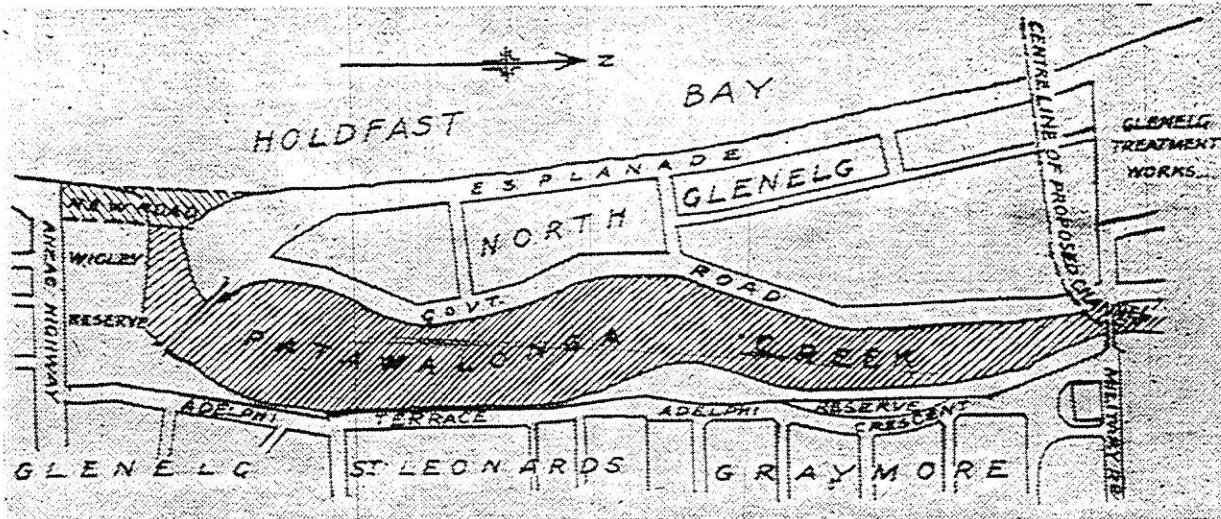
## New titles for Women in Aust. History series

Cambridge University Press has issued three new titles in its popular Australian Women in History series of paperbacks, offering a wealth of information from primary sources, photos and other contemporary documents.

The new titles are *Women at Work in Australia – from the gold rushes to World War II* by Raelene Francis and Bruce Scates, *Educating Australian Women - from the convict era to the 1920s* by Anita Selzer, and *Australian Women and the Vote* by Audrey Oldfield. Forthcoming titles include another by Raelene Frances and Bruce Scates, *Women and War in Australia*, and *Aboriginal Women* by Jackie Higgins.

Prices range from \$21.95 to \$24.95. Copies may be obtained from your favourite book shop or educational supplier. Enquiries to Cambridge University Press, PO Box 85, Oakleigh, Victoria, 3166, tel. (03) 9568 0322.

## Proposed and Present Outlets of Patawalonga Creek



History Society member and Glenelg resident Kath Crilly has sent this extract from the News of 30 September 1931 with the comment, 'Every time history repeats itself, the price goes up.!'

## DIVERSION OF PATAWALONGA

### "Big Improvement for Glenelg"

The diversion of the Patawalonga will be one of the finest improvements ever effected at Glenelg if the Public Works Committee's recommendations are followed, says Mr. J.W. Sutherland (Mayor of Glenelg).

The Hon. J. McInnes (Commissioner of Public Works) was given leave in the Assembly today to introduce a Bill to provide for diverting the creek.

"Wigley Reserve will be increased in area almost double its present size," said Mr. Sutherland. "It will then be possible to link up the northern and central parts of the town. St Leonard's residents will have direct access to the sea. As times improve, there will be nothing to prevent this end of the town becoming as valuable as the southern end.

#### NO MORE BAD ODORS

"The risk of the council in having to construct anew bridge in place of the old one at a cost of about 8,000 pounds will be eliminated. The

untidy sheet piling surrounding the creek, together with the unpleasant odors will be a thing of the past."

It is understood that the Bill will be substantially on the lines recommended by the Public Works Committee. The scheme is to cut a channel from the creek, near the sewage farm pumping station, to form an outlet about five-eighths of a mile north of the present mouth of the creek.

It is proposed to level all sandhills south of the new channel to fill up the old bed of the Patawalonga and to cut up all the reclaimed land into building blocks. The reclaimed portion will cover about 30 acres.

Preliminary estimates submitted by Mr. Eaton show that the work is expected to cost 64,130 pounds or 76,500 pounds if the whole of the new channel is concrete lined. It was estimated that with machinery there would be work for 60 persons at a time, so that by working the men in relays, one week in four, it would be possible to employ 240 men.

## New members

The Society is pleased to welcome the following new members: Dr B. Wall, Mr B. Harrison, Mr C. Howard, Mr L. Blight, Ms J. Southcott, Miss C. Clark, and Ms S. Carroll.

## History SA deadline

The deadline for material for the November issue of *History SA* is Friday 20 October.

# Coming events

Following are items that have come to the attention 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.

**9 September:** SA Historical Society Annual Dinner. Justice Catherine Branson will speak on SA and female suffrage. Public Schools Club, 207 East Tce, Adelaide. Bookings to Avis Huckel, 277 2953.

**10 September:** Campbelltown Historical Society bus trip to Poltalloch Station CANCELLED.

**12 September:** Campbelltown Historical Society. Brian Howes, *Old and Rare Books*, Campbelltown Community Centre, 8 pm.

**13 September:** East Torrens Historical Society. Robert Potts, *Men in Blue in East Torrens*. Council Chambers, 1 Crescent Dr., Norton Summit, 8 pm.

**16 September:** Royal Geographical Society annual dinner. Bill Jeffrey, *SA Shipwrecks*. Institute Building, cnr North Tce and Kintore Ave, 7.30 pm.

**18 September:** Burnside Historical Society. Dr Robert Nicol, *Tombstone Designs*. Community Centre, 401 Greenhill Rd, Tasmore, 8 pm.

**22-24 September:** National Nursing History Conference, *Beyond the Black Stump*, telling of the development of nursing in rural and remote Australia. Australian National University, Canberra. Enquiries to Convention Manager, PO Box E181, Queen Victoria Tce, Barton, ACT, 2600, tel. (06) 270 6530, fax (06) 273 2918.

**27 September:** Mount Lofty Districts Historical Society. Dr Geoffrey Bishop, writer on wine history, and wine maker Stephen George, *Grape Growing and Wine Making in the Adelaide Hills*. Stangate House, Aldgate, 8 pm.

**28-30 September:** *Australian Workers: A century of change*, national conference of the Australian Society for the Study of Labour History, University of Adelaide. Enquiries to Dr Palmer, Department of American Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Flinders University. Tel. 201 3794, fax 201 2566.

**29 September - 2 October:** Victor Harbor Folk and Music Festival with story telling, community arts, bush dancing, concerts. Enquiries

8

to GPO Box 525, Adelaide, 5001, tel. 340 1069, fax 346 8506

**30 September-1 October:** Burra 150 celebrations with fireworks, food fair, grand parade, Victoriana picnic and children's entertainment. Enquiries to (08) 8892 2100.

**1-14 October:** Cockle Train between Goolwa, Port Elliot and Victor Harbor. Enquiries to SteamRanger 231 1707, fax 231 5542.

**6 October:** Historical Society of SA meeting. Christopher Menz, Art Gallery of SA, *Morris and Co. in Adelaide*. Prince Philip Theatre, Prince Alfred College, Kent Town, 8 pm.

**10 October:** Historical Society of SA tour of ArtLab. 5.45 for 6 pm at Artlab

**13 October:** National Trust AGM, guest speaker Mrs Jill Ahlberg on archives of Mount Lofty Districts Historical Society. Stangate House, Aldgate, 8 pm.

**14-15 October:** State History Conference presented by State History Centre and Kapunda Historical Society, with discussion sessions, workshops, tours. Enquiries to History Centre, 207 1077.

**3 November:** Historical Society of SA meeting. Susan Chaney, Flinders University, *Out of Sight, Out of Mind: the archaeology of SA*. Prince Philip Theatre, Prince Alfred College, Kent Town, 8 pm.

**19 November:** Historical Society of SA tour of Queens Theatre with archaeologist Justin McCarthy. Meet outside theatre (cnr Gilles Arcade and Playhouse Lane) 10.30 am. Bookings to Avis Huckel, 277 2953.

**19 November:** Guided walk down Stirling main street. Stirling Institute, 2 pm.

**22 November:** National Trust meeting *Share the Past*. Stangate House, Aldgate, 8 pm.

## ONGOING EVENTS

### DAILY

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

**Port Dock Station Railway Museum:** Locos and carriages, historic goods shed, dining car and model trains, train rides. Lipson St, Port Adelaide, Sunday to Friday 10 am-5 pm, Saturday 12 noon-5 pm. Enquiries 341 1654/1690.

**Sheep's Back Museum:** Award-winning displays of wool industry and its people, in an

1870 flour mill. Craft shop. MacDonnell St, Naracoorte, 10 am-4 pm.

**Signal Point:** Tells Murray-Darling River story. Animated stories of the Dreamtime, video trips with explorers, touch screens life of the river system, *Oscar W* paddle steamer. Banks of the River Murray, Goolwa, 11 am-5 pm.

**Tandanya:** Guided tours and talks on Aboriginal heritage and culture, including the telling of Dreamtime stories. 253 Grenfell St, Adelaide, 10.30 am-5 pm Monday to Friday, 12 noon-5 pm weekends, public holidays.

**Wadlata Outback Centre:** Reveals the origins of the Outback, aspects of Aboriginal heritage and culture, stories of the Dreamtime. Shows what the vast and varied land means to the people who live and work there. 41 Flinders Tce, Port Augusta. Weekdays 9 am-5.30 pm, weekends 10 am-4 pm.

**Whyalla Maritime Museum:** Guided tours of *HMAS Whyalla*, first ship launched at Whyalla shipyards. Plus scale model of the Santos plant, Port Bonython, and Australia's largest 00-gauge model railway. Lincoln Highway (Port Augusta Rd), 10 am-4 pm. Enquiries (086) 45 7900.

**Woods-MacKillop Schoolhouse:** Where Mother Mary MacKillop and Father Tenison Woods established first Josephite school. Cnr Petticoat Lane and Portland St, Penola, 10 am-4 pm.

#### MONDAY - FRIDAY

**The Archives Remember 1939-45:** Exhibition from Australian Archives and SA State Records with posters, videos, official photographs and documents, war memorabilia. Australian Archives, 11-13 Derlanger St, Collinswood, 9 am-5 pm until 15 September.

#### MONDAY, TUESDAY, FRIDAY AND WEEKENDS

**Gladstone Gaol (1881):** Monday, Tuesday, Friday, 1-4 pm; Saturday, Sunday, school holidays and public holidays, 10 am-12 noon and 1-4 pm. Accommodation available. Enquiries (086) 62 2200/2232.

#### TUESDAY-SUNDAY

**Ayers House:** Home of seven times premier Sir Henry Ayers. North Tce, Adelaide. Tuesday-Friday 10 am-4 pm. Weekends and public

holidays 1-4 pm.

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

#### TUESDAY THURSDAY, WEEKENDS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

**Axel Stenross Maritime Museum:** Boat building workshop, windjammer relics. 97 Lincoln Highway, Port Lincoln (086) 82 2093/1162.

#### THURSDAY

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

#### SATURDAY, SUNDAY AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

**Aviation Museum:** Piston engines, jet planes. 11 Mundy St, Port Adelaide, 10 am-5 pm.

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

**Old Police Station, Clare:** Early furniture, clothes, records and photos of district, agricultural machinery, horse-drawn vehicles. Cnr Victoria Rd and West Tce, Saturdays and public holidays, 10 am-12 noon; Sundays 2-4 pm.

**Strathalbyn Museum:** Police Station (1858) with rooms containing domestic objects of 19th century. Also Courthouse (1866). Weekends, public and school holidays, 2-5 pm.

**SA Police Museum:** In Old Police Barracks and Armoury Building (behind SA Museum, enter from Kintore Ave), 1-5 pm.

#### SUNDAY TO FRIDAY

**Clayton Farm:** Historic site and agricultural museum, fine rural buildings and original farm machinery. 3 km south of Bordertown, 2-5 pm.

#### SUNDAY

**Adelaide Gaol (1841):** Guided tours of cell blocks, exercise yards, hanging tower and graves. Port Rd, Adelaide. First tour 11 am, last tour 3.30 pm. No booking needed. Weekday and night tours available but bookings essential.

Enquiries to State Heritage Branch, 204 9261, or gaol manager, 231 4062.

**The Brocas:** Colonial house with blacksmith's shop, joinery, stables. 111 Woodville Rd, Woodville, 2 pm-5 pm.

**Cummins:** Historic home of the Morphett family. Sheoak Ave, Novar Gardens, 2-4 pm.

**Historic Military Vehicles Museum:** Cnr Baynes Place and Commercial Rd, Port Adelaide, 9.30 am-4.30 pm.

**Old Customs House, Station Master's House:** Victor Harbor, 11 am-4 pm.

**Old Government House:** Vice-regal summer residence 1860-80. National Park, Belair. 12.30-4 pm.

**Railway Signal/Telegraph and Aviation Museum:** Story of aviators Ross and Keith Smith, history of Albert Park and Parafield airports, railway memorabilia. 112 Marion Rd, Brooklyn Park, 1-4.30 pm. Enquiries 373 3554.

**Cockle Train:** Runs between Victor Harbor, Port Eliot and Goolwa. Every Sunday to Christmas and daily 1-14 October. Tel. SteamRanger 231 1707, or (085) 52 2782 on Sundays.

**Suburban Steam:** Tank loco F251 hauls trains from North Terrace TransAdelaide station until end November. Various destinations and prices. Tel. SteamRanger 231 1707, fax 231 5542.

#### FIRST SUNDAY OF MONTH

**Sunnybrae Farm:** Restored historic complex including Enfield Heritage Museum, Gallipoli Grove, Regency Park, 2-4.30 pm.

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## 20 years ago

After the Society made an unsuccessful approach to the government of the day for a subsidy for printing the *Journal*, the *Newsletter* commented, 'This will mean our Society will be the only central historical society in Australia that does not receive a State Government grant.'

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The president, Mr R.M. Gibbs wrote to the *Advertiser* urging the establishment of a museum concentrating on human history in the SA and Australian environment. He wrote, '(It) 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.'

## The extraordinary adventures of 'Big John' McKinlay



Melbourne journalist Kim Lockwood has written what is believed to be the first account of a largely forgotten explorer – John McKinlay, who succeeded where Burke and Wills failed by crossing the continent from south to north and surviving.

Although Burke and Wills were in fact dead before he set out, McKinlay (pictured above) led a South Australian relief party, which suffered intense heat, floods, flies and starvation.

Three years later, on a second expedition, the explorer was stranded by the Wet in western Arnhem Land. He saved his party by building a punt from saplings and sailing for six days and nights down the swollen East Alligator River out into the Arafura Sea and back to the settlement they had left six months before in one of the most amazing feats of survival in the history of Australian exploration.

Kim Lockwood's 194-page paperback, *Big John*, contains 20 pages of maps and illustrations. It is available to *History SA* readers at a privilege price of \$23 (plus \$5 post and handling) from the publisher, State Library of Victoria, 328 Swanston St, Melbourne, 3000.

## To the editor More on Riverland's Village Settlements

Sir,

May I bring to the attention of readers that several other books on the subject of the Village Settlements were published during 1994, the centenary year of the South Australian Settlements, in addition to Jean Nunn's *History of Waikerie, Gateway to the Riverland*, reviewed on page 5 of the May issue of *History SA*.

*My Lyrup Village: A Centenary of Association 1894-1994* was launched at the Lyrup centenary celebrations in February 1994. Copies are available from me to 42 Salisbury Street, Unley (telephone 272 7519 after hours) at \$30 picked up or \$30 plus postage and packing, or from the Lyrup Village Centenary Committee, c/- Post Office, Lyrup, at \$38 posted. In addition to the history of Lyrup this book contains as an appendix the texts of the Acts of Parliament under which all the Village Settlements were established and managed.

David Mack's *The Village Settlements on the River Murray in SA* is particularly thorough in its treatment of the engineering difficulties encountered by most of the nine Upper Murray settlements in establishing pumping plants for irrigation. The privately published book is available from the author at Unit 1, 2 Walkley Avenue, Somerton.

Also privately published is Richard Wood's *The Birks Murtho Letters*, a selection of letters sent from Murtho between 1894 and 1900 by members of the families of John Napier Birks and Walter Richard Birks. These letters describe life on the settlement in a way not available for any other settlement. Mr Wood is a grandson of Walter Richard Birks. The book is available from him at Box 155, Kangarilla, 5157, at a cost of \$10 plus postage.

Small booklets were published by the Ramco Centenary Committee and also the committee which organised joint centenary celebrations for Kingston, Moorook and New Residence.

Alan Jones  
Unley

## Changes to Queens Theatre visit

The Society has had to amend its arrangements for the tour of the old Queens Theatre in November.

First, the date of the visit is Sunday 19 November not 9 November as stated in the 1995 program brochure. Second, the tour will now only be to the old theatre building and will not include Old Parliament House, which is being refurbished as parliamentary offices.

The tour will be led by Hamish Angas of the State Heritage Branch and archaeologist Justin McCarthy. The cost is \$3 and Avis Huckel is taking bookings on 277 2953.

Emanuel and Vaiben Solomon opened the Queens Theatre 1841 but it soon closed and was leased to the Government for use as the Supreme Court, Resident Magistrate's Court and Police Court.

In 1850 the building, now named the Royal Victoria Theatre, was extensively refurbished and given the facade we see today. Despite interruptions by the Victorian gold rushes it continued to offer theatrical fare until 1868. Then began years of decline until its eventual use as a car park.

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## New legal history journal from Adelaide University

The Adelaide Law Review Association has announced the publication of the *Australian Journal of Legal History*. The *Journal* is the first publication of its type in Australia and New Zealand and is intended to give scholars a forum for the dissemination and debate of topics relevant to legal history.

In order to encourage debate on the historical function of law in society and the legal uses of history and comparative studies, the *Journal* has a cross-disciplinary approach and welcomes articles, case notes, book reviews and original source notes from scholars around the world.

The *Australian Journal of Legal History* will appear twice yearly and is available at \$20 a copy from Ms Helen Creeper, Law School, University of Adelaide, SA 5005. Cheques should be made payable to the Association.

## The debate over Old Parliament House

The battle over the future of Old Parliament House as a home for the State History Centre and its exhibitions program raged long in the columns of the press, over the airwaves and in the Parliament. Following are some (very limited) extracts from *Hansard* records of the debate.

**The Hon. Anne Levy (31 May):** ... Sydney has just opened the Museum of Sydney; the Museum of Victoria is opening a major exhibition on the history of Melbourne... and the WA Museum is to open a (permanent) exhibition on the history of Perth. These displays have all been modelled on the history of Adelaide as shown in the exhibition *A Tale of One City* in Old Parliament House yet ... we are to lose our historical exhibition and slip backwards.

**The Hon. Anne Levy (6 July):** The staff of Old Parliament House, while it still existed, were very constructive and put forward proposals for keeping Old Parliament House museum and its important functions, and in fact enhancing them. They suggested that a grant of \$1.2 million should be provided over three years: \$600,000 in the first year and \$300,000 in each of the next two years. This would enable Old Parliament House to set up two new displays specifically linked to the ... changing curriculum on Australian and South Australian history and politics, to add to the sound and light parliamentary debates in the old House of Assembly ... to maintain the 23-minute history of SA known as *The SA Story*, and to fill the State Historian's position so that we would finally have a State Historian again.

This would enable the museum to compete on equal terms with other museums on North Terrace. It would enable it to continue its function both as an educational resource with an added emphasis on civics education, and as a tourist attraction. It is appalling that, when someone has finally convinced the Federal Government of the value of civics education so that it is now prepared to support it throughout the country, the one and only State where civics education has been taken seriously, where there have been materials, exhibitions, teaching displays and assistance for civics education, is now closing.

**The Hon. Carolyn Pickles (6 July):** The closure of the museum is an act of cultural vandalism, the like of which we have never seen before in South Australia, and I hope that we never see it again. The museum has provided a very valuable resource for every South Australian and for every visitor to South Australia. It has been highly praised by people from all over the State and from interstate and overseas. I cannot speak too highly of the museum's activities.

**The Hon. Diana Laidlaw (6 July):** ...It is in the interests of both the Government and the History Trust to have a long-term rental for Edmund Wright House. While there is occupancy of that, the Trust will require basic funding for the rental and the exhibition purposes that it plans.

Quite a number of organisations are lobbying for Speakers' Corner. Initial plans ... (are to) move Speakers' Corner from where it was ... back to where it was originally and which later became a shop. ... The State Library is keen to get it (and) consideration has also been given to the possibility of having Speakers' Corner in Edmund Wright House. ... There is no way there will be no Speakers' Corner. It is one of the exciting, unique and important community activities in SA and it will continue ... at one of those three sites...

...I have (always) said that public access is important both to the Legislative Council Chamber and to the old library area, because that is where the walkway (connecting with Parliament House) will be. That library area is a large room. ... It will continue to have photographic uses and be used for other interpretation purposes. ... We will negotiate with the History Trust and the Parliament in terms of opening hours on weekends. Any negotiations will have to take into account that since Labor introduced fees for entry, attendance on Saturdays fell to an average of 40, which is low by any museum's standards. ...

... The History Trust is excited about the possibility of Edmund Wright House being available for the display of its own collections and possibly for touring collections. (Therefore Edmund Wright House) would be open seven days a week and (it) is not open seven days a week at present, so if Old Parliament House is not open seven days a week there would this trade off in terms of hours.