

HSA *History*

Newsletter of the Historical Society of South Australia

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No. 145, November 1999

Looking back with pride, and forward with confidence

With little more than a year to go until the end of the millennium, the Historical Society of South Australia can look back with justifiable pride on the achievements of its first quarter-century. To commemorate our Silver Jubilee we have issued a booklet (enclosed with this Newsletter) containing a complete list of the Society's programmes from 1974 to 1999 and a complete list of all articles published in the Journal from 1975 to 1998. Also enclosed is our programme for 2000 which, we hope you will agree, looks every bit as interesting as those of the last twenty-five years. Members are asked to pass on the extra copy to a friend or colleague. And for your holiday reading we have included a recent copy of *Community History*. If you wish to subscribe to this publication (\$20.00 per year), please contact the History Trust on 8226 8555.

Council would like to thank those members who have contributed to the History Essay Prize Fund. Their generosity will help to ensure its continued success.

The Editor would like to take this opportunity to thank all those people who have contributed information and articles to the Newsletter this year and to wish all our members the very best for Christmas and the New Year.

New plaques in place

It is always pleasing to see historic sites given public recognition in the form of prominent physical markers. Two plaques have recently been set in place by the Institution of Engineers, Australia as part of their Historic Plaquing Programme which was established to acknowledge past achievements in engineering and to draw attention to the many significant contributions that engineers have made to our society.

On October 2nd a plaque was unveiled at the entrance to Woomera Village in the state's far north, commemorating the Rocket Range and its important engineering heritage.

The plaque reads:

WOOMERA ROCKET RANGE

Established under the Anglo-Australian Joint Project following the Second World War, this range and the associated Weapons Research Establishment at Salisbury were the largest and most expensive scientific and engineering activity ever conducted in Australia in peacetime. The equipment used and tested here was at the forefront of technology and especially in fine mechanics, advanced optics, telemetry and rocket fuel chemistry. While participating in programmes conducted here, Australia was in the forefront of scientifically and technologically advanced nations. The successful launch of the WRESAT satellite from Woomera in 1967 gained Australia international recognition and membership of the exclusive 'Space Club'.

Dedicated by

The Institution of Engineers, Australia, 1999.

And on October 22nd a plaque was unveiled at the G.P.O. in King William St., Adelaide, commemorating the reception of the first messages from overseas via the Overland Telegraph Line in 1872.

The plaque, on the eastern wall, reads:


THE OVERLAND TELEGRAPH, ADELAIDE TO DARWIN, 1872

The 3178 kilometre line was built in less than two years and joined on 22 August 1872. It linked Australia to an undersea cable from Indonesia that came ashore at Port Darwin and made communication between Australia and the rest of the world possible in hours rather than weeks. The project was under the direction of Sir Charles Todd, KCMG, MA, FRS, FRAS, FRMS, FSTE, Superintendent of Posts and Telegraphs.

The first telegraph messages from overseas were received in Morse Code in this building on 22 October 1872 via the Overland Telegraph Line.

Dedicated by

*The Institution of Engineers, Australia, 1999
Australia Post SA/NT*

Two other plaques have been set up --- one at Parliament House, Darwin, and the other at the Alice Springs Telegraph Station --- to mark the sites of the original cable stations. 

The Historical Society of South Australia Inc.

Founded 1974

P.O. Box 519, Kent Town, S.A. 5071.

E-mail: hssa25@hotmail.com Web-site: www.history.sa.gov.au/hssa.

Meetings are held on the first Friday of each month at 8 p.m. in the Prince Philip Theatre, Prince Alfred College, Kent Town. All welcome.

THE OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY ARE:

- 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 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.

PATRON: Sir Walter Crocker, K.B.E.

COUNCIL:

President: Dr. R.P.J. Nicol, 8297 9844.

Vice-President: Mr. M. Keain

Secretary: Mrs. G. Brown

Treasurer: Mrs. A. Huckel, 8277 2953.

Members: Dr. G. Bishop, Dr. S. Cameron, Mr. S. Dawes, Mr. C. Deed, Mr. J. Healey, Mr. J. Loudon, Ms. J. Palmer, Dr. P. Payne, Ms. P. Sumerling.

Journal Editor: Dr. J.T. Stock, fax 8303 3446.

History SA Editor: Mr. J. Healey, 27 Germein St., Semaphore, S.A. 5019. Ph. 8449 2268.

APPOINTED OFFICERS:

Consultant: Mr. R. M. Gibbs, A.M.

Publicity Officer: Ms. M. Dunshore

Records Officer: Mrs. E. Ulbrich

Mortlock Archives

by Roger André

Further to Brian Samuels' list in the July Newsletter, a considerable number of archival donations of interest have been accessioned during the last few months, though some will not appear on the shelves until conservation work has been completed.

The wine industry has been represented by an 1895 letterbook of Tolley, Scott & Tolley together with the firm's label book (c. 1919-1922), cashbooks and diaries of H. M. Martin of Stonyfell Winery (1891-1939) and impressive certificates awarded to W. Salter & son (1874-1890). World War I diaries, certificates of service and a poem have been added to the papers of Private Hugh Frederick Smith.

Of research interest, E. R. Hancock has listed personnel who served with the 13th Australian Field Regiment in World War II. Other research papers have included Alexander Clark's note on Murray River settlements and locks, Hans Mincham's continuing documentation of the history of the Hawker district, Edward Turner's history of V.O.T.E. (Voice of the Elderly SA Inc.) and a history of Adelaide Rotary.


Literary work has been received in the form of Charles Harris' *A Yorkshire tyke teaching in two continents*, Cynthia Hood's *Emigration of the Hood family, March 1963*, Clyde Cameron's *Fading greatness*

and Jason Hopton's *Life of an old ketch skipper 1898-1980*. (Captain L. C. Harvey) Wyles family papers, 1804-1946, are also of maritime interest.

Holden Limited has contributed model cars to its vast business record group and further records dating from 1873 have been added to those of Forwood Holdings, engineers. Unique among accessions of business record groups has been a small quantity of records, 1898-1959, of the enameller Henry Lansley.

As usual, religious denominations have been substantial depositors with a couple of metres of records accessioned for Port Adelaide Presbyterian Church, 1876-1966, and Plympton Park Presbyterian Church, while the Anglican Church has deposited the 1856-64 minute book of the Committee of the Female Refuge along with minutes of other Church-based organisations.

The Friends of the State Library have financed the purchase of an 1885 painting of Brownhill Creek by Anglican clergyman Reverend Alfred Sells as well as a 1937 linocut by May Voke. More nineteenth century artworks have enhanced the collection of Reverend Tom Ward who sketched widely in South Australia and a splendid photograph album presented to Mabel Annie Brassey in 1887 has been acquired.

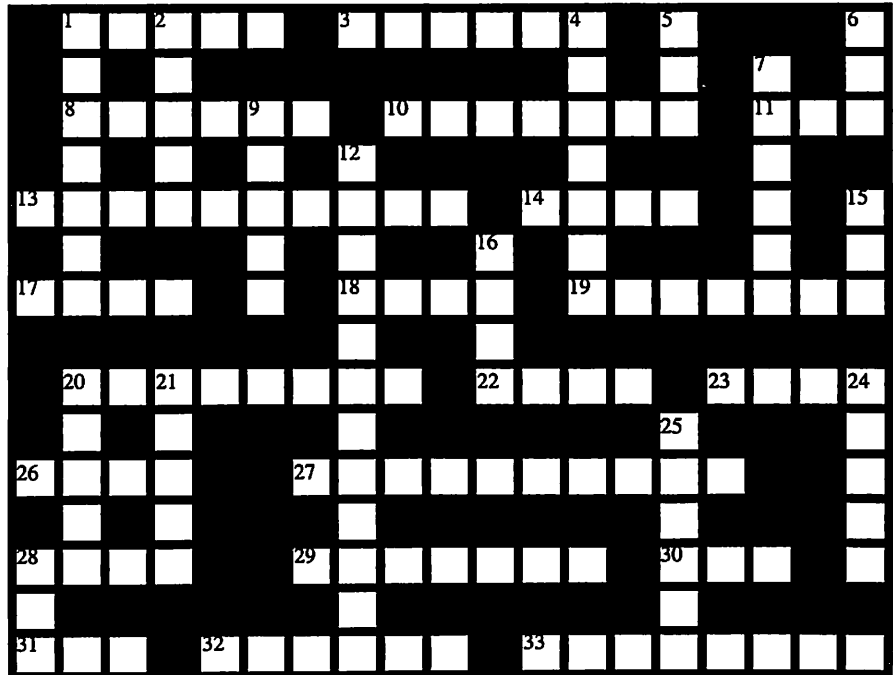
Travellers' Aid Society minutes and reports, 1940-1986, have been deposited and correspondence spanning 1925 to 1949 reflects the work of the indefatigable Secretary of the Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Society, Harold J. Finnis. 

Crypto-historical crossword

The answers to all but six of the clues are the names of well-known locations in and around Adelaide with historical associations. Clues follow the usual conventions for cryptic crosswords.

A prize is offered for the first correct entry drawn from the pile after December 17th. The winner will receive a \$20 book voucher redeemable at Maurice Keain's bookstall at our monthly meetings.

Readers are invited to use the enclosed copy of the crossword. Be sure to fill in your name and contact details and return it to the Editor by the above date.



Across & Down

1A, 29A, 32A Oxymoronic gemstone with apex near the wharves. (5, 7, 6)

1D, 32A You'll find Colony 32 at the end of the walk. (7, 6)

2D What Venus de Milo yearned to be, if only in self-defence. (5)

6D Documents were kept here initially. (3)

8A, 3A, 20D Shakespearean bastard and old-fashioned craftsman find accommodation in what is now an historical home. (6, 6, 5)

9D Plane crash in the Himalayas. (5)

31A, 10A This gives me true gold when misshapen. And it's certainly bent! (3, 3, 4)

22A, 11A, 15D Roman logician just couldn't do without it. (4, 3, 3)

12D To illuminate's to see. (6, 6).

13A Stormy argument over city lights. (5, 5)

24D, 14A First-born takes soft ship at the river bank. (5, 4)

15D, 16D Minus puzzle? (3-4)

17A, 4D, 33A Create sweet merry etc. In a crisis, this is the last place you'd want to go. (4, 7, 8)

25D, 18A Lamb hire £2. Damaged? Fire-damaged if they lived here. (6, 4)

19A, 5D, 18A Hie to hell, angel, in confusion! We'll get a bird's eye view from here. (5, 2, 3, 4)

20A, 30A Stand firm, horse! And watch out for the buffalo there! (8, 3)

21D, 7D Fair dinkum? Did he plan to lie here? (5, 6)

28A, 23A Stay in convalescent hospital. (4, 4)

26A Put something in a hole. (4)

27A Trim the edge, that is, smooth a spot near the river. (6, 4)

28D Good jumper from Old Regret, by the sound of it. (3)

The winner's name and the solution to the crossword will be published in the January issue.



Countryside in the city

Christine Garnaut: *Colonel Light Gardens – model garden suburb* (Crossing Press, Darlinghurst, 1999)


The notion of a garden suburb evolved in England before the turn of the century but it was not until Charles Compton Reade toured here in 1914 that the concept was translated and adapted to an Australian context. Two years later he was appointed Adviser on Town Planning in South Australia and set about putting his ideas into practice. Though Colonel Light Gardens has been the subject of many articles and theses, this is the first book to be devoted to a history of the suburb's conception, planning and early development.

It deals with the political and economic principles of the scheme, their gradual implementation through the 1920s, the state government's Thousand Homes project, the various design features (such as open spaces, curved streets, roadside landscaping and the deliberate

mix of social classes and architectural styles) as well as later initiatives by the residents.

The book is well written and comprehensively researched and contains over 80 photographs and maps. It retails for \$25.95 and is available from the author (Ph. 8277 7844) and from the Colonel Light Gardens Historical Society (Ph. 8277 2595). -- J.H.

2000 Journal deadline

Articles on historical subjects relating to South Australia or Australia are invited for the 2000 issue of the Historical Society *Journal*. They should be of no more than 6,000 words and should initially be submitted in printed or typed form to the Editor, Dr. Jenny Stock, c/o Politics Department, University of Adelaide, Adelaide 5005, or forwarded by e-mail to: jenny.stock@adelaide.edu.au. The Editor would like to receive all material by April 30th, 2000. Enquiries to Dr. Stock on (08) 8303 5755. 

Coming Events

December 2 Brighton Hist. Soc. Isabella Norton: "50 years of St. Jude's Players". Holdfast Bay Civic Centre, 24 Jetty Rd., Brighton. 7.30 p.m.

January 19 Port Adelaide Hist. Soc. Exploring some churches of Port Adelaide. Walk conducted by Errol Chinner. Meet at St. Paul's Anglican Church, cnr. St. Vincent St. and Church Pl., Port Adelaide. 7.00 p.m.

Exhibitions

Hidden Treasures Equipment, photographs and memorabilia from the University of Adelaide's Heritage Collection. Main Building, Waite Campus, Waite Road, Urrbrae. Until June 30.

The Tatar-Bashkurts in Australia The history and culture of the smallest and least known immigrant group in Australia. Migration Museum, Kintore Ave. November 26 – Late February.

We Remember Daisy Bates Previously unexhibited letters, photographs and memorabilia. Ayers House, North Tce. November 2 – February 29.

Witnesses of Change Older people's experiences of social and technological change. Unley Museum, 80 Edmund Ave., Unley. Until June.

Yakapna: The Koorie Family Historical images, community photographs and paintings celebrating the indigenous people of South-East Australia. Migration Museum, Kintore Ave. December 5 – May 31.



CHAFF MILL VILLAGE

Luxury apartments in the heart of Clare

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Clare, S.A. 5453

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(08) 8842 1111

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<http://www.capri.net.au/~chaffmil>

E-mail:

chaffmil@capri.net.au

The owner, Helen Dickeson, is Curator of the Clare Regional History Collection.

Bugus millenarius

[Translated from a Latin scroll, dated 1 B.C.]

Dear Cassius,

Are you still working on the Y Zero K problem? This change from B.C. to A.D. is giving us a lot of headaches and we haven't much time left. I don't know how people will cope with working the wrong way round. Having been working happily downwards forever, now we have to start thinking upwards. You would think that someone would have thought of it earlier and not left it till now to sort it all out.

I spoke to Augustus Caesar the other day. He was livid that Julius hadn't done something about it when he was reforming the calendar. He said he could perfectly understand why Brutus turned nasty. We called in Consultus to advise on the feasibility of continuing downwards using minus B.C. but he said that it's too easy for lazy stone-masons to leave the minus sign out. Surely we will not have to throw out all our hardware and start again? Macrohard will make yet another fortune out of this, I suppose.

The money lenders are all paranoid, of course. They have been told that usury rates will invert and they will have to pay their clients to take out loans. It's an ill wind!

As for myself, I just can't see the sand in an hour glass flowing upward. We have heard that there are three wise men in the East who are working on the problem but unfortunately they won't arrive until it's all over. I have also heard that there are plans to stable all horses at midnight at the turn of the year as there are fears that they will stop and try to run backwards, causing immense damage to chariots and possible loss of life.

Some say that the world will cease to exist at the moment of transition but I think that's nonsense. It might be the First Millennium B.C. that's come to an end, but it's not the first millennium that's come to an end, if you see what I mean. Anyway we are still continuing to work on the problem. I will send you a parchment if anything further develops.

Yours,

Plutonium

[Reprinted from *GeoNews*, Sept/Oct 1999]

9/9/1999

by John Jenkin

The ninth of September, nineteen ninety-nine, an auspicious date to be sure. But aeroplanes didn't fall out of the sky, computers did continue to work, and the world didn't come to an end. So what was special? Well, it's like this!

William Henry Bragg, aged only 23 years old, arrived in Adelaide early in 1886 to begin his long term as Professor of Mathematics and Experimental Physics at the University of Adelaide. On his very first day here he met the chief scientific figure in the city, Sir Charles Todd, his wife Alice, and their very lively family of two sons and four daughters. In 1889 Bragg married Gwendoline, the third daughter, and the young couple moved into a rented house on the corner of LeFevre Terrace and Tynte Street in North Adelaide. Here their two sons were born: (William) Lawrence Bragg on 31 March 1890 and Robert Charles Bragg on 25 November 1892.

After a strenuous period of teaching, examining, and sporting and social activity, Professor Bragg felt the need to recharge his batteries, catch up on academic developments and family back home, and explore the possibilities of serious research in Adelaide. The family spent 1898 in England on study leave.

By the time they returned to Adelaide, William Bragg had decided to make Adelaide his permanent home and he and Gwendoline therefore determined to buy a block of land and build a new family home close to the centre of the city. They chose a site that would give them a pleasant and peaceful outlook over the parklands to the Adelaide hills, just like they had enjoyed in North Adelaide --- this time on the corner of East Terrace and Carrington Street. The two-storey design, incorporating high Edwardian gables, was based upon the new home of Bragg's uncle and childhood guardian in Market Harborough, Leicestershire. Gwendoline claimed she couldn't visualize the house from the plans, so her husband built a model to assist her and he borrowed £1,300 from the State Bank of South Australia to help finance the project.

On 9/9/1899, Sir Charles Todd laid the foundation stone for the house. It can still be seen embedded in the brickwork of the front verandah of the somewhat modified structure, now the Public Schools Club, where the Rotary Club of Adelaide Parks holds its regular monthly meetings.


Under the prompting of Mr. Robert George, surely one of Adelaide's most energetic and enthusiastic residents, the Rotary Club decided to hold a "Centenary Dinner" on 9/9/1999. It was a great occasion, to which I was privileged to be invited

to give the after-dinner address. More importantly, the Lord Mayor of Adelaide attended and unveiled a new plaque to commemorate the centenary. It has been placed next to the original foundation stone and reads as follows:


THIS PLAQUE
RECOGNISES THE SIGNIFICANT
CONTRIBUTION MADE TO SCIENCE
BY
WILLIAM HENRY BRAGG
AND HIS SON
WILLIAM LAWRENCE BRAGG
Nobel Laureates
WHO DESIGNED, BUILT AND LIVED IN THIS HOUSE
1899 - 1909
Unveiled by
The Right Honourable The Lord Mayor of Adelaide
Dr Jane Lomax-Smith on 9 September 1999
The Centenary
of the Laying of the Foundation Stone
of this House by Sir Charles Todd
Father-in-Law of
William Bragg

Much could be written about the time the family spent here. It marks the beginning of Professor Bragg's illustrious research career, his elder son's education at St. Peter's College and the University of Adelaide, and the early years of the journey that took father and son to the invention of the scientific technique called X-ray crystallography, to the award of the 1915 Nobel Prize in Physics, to the foundations for the discovery of the structure of DNA and the biological revolution that followed, and to much else besides.

William and Lawrence Bragg stand tall as two of the greatest and most important of all twentieth-century scientists and their days in Adelaide were pivotal to their success. The house the family built and lived in on East Terrace for these crucial years is surely precious. But who will care for it and preserve it in the long term? The Public Schools Club has been looking after it well since 1959 but they will need very considerable financial support when the structure faces the inevitable major restoration in the future. Or will it ultimately be demolished? After all, the State Heritage Branch has declined to register it because of its substantial modern additions and because the North Adelaide property that the family rented earlier has already been registered.

I believe the East Terrace property is also precious. Does Adelaide agree? 

New members

The Historical Society would like to welcome the following new members: Mrs. Tricia Miller and Mr. Alan Paterson. 

Moments in the Life of a City

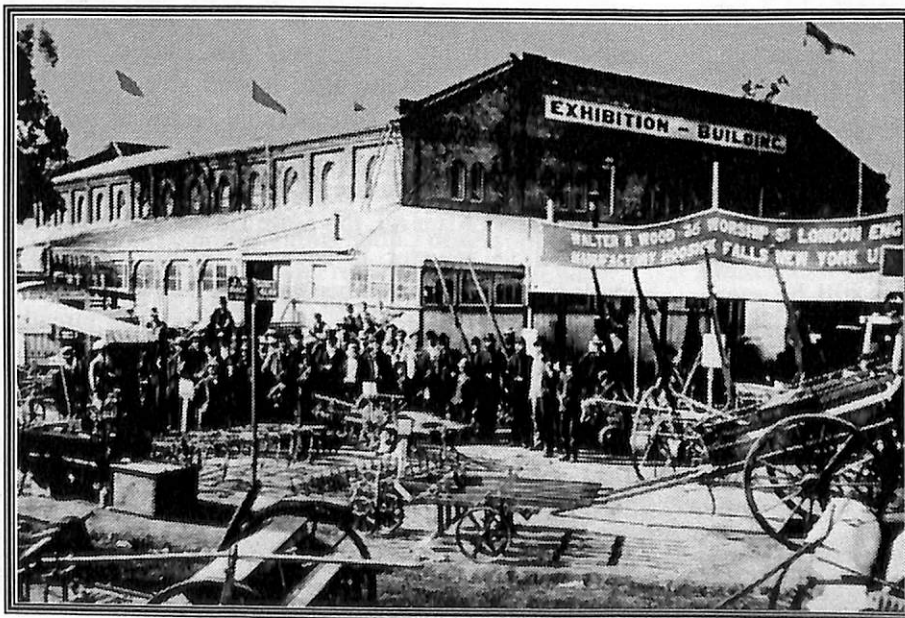
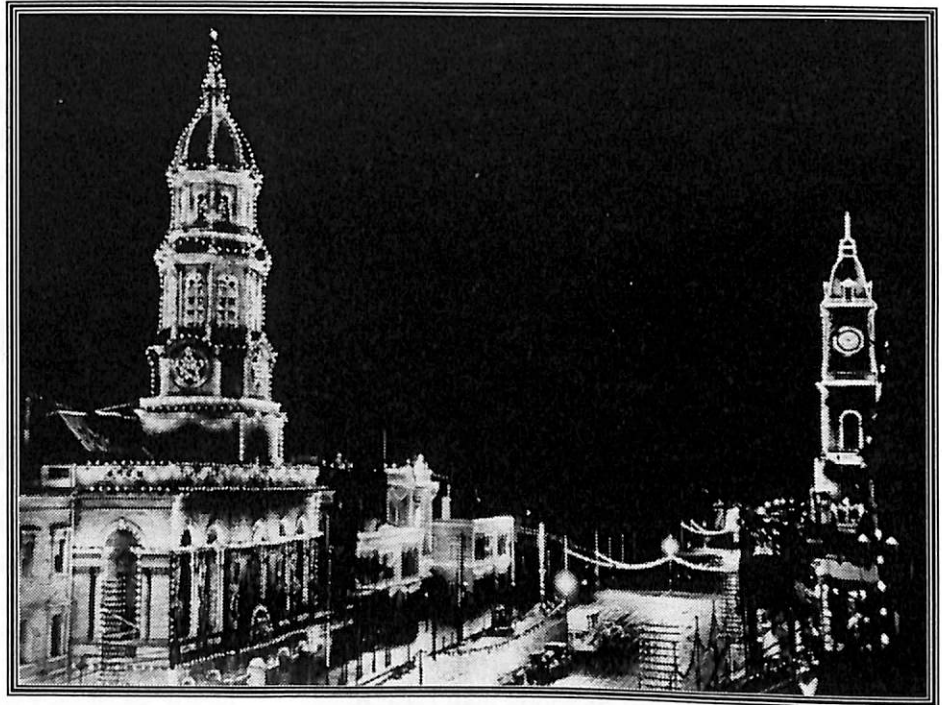
Photographs from the files of the Adelaide City Archives

Among the many records held by the Archives of the Adelaide City Council are several thousand photographs, spanning almost the entire life of the city. The five images reproduced here have been selected from two major series --- the Historical Pictorial Collection and the Lantern Slide Collection. The former is a group of approximately 1,800 items gathered together by the former Commercial Department of the Council in the 1970s and comprises photographs of important civic events and personalities, major streets and buildings, parks and gardens, and various historic maps and prints of paintings. The Lantern Slide Collection, of over 1,000 photos, consists of two groups --- slides which were created or purchased by the A.C.C. and those which were the personal property of Mr. A. J. Morison who began work with the Council in 1895 and was Town Clerk from 1937 to 1946. There is also a small group of slides that were used by Mr. W.C.D. Veale to illustrate lectures when he was City Engineer. The Council's collection was begun in 1921 when a decision was made to produce lantern slides of early Adelaide from old photographs that had been donated or lent to the Council. From 1928 to 1936 lantern slide shows and public lectures were presented by Morison in the Adelaide Town Hall and proved to be immensely popular.

Catalogues for these collections, together with folders containing contact prints, are held in the Reference and Guide Area of the Adelaide City Archives, Topham Link, off Currie and Waymouth Streets, Adelaide. The reading room is open to the public for research from 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m., Monday to Friday.

When the Duke and Duchess of York visited Adelaide in July 1901, King William Street was lit up like this every night for a week. Thousands of light globes festooned all the major buildings from Parliament House to Victoria Square.

To generate the electricity two temporary power stations were established, one behind the Government Printing Office in King William Road and the other alongside the Treasury Building. These incorporated five narrow-gauge locomotive boilers to generate steam for the engines driving the dynamos.



From 1844 to 1894 the Adelaide Show was held in "the extensive, beautiful and umbrageous paddock between North Terrace and Frome Bridge" (to the east of Frome Road). The first Exhibition Building, seen here, was erected in 1859 and served as the main venue for the Show for over thirty years until supplanted by the Jubilee Exhibition Building.

This photo was taken at the Royal Show, circa 1884, when the very latest in modern agricultural machinery was on display.



In the 1920s and '30s the Sunderland Patent Cement Grouting Machine was used to surface some of the streets of Adelaide. The man in the centre of the photograph can be seen pouring a thin liquid cement onto the macadam. This filled all the interstices, prior to the addition of a hard-wearing coat of bitumen.


Neither the exact date nor the location of this photo is known. Do readers have any suggestions?

This photo can be dated to 1925. It shows workers cleaning and stacking bricks after the demolition of a one-storey building on the western side of Leigh Street, that had been the premises of Henry Pomeroy, a maker of travelling bags.

The building can be seen in a photo from Dec. 1924 that is reproduced on a pillar at the northern end of the street. By April 1926 Cook, Son & Co.'s two-storey premises had been extended to occupy the site.



This view of Bank St., looking towards North Tce., was taken in 1924-26. It shows the premises of Horwood Bagshaw Ltd. (who merged in 1924), W.H. Evans, gun maker (on this site since 1896), S.A. Coote, jeweller (the closing-down sale) and Hunt's Labour Offices. It may be the last photo to have been taken of the latter three, as they were replaced in 1926 by the Chapman Buildings.

History SA would like to thank the Reference Services Archivist, Mr. Robert Thornton, for his help in providing the above photographs, which are reproduced by kind permission of the Adelaide City Council. The catalogue numbers are: HPC 553, LSC 947, HPC 1474, LSC 800 and HPC 1629. 

Jazz improvisations

The Society's Annual Dinner, held on Saturday, August 21st, was again an outstanding success. Held at the Pavilion on the Park and wonderfully organised, as usual, by our Treasurer, Mrs. Avis Huckel, it was attended by over seventy people who enjoyed not only the roast sirloin and the grilled perch but also the entertaining reflections of Dr. Don Hoppood on the early history and, more particularly, the historiography of jazz. He presented us with some fascinating details of the many inaccuracies and creative improvisations that are to be found in the jazz histories of the 1930s --- histories that were based on unverified and often self-interested oral sources. The following extracts are taken from his speech, "The Development of a Mature Jazz Historiography".

In January 1917, five young musicians from New Orleans, calling themselves the Original Dixieland Jazz Band (O.D.J.B.), went into the recording studios of Columbia in New York and "waxed" two tunes in a new style of music firstly called "jass" and then "jazz". Further issues followed. They were a sensation. It is now clear that they were playing in a tradition that had been established some years before in their home town but they claimed invention. They also hammed it up a good deal and played their multi-thematic pieces at a higher than usual tempo to fit them into the three-minute confines of the typical 78 r.p.m. record. Jazz was perceived as a novelty rather than a musical discipline in its own right. And so the Jazz Age was born. . . .

Jazz became many things. The name, it seemed, was bigger than the music. A whole decade was called the "Jazz Age". There was jazz literature (F. Scott Fitzgerald), jazz furniture, jazz clothes and, for the flappers, jazz garters. . . .

Now what of the historiography? . . . The seminal work, by Charles Edward Smith and Frederick Ramsey, Junior, appeared in the U.S.A. in 1939. Entitled *Jazzmen*, it was the product of much patient research yet research which was, necessarily perhaps, limited in scope. It was the fruit of a good deal of collecting of old records and many interviews, often in nightclubs between sets, with older jazzmen. Smith *et al* did not simply haunt old junk shops for those precious pieces of shellac, they door-knocked black neighbourhoods in Chicago offering to buy any old 78's the families had lying around. A sub-discipline, infelicitously labelled "discography", was born. So far as the interviews were concerned, the writers felt they had hit pay dirt with the reminiscences of two remarkable older musicians who, in a sense, talked their way into jazz history.

Ferdinand La Menthe, stage-name Jelly Roll Morton, was a New Orleans-born red-light-district

pianist who, with his band, made a series of remarkable recordings in the mid-twenties, discs that are still hailed in many quarters as the acme of the classic style. At the invitation of folklorist Alan Lomax, Morton, now, in 1938, down on his luck, attended the Library of Congress in Washington where Lomax recorded his playing and extensive reminiscences. Morton confirmed that jazz was something apart from the general "pop" or even dance music scene and that its development was largely a black, or brown, affair. (He was a Creole, a New Orleans-born mulatto with French ancestry and did not always have a high opinion of those of a darker hue.) But he went on to make two more claims --- that the music originated in New Orleans and that he, Morton, was its originator.

He claimed that he started playing jazz in 1902, when he was 17. In a rare burst of humility, he admitted that at that stage his piano technique was not sufficiently advanced to play the intricate ragtime figures at high tempos so he slowed the music down, converted ragtime's two beats to the bar to four and departed more from the score, using his ear to improvise around the theme. The Library of Congress material was issued on record (easier once LP's came along) and Lomax wrote a book, *Mr. Jelly Roll*, based on the same information. He interviewed a number of Morton's contemporaries for the book. (Morton died in 1941, some years before publication.) Most of them contested Morton's claim for priority but confirmed the New Orleans origins of the music.

The other rediscovery was trumpeter William Geary "Bunk" Johnson. The writers of *Jazzmen* contacted Louis Armstrong in search of leads and Louis, always amiable, directed them to Johnson, then living in obscurity in New Iberia, Louisiana. Bunk had lost his teeth, was no longer playing and was keeping body and soul together driving a truck. He proved as garrulous and self-serving as Morton. Bunk told them that the primal jazz horde had been led by a black New Orleans cornet player who also featured in Morton's reminiscences, a larger-than-life character called Buddy Bolden. He added that, as a teenager in the mid-1890s, he had played with Bolden. He stressed the importance of improvisation in the Bolden band and its use, and transformation, of the rags and blues. He wanted to play again so the enthusiasts passed the hat around, had him fitted with a set of false teeth and gave him the money for a new instrument. He recorded extensively in New Orleans, San Francisco and New York before his death in 1949. *Time* magazine wrote him up. By all accounts a remarkable player in his youth, he spent as much of his second career in bars as on the stand and, as a result, not all of his work does him justice. But the tradition was set down. Jazz was a music with its own integrity, the creation of the New Orleans black community and Morton, Johnson and Bolden were, *inter alia*, revered as pioneers. *Mr. Jelly*

Roll reveals Morton as somewhat of a theorist about the music (a rare trait among musicians) and Bolden was written up in *Jazzmen* as a flamboyant character, a womaniser, a barber and the compiler of a local scandal sheet (in a city with no lack of source material) called *The Cricket*. He never got to read any of this, having died in a psychiatric institution in 1931.

As jazz historiography has matured, some of these claims have had to be modified. Don Marquis, writer of the prize-winning *Buddy Bolden -- First Man of Jazz*, was one of the first to delve into New Orleans birth, death and marriage records and the City Directory, to scan thoroughly the local press, while continuing some of the oral history techniques used by the writers of *Jazzmen*. He was fortunate that in the 1960s William Russell had used the resources of Tulane University to tape the reminiscences of dozens of the older jazz practitioners. The documents, however, were being used, for the first time, as a check on the imperfections of memory. Marquis confirmed Bolden's pre-eminence in the early rag-jazz music but demolished a good deal of the rest. He was not a barber, though, like many of the "sports" of that day, he hung around the "shaving parlour" --- it had a phone, an important asset for a musician waiting to be called for gigs. The "Cricket" was never uncovered and, in any event, Bolden, though literate (Marquis found a copy of his signature), did little or no writing. Further, the whole chronology had to be set forward by about ten years. Bolden was born in 1877 (some earlier accounts had put it at 1866) and did not start playing cornet until 1894 or 1895. As we shall see, if the young Bunk Johnson ever played with Buddy it would have been about ten years later.

Professor Larry Gushee has exposed some of the claims of Morton and Johnson without destroying their credibility as pioneers. He used the census material, the actual individual response sheets from the census collectors. To be fair to the earlier investigators, Louisiana has always been very reluctant to expose this data to the public scrutiny lest individuals wishing to destroy proof of their origins in miscegeny should do just that. Gushee was able to show that Johnson and Morton had both falsified their dates of birth in order to give greater credibility to their claims as pioneers. Morton, it is now clear from a baptismal register, was born on 20 October 1890, making him only 12, not 17, in that year of 1902 when he claimed to have invented (actually he said "discovered") jazz. The earlier researchers had not dug deeply enough. Morton's death certificate in 1941 had given a birth-date of 20 September 1889, incorrect but sufficient to throw suspicion on his own claim. If we are right to be cautious about aspects of oral history, we must also have a healthy suspicion of the documents. In the records of the 1900 census, he is listed as being born in September 1894. It is suggested that, as his mother's only recorded marriage was to a William

Mouton (anglicised form Morton) in February 1894, she wanted to conceal the fact of an illegitimate birth.


Bunk Johnson was born in December 1889. This confirms Marquis' contention that Bunk's reminiscences of the Bolden band were ten years too early. His claims for priority can be no greater than dozens of others, some of whom made far lesser claims. He was only ten when Teddy Roosevelt and the Rough Riders stormed San Juan Hill in the Spanish-American War. Bunk had claimed he blew charge for them. He also claimed a tour to Australia but the shipping lists are silent. . . .

Let me establish a modest priority for jazz studies by making two observations.

Firstly, whether we like it or not, popular music, especially that emanating from North America, has had an enormous influence on our lives. From its modest beginnings in the pre-Tin Pan Alley days of the 1880s (some would date it from the success of Charles K. Harris' "After The Ball"), it has spawned an enormous industry, the products of which have been poured out at us from millions of music boxes of increasing technical sophistication. In the first half of the twentieth century, jazz, though separate from this phenomenon, greatly influenced it. . . If popular music is seen as sociologically significant, then remember that it cannot be properly understood without a consideration of jazz.

Secondly, and more importantly, jazz, a co-operative music, was a liberating force for black and white alike. Along with Martin Luther King as a pioneer of the second emancipation, spare a thought for Jelly Roll Morton who recorded with a white band in 1922, for Benny Goodman who employed black musicians in his band, and Louis Armstrong who preferred the white trombone player Jack Teagarden when he could have used four or five blacks of similar ability. White appreciation of the musical gifts of blacks eventually led to an appreciation of their rights. . . .

Armstrong played a vital role in the Arkansas desegregation crisis of 1957. Goaded into fury by a television report of little black children being confronted by a howling white mob, Louis, often denounced by the more militant brothers as a "handkerchief head" and an "Uncle Tom", told a reporter that Eisenhower "had no guts" and "the way they are treating my people in the South, the government can go to hell". The story echoed around the world. Soon afterwards, Ike sent in the troops.

Playing in a night-club, or even on a concert stage, all that mattered to the musicians was ability. The white guitarist Eddie Condon once claimed that his band contained one black, one Jew, two Catholics and three Protestants. Despite this mixture, he could boast that the only thing they ever argued about was what key to play in. Condon further claimed that they got by with only two rules --- socks had to be worn on the bandstand and anyone who fell off had to get back under his own steam! It is probably apochryphal but it should be true. 

Aspects of Australian Folklife

by Brian Samuels

If you define our heritage as our inheritance from the past, it can be divided reasonably neatly into four types. There is the natural environment, the built environment, the artefacts we have made (our movable heritage) and finally there is the sum of the heritages each of us carry within us (our inner or personal or intangible heritages) or in other words, our folklife heritage.

This is the heritage we don't usually learn about formally. Rather, we absorb it in the communities and environments we live in, learning it through stories, by imitation or through observation. When you stop and think about all the things we learn that way, you soon realise that our folklife heritage is quite enormous.

Examples include the ways we celebrate Christmas, the tradition of wedding telegrams, the handing down of food recipes within families, the sports and pastimes the early European settlers brought with them, the rituals associated with drinking in hotels, the institution of the fund-raising fête and so on. Folklife also includes such customs and traditions as using the right hand to shake hands, avoiding walking under ladders and having candles on birthday cakes.

Given such diversity, how can folklife be defined? The Report of the Committee of Enquiry into Folklife in Australia, commissioned by the Commonwealth Government in 1986 and published in 1987 under the title of *Folklife: our living heritage*, provides a very useful definition. It is based on a number of existing definitions, including one agreed upon by UNESCO after a mere 12 years of debate, and reads as follows:

Folklife is tradition-based and/or contemporary expressive culture repeated and shared within a community, and accepted by it as an adequate reflection of its cultural and social identity. It embraces a wide range of creative and symbolic forms such as custom, belief, mythology, legend, ritual, pageantry, language, literature, technical skill, play, music, dance, song, drama, narrative, architecture, craft. Its expressions are mainly learned orally, by imitation or in performance, and are generally maintained without benefit of formal instruction or institutional direction. (p. 16)

The last sentence is really a way of stating the essence of the folk process. It is a virtue of the Report and the definition that it does not engage in the unproductive business of trying to define that process too carefully. If I hear a song and learn it from the singer,

is that any different from learning it from a printed copy of the words? Is the Mickey Mouse Club song excluded from folklife because children learnt it from television?

As the Report's definition states, if something is "repeated and shared within a community" and is "generally maintained without benefit of formal instruction or institutional direction" then it is part of our folklife heritage. And of course that heritage is being added to and changed all the time. The folk revival that began in Australia in the 1950s uncovered parts of our musical heritage and introduced them to new and wider audiences. Guy Fawkes Day died in South Australia because of a seemingly increasing number of accidents and fires.

An equally important point is that there is no single Australian heritage, but rather many heritages. The Report sensibly defines Australian folklife by relating it to the communities which generate and maintain it:

Australian folklife is folklife associated with one or more communities within Australia. This includes, for example, folklife associated with individual family, ethnic, occupational, religious, sporting, special interest, or regional groups. (p. 17)

So, having noted that our folklife heritage cannot be static and that it is best considered not as one Australian heritage but in terms of the many communities which generate it, it's time to look at some diverse examples of that heritage.

The folklife of the workplace

Nicknames are a long-standing feature of many workplaces, though I've long thought that those of wharfies are the best. These examples are drawn from V. Darroch: *On the Coast: Maritime Industry, Life and Language* (Lothian, Port Melbourne, 1984) and R. Lockwood: *Humour is their Weapon: Laugh with the Australian Wharfies* (Ellsyd Press, Chippendale, 1985).

The Pill -- had no conception.

The All-Night Chemist -- never shut up.

The Undertaker -- always sizing you up.

Autumn Leaves -- always falling down.

Singlets -- a foreman who was never off wharfies' backs.

Tea Bags -- forever getting into hot water.

The Whale -- when working in the hold always wanted to come up for a blow.

The Judge -- always sitting on a case.

Kitbag -- had to be carried on the job.

George Negus -- didn't like working more than 60 minutes.

By way of contrast, witty names for hairdressing salons are a more recent development. A quick scan of the yellow pages a few years ago revealed the following: Hairafter, Hair Control, Hair Craft, Hair Essentials, Hair Force, Hair Line, Hair Waves, Cutting Remarks, The Cut Above, The Head Gardener and The Upper Cut.

Adult pastimes

Not surprisingly, Australia's early settlers brought with them the recreational activities of their homelands. Angling, wrestling, boxing, football, cricket, bowling, sailing, rowing and horse racing were among the earliest.

There also developed a calendar of regular events. Agricultural shows were established quite early, Labour Day celebrations were first held in Melbourne in 1856 to celebrate the gaining of the 8-hour working day, Guy Fawkes Day and Boxing Day were maintained, some colonies celebrated their proclamation days and of course the major festivals of Christmas and Easter were kept up. Guy Fawkes Day is an especially interesting case. Why did South Australians continue to observe Guy Fawkes Day until the 1970s? Certainly not because we were instructed to or because Guy Fawkes' attempt to blow up the British House of Lords in 1605 had any continuing meaning. (Although I must admit that one of my favourite graffiti is "Vote 1 Guy Fawkes --- the only man to enter Parliament with honest intentions".) Perhaps the long-standing attraction of bonfires and firecrackers is sufficient explanation.

Indeed, the lighting of bonfires at Midsummer dates from ancient times, when they were used ritually to strengthen the sun, it having reached its zenith. They were common all over Europe, and Midsummer is still one of the important occasions of the Swedish year.

Not so well known is the fact that our Cornish immigrants continued the custom of Midsummer bonfires in South Australia, both at Burra and Moonta, and maintained the northern hemisphere Midsummer Day of June 24th.

Oswald Pryor in *Australia's Little Cornwall* (Rigby, 1962) recorded:

The first traditional bonfire at Moonta was lit on June 24, 1862. From then on increasing numbers of people took part in the celebration of the ancient custom. In 1867 a large pyre was built on a sandhill, and fifty smaller fires were lit in other places. The day became a local public holiday for nearly thirty years. Crackers, skyrockets and the exploding of heavy charges of powder "borrowed" from the mine magazine were added to the ceremonial lighting of bonfires. For weeks before "Bonfire Day" boys and men could be seen bringing in sticks and brush to build the pyres, which were lit soon after nightfall. The final act of the evening, after the fires had died down, was to roast potatoes in the ashes and eat them with butter and salt. (p. 165)

Reminiscing in the *Burra Record*, 23 May 1934, Solomon Williams (1846-1948) recalled:

Bonfires were quite an institution among the boys on midwinter nights. In preparation for this all old bones, rags or other inflammable materials were

collected and heaped in some convenient place. The greasier the bones the better they would burn and a marrow bone was a treasure, it flared so grandly. Boys ran from fire to fire with firesticks, waving them in circles, figure-eights and so on, at the same time singing the slogan "Hip Hip Hooray, midsummer day is passing away". When the fires were getting low enough there was a procession of boys jumping over it. . . . One advantage of the bonfire was that it cleared up a good deal of accumulated rubbish. But one can imagine the odor of the atmosphere on a still night.

Street Music

Entries for dancing, music and song are absent from the indexes of most Australian history books. The following snippets on the organ-grinders who frequented Rundle Street in the 1870s are taken from the pages of our first newspaper, the *South Australian Register*.

[They] earn their living by playing hurdy-gurdies. . . . A friend of mine the other day gave one of them a shilling to go away. The afflicted creature took the shilling and then, in a spirit of generosity (I presume), remained and gave my friend a double dose of discord. (21/10/1867, p. 2)

Young boys are being trained up by the organ-grinders to be a future pest to society. (1/5/1873, p. 7)

From early morn till dewy eve in Rundle Street is one continual noise. . . . It is at times impossible to transact business, especially in matters of figures, to say nothing of the nuisance caused by the boy or boys who solicit by thrusting a dirty greasy box into the face almost of every person passing, and then by way of a change take a roll on the pavement or in the gutter until called to duty by a choice selection of Billingsgate and a cuff or two in the bargain from the 'Por Bli Man'. I would cheerfully subscribe weekly, monthly or yearly to be rid of them, and I feel sure there are many who would do the same. (9/7/1875, p. 6 & 10/7/1875, p. 5)

Further Reading

While there is a diverse range of publications on aspects of Australian folklife, the formal study of folklife/folklore as a subject in its own right and one which encompasses more than folksongs, yarns and bush ballads has been slow to develop in Australia. However, recent years have seen the publication of Graham Seal: *The Hidden Culture: Folklore in Australian Society* (OUP, Melbourne, 1989), June Factor: *Captain Cook Chased a Chook: Children's Folklore in Australia* (Penguin, Ringwood, 1988) and Gwenda Davey & Graham Seal (eds.): *The Oxford Companion to Australian Folklore* (OUP, Melbourne, 1993). There is also the journal *Australian Folklore*, which has appeared since 1987 and is now published for the Australian Folklore Association by the University of New England, Armidale, NSW. The journal is at www.une.edu.au/arts/Folklore

Was Adelaide Prof. guilty of murder?

In December 1871 a young man of 22, the son of a wealthy squatter of the Upper Murray, left Fiji on board the brig *Carl* for a cruise around the South Sea islands. The ship, soon to become notorious, was a black-birder, engaged in the systematic abduction and enslavement of native islanders and when it returned to Levuka five months later the young man, along with the captain and crew, was arrested on charges of kidnapping and attempted murder.

His name was Archibald Watson and he was later to become the Professor of Anatomy at the University of Adelaide Medical School, a position he held for almost thirty-five years. A colourful and charismatic figure throughout his medical career, he was well known for his outstanding skills as a surgeon and teacher as well as for his abrasive manner and eccentric behaviour. In later life he was wont to refer to his South Pacific experiences in highly romantic terms but in fact they preyed on his mind and on many occasions sunk him into black moods of depression and despair, and resulted in bouts of self-recrimination which he referred to as "whipping the cat".

In *Painting the Islands Vermilion: Archibald Watson and the Brig Carl* (Melbourne University Press, 1999), Jennifer Carter presents a richly-detailed account of the whole shameful business, placing it in the context of Watson's earlier and later life and providing substantial evidence that he was as much implicated in the wrongdoings of 1871-72 as any of the crew.

The *Carl* was owned by Dr. James Patrick Murray, a villainous and unscrupulous profiteer who, on the previous voyage (in which Watson had not participated), had, with the collaboration of the captain, Joseph Armstrong, and the crew, captured and subsequently murdered seventy islanders. Their usual method of seizure was to entice the natives close to the ship and then drop bars of pig-iron into their canoes, capsizing them and thus enabling the crew to haul the stunned unfortunates on board and imprison them in the hold. Scores of men were taken from a number of islands but one night they revolted and attempted to set fire to the ship. Whereupon Murray and the crew fired on them in the hold, killing fifty and wounding a further twenty. All, dead and wounded alike, were then thrown overboard.

On the second trip, in which Watson seems to have been a willing participant, 101 islanders were captured and taken back to Fiji. Watson's log of the voyage is published here in full and reveals a callous disregard for the natives' plight. The entire crew was arrested on their return and several charges were laid, relating to both voyages. Murray, however, turned Queen's evidence and escaped all retribution for his deeds. Watson was remanded on bail but was apparently

given protection by friends and supporters in the Fijian government and soon fled to Germany where he began his medical studies.

Apart from the comprehensive account of the slave-trading activities and their judicial aftermath, there are further chapters on Watson's family background, his experiences of inter-racial conflict in Victoria, his long and controversial academic career and his habitual womanising. The book has an extensive bibliography and detailed footnotes as well as appendices which reprint several legal depositions including one from an abducted islander, Kate, which has the damning statement: "Watson was very angry with me for telling the Consul about his shooting on board the *Carl*."

This is history at its most riveting. Carter has an engaging and often witty style and shows a fine sense of responsibility in considering the evidence. She presents Watson as a complex character with both endearing and downright offensive aspects to his personality. We may deplore his actions but we cannot deny the fascination of his story. -- J.H.

Available from Imprints Booksellers, The Book Place and Angus and Robertson. R.R.P. \$45.00.



History SA deadline

The deadline for all material for the January 2000 issue of the Newsletter is Friday, December 17th. It should be addressed to the Editor, John Healey, whose contact details appear on page 2.

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