

History SA

Newsletter of the Historical Society of South Australia

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No. 152, January 2001

Bang, bang, toot, toot!

From the 1890s through to the 1940s, virtually every state school in South Australia had a drum and fife band. They operated in the community as much as in the schools, serving as the town band for ceremonial occasions and often being used to welcome royalty and local dignitaries. As such, they represented the public face of both school and town.

In our first lecture for 2001, "Drums and Fifes: Music Education in South Australian Primary Schools, 1875-1950", to be given in the Chapel at Prince Alfred College, Kent Town, on Friday, February 2nd, Dr. Jane Southcott will examine the ways in which the bands functioned, the instruments they used and the mandatory discipline and drilling involved. The bands were seen as a way of imposing a system of order and control on students and were often taught by the town policeman or a retired military man. Dr. Southcott has drawn her material from the records of the Education Department, individual school histories, the *Education Gazette* and the *Children's Hour*, and will include a host of entertaining stories and intriguing photos.

The evening will begin at 8.00 p.m. with the presentation of the 2000 History Essay Prizes for high school students. Please note that this meeting will be held in the air-conditioned Chapel which is just to the east of our normal venue, the Prince Philip Theatre.

Dr. Jane Southcott has an M.A. in Music Education from London University and a Ph.D. in Education Curriculum History from Deakin University. She taught at Findon High School and P.G.C. and lectured at the S.A. College of the Arts and Education before being appointed Senior Lecturer in Education at Monash University where she has trained teachers and supervised post-graduate students for the last five years. She has published numerous articles on music education in both Australian and international journals. 


Damned unfair, Sir!

Few issues in the history of cricket have aroused as much controversy as the "bodyline" bowling used by the English team in their tour of Australia in the summer of 1932/33. The tactic, practised by the English bowlers Larwood and Voce, was intended to intimidate the Australian batsmen and force them to play shots to fielders close on the leg side. The English euphemistically called it "leg theory" but Australians regarded it as being outside the spirit of the game and it became an ethical issue as much as a tactical one.

In his lecture, "Bodywhine: Responses to the Adelaide Test Match, 1933", to be given in the Prince Philip Theatre, Prince Alfred College, Kent Town, on Friday, March 2nd, at 8.00 p.m., Dr. Bernard Whimpress will take a close look at what local people were saying at the time, as expressed in newspaper editorials, cartoons and letters to the editor.

It was a series that seriously threatened relations between England and Australia and the situation was not helped by the intransigent attitude of the English captain, Douglas

Jardine, who hated criticism, insisted on wearing his brightly-coloured Oxford University cap on the field and locked Adelaide cricket fans out of the practice sessions. In contrast, the Aussie captain, Bill Woodfull, took a strong moral stance and refused to countenance his bowlers' using bodyline in retaliation.

Dr. Bernard Whimpress has a Ph.D. in History from Flinders University and has served as Oral Historian to the Adelaide City Council and as Publications Manager for the S.A.N.F.L. He has written seven books on sporting history, the most recent of which was *Passport to Nowhere: Aborigines in Australian Cricket, 1850-1939*. For the last six years he has been the S.A. Cricket Association Historian and the Curator of the Adelaide Oval Museum. 



From The News, 16/1/33

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 arouse interest in and promote the study and discussion of history, especially South Australian and Australian history.
- 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 co-operate with similar societies throughout Australia.
- To do all such things as are conducive or incidental to the attainment of any of the above objects.

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

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

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Stained glass tour

The HSSA field trip on Sunday, March 11th, will provide a rich feast of colour and light as Peter and June Donovan lead us on a walking tour of Adelaide's stained glass windows, explaining as we go some of the history as well as the intricacies and mechanics of this art form.


The tour will begin in the Brookman Hall of the former Institute of Technology with the work of E.F. Troy, whose firm was responsible for the vibrant "Empire" window, completed in 1903. The oriel window, produced by the firm of H.L. Vosz, another early Adelaide glazier, displays coats-of-arms and portraits of notable scientists. From there we will proceed to Scots Church which features the more modern work of Lawrence Lee, one of the designers of the nave windows of Coventry Cathedral.

If we receive permission to enter Government House we will see more of Troy's work in his delicate representations of Australian birds. These windows are some of the earliest ones in South Australia to feature specifically Australian themes. We will then walk to the Stock Exchange Building which contains the 1901 "Federation" window, produced by the influential English studio of Morris & Co. This is a window of particular significance because of its purported celebration of Australia's Federation, though, with its images of Canada, India and Africa,

it in fact represents more accurately the ideal of British Empire federation.

Pilgrim Church in Flinders Street displays the work of Albert Ernest Clarkson who took over the firm of H.L. Vosz in 1915, renaming it Clarkson Ltd. to conform to the prevailing anti-German sentiment. And finally, at St. Francis Xavier's Cathedral, we will see some stunning windows dating from 1928-30, produced by several studios including the prolific Melbourne firm of Brooks Robinson.

The cost of the tour will be \$4.00, payable on the day. Please assemble by 2.00 p.m. outside the main entrance to the Brookman Building, University of South Australia, on the corner of North Terrace and Frome Road. The walk will take approximately two hours.

Peter Donovan has an M.A. in History from Flinders University and has also studied at the International Centre for Conservation in Rome. His wife June has a B.A. in History and they are partners in the consulting firm of Donovan and Associates, which recently celebrated its twentieth anniversary. They specialize in heritage work and historical conservation and together have produced over thirty books, including regional histories, corporate histories and major heritage surveys. In 1986 they published *150 Years of Stained and Painted Glass* which contains colour photographs of many of the windows we will inspect on the tour. 


Director parties as Jervois Building dies

In an extraordinary display of bad taste, the Director of the State Library, Bronwyn Halliday, threw a party in the emptied Jervois Building on November 22nd, as soon as all the books were gone. The PR stunt backfired, however, when over forty members and supporters of the HSSA mounted a protest at the door, displaying a banner and handing out leaflets to the guests as they arrived. It was quickly discovered that many of the guests strongly supported the stance that the Society has taken and were horrified that, when the redevelopment programme is complete, the Mortlock Collection of South Australiana will not be restored to the Jervois Wing and the latter will no longer be an active, working library.


The Director was clearly embarrassed when she found over a hundred of her invited guests wearing badges that read "Keep the Mortlock in the Jervois Building". She was certainly not quite in command of herself when she came out to the door and yelled at the President of the HSSA, Dr. Robert Nicol: "It's my party, not yours!" She also refused to allow our members to distribute leaflets inside the building, which would seem to negate her claim to be receptive to the opinions of library users.

The Director, with five of her staff, recently met with Dr. Nicol, Brian Samuels (Principal Heritage Officer with the Department for Environment and Heritage) and the Editor of *History SA* to discuss the future of the Jervois Wing, but the Library administration seems stubbornly committed to their plans. Reasons given as to why the building will no longer house the Mortlock Collection included:

- The sun shines in the windows.
- The staff aren't tall enough to reach the computers on the reference desk.
- The chairs are too heavy to move around.
- Individually sponsored chairs have to stay in particular bays.
- It's too hard to bring power into the wing.
- It's too hard to organize wheelchair access to the balconies.
- The flashbulbs of tourist parties will distract researchers.

People should also be aware that the plan to erect an extra storey on the Bastyan Wing has now been abandoned due to funding cuts by the Department for Administrative and Information Services. 

History SA deadline

The deadline for all material for the March 2001 issue of the Newsletter is Friday, February 9th. It should be addressed to John Healey, Editor, *History SA*, 27 Germein St., Semaphore, S.A. 5019. 

Mortlock Archives

by Roger André


A generous donation given to the Library in memory of Lady Hawker has contributed to the acquisition of more plans for the Jackman Gooden Collection, augmented by a substantial donation of plans made under the Cultural Gifts Programme. Nineteenth-century items include a rare 1878 design by Daniel Garlick for a mill at Mallala, Thomas English's 1880 design for the Gladstone Institute and Ernest Bayer's elevation for the Ramsgate Hotel featuring the superb balcony added in 1897. From the Federation period there are plans for Adelaide Oval pavilions and Moorak homestead near Mount Gambier. The 1920s are represented by plans for rural banks, Tattersalls Club, Hooper's furnishing arcade and Naracoorte's Kincaid Hotel.

Architectural plans separately deposited were commissioned by the Royal Institution for the Blind and include drawings (1914) for their North Adelaide building, sadly demolished in the seventies. Holdings of the Aborigines' Advancement League, the Oral History Association and Penguin Club records have also grown and records of Karoonda and Snowtown Methodist circuits and their constituent churches, some long gone, have recently been processed. Likewise, records of the Lower Inman Young Peoples' Social Club (1934-1951) and the Lower Inman Hall Committee reflect the activities of a little country community of which scant evidence remains.

The transfer of union records to archival custody has fallen off, an exception being minutes (1917-1926) of the Painters and Decorators Union at Port Adelaide. Nineteenth and twentieth-century minutes have been accessioned for John Martin's archives and supplementary items deposited for J.S. Watts & Sons' (brick-makers) and Horwood Bagshaw's record groups. Help has been sought from the Millicent National Trust Museum to identify an early illustration of one of Horwood Bagshaw's agricultural machines.

An exquisite family miniature has been donated with papers of antique dealer Lyndall Bonnear and millinery samples can be found amongst the papers of pre-war teacher Rhoda Gehrike. Questionnaires completed by teachers employed between 1919 and 1964 and used by educationist Anthony McGuire for his Ph.D. thesis should prove useful to fellow researchers.

As the archival collection is set up to preserve original documents, it has been gratifying to receive the originals of Jesse Wake's diary aboard the *Burlington*, John Carter's 1884-85 shipboard diary and well-known historian Geoffrey Manning's 1945 diary written while on active service in the navy.

To end on a contemporary note, music scores meticulously written by the post-modernist composer Graeme Koehne have been donated through the Cultural Gifts Programme. 

Coming Events

- February 2 HSSA Meeting** Presentation of History Essay Prizes for 2000, followed by Dr. Jane Southcott's lecture: "Drums and Fifes: Music Education in South Australian Primary Schools, 1875-1950". The Chapel, Prince Alfred College, Kent Town. 8.00 p.m. See page 1.
- February 7 Kensington & Norwood Hist. Soc.** Hon. John Bannon: "S.A.'s Contribution to Federation". Don Pyatt Centre, 175 Norwood Pde., Norwood. 8.00 p.m.
- February 14 Friends of the S.A. Museum** Dr. Steve Donnellan: "Seeing Double" – on cloning. Armoury Gallery, rear of S.A. Museum, North Terrace. 6.00 p.m.
- February 19 Burnside Hist. Soc.** Dr. Angelo Morella: "Take Three Times a Day". Masonic Hall, 1 Fisher St., Tasmore. 8.00 p.m.
- February 20 History Alliance** Greg Mackie: "History, Writing and the Arts". Australian Education Union, 164 Greenhill Rd., Parkside. 7.00 p.m.
- February 21 Port Adelaide Hist. Soc.** Guided tour of "The Port to the East". Meet at the Lighthouse, No. 1 Wharf, Port Adelaide. 7.00 p.m.
- February 28 S.A. Genealogy & Heraldry Soc.** Mary Hoskins: "The Barr Smith Library as a Source for S.A. History". S.A.G.H.S., 201 Unley Rd., Unley. 7.45 p.m.
- March 2 HSSA Meeting** Dr. Bernard Whimpress: "Bodywhine: Responses to the Adelaide Test Match, 1933". Prince Philip Theatre, Prince Alfred College, Kent Town. 8.00 p.m. See page 1 for details.
- March 11 HSSA Field Trip** Stained Glass Windows of Adelaide. Led by Peter and June Donovan. Brookman Bldg., cnr. Nth. Tce. & Frome Rd. 2.00 p.m. See page 2.
- March 14 Mitcham Hist. Soc.** Guided walk of West Mitcham Cemetery, led by Maggie Ragless. Meet at the cemetery, Price Ave., Clapham. 7.30 p.m.
- March 15 Engineering Heritage Branch** Ron Stewien: "The East-West Railway". I.E.A. Rooms, 11 Bagot St., North Adelaide. 5.30 p.m.
- March 18 Enfield & Dist. Hist. Soc.** Official opening of the new Sunnybrae Farm Federation Pavilion. Gallipoli Grove, Regency Park. 2.00 p.m.
- March 19 Burnside Hist. Soc.** Elizabeth Rogers: "The Irish and other Celtic Connections at Carrick Hill". Masonic Hall, 1 Fisher St., Tasmore. 8.00 p.m.
- March 21 Pt. Adelaide Hist. Soc.** Dr. Simon Cameron: "Silent Witnesses". Semaphore Library, 14 Semaphore Rd., Semaphore. 8.00 p.m.
- March 23 Friends of the S.A. Museum** Great Debate: "That the Museum has stuffed up the animals". 7.00 p.m. For details please ring Joy Mallett on 8251 3914.
- March 26 West Torrens Hist. Soc.** Bob Hank: "Life in Lockleys". 327 Marion Rd., North Plympton. 7.45 p.m.
- March 28 S.A. Genealogy & Heraldry Soc.** Maggie Ragless: "Your Ancestors are Our Pioneers". S.A.G.H.S., 201 Unley Rd., Unley. 7.45 p.m.
- March 28 Enfield & Dist. Hist. Soc.** Members' Night: "Tall Tales and True of Travel Adventures". Enfield Community Centre, 540 Regency Rd., Enfield. 7.45 p.m.

Exhibitions

- Arrival and Settlement of Vietnamese People in South Australia** Migration Museum, Kintore Ave. Until March 9.
- The Bay Discovery Centre** Information, photographs, audio-visuals and memorabilia recording the history of Holdfast Bay. With a display of artefacts from beneath the jetty by the Society for Underwater Historical Research. Glenelg Town Hall, Moseley Square, Glenelg. Permanent exhibition from February 12.
- Evening at Home** An exhibition of hobbies and home entertainments. Unley Museum, 80 Edmund Ave., Unley. Until March 31.
- Founders of Federation** Posters and memorabilia highlighting the South Australian figures of Federation. West Terrace Cemetery. Ongoing exhibition.
- Generations** Photo exhibition on Greek life in Australia. Migration Museum, Kintore Ave. March 16 – June 30.
- The Greek Contribution to Community Life in South Australia** Migration Museum, Kintore Ave. March 16 – May 31.
- The Snowy Mountains Scheme: The First 50 Years** 100 photographs celebrating the Scheme's continuing contribution to Australia's social and economic development. Migration Museum, Kintore Ave. January 9 – February 28.
- Yes for Australia: South Australia and Federation** Documents, photographs, cartoons, memorabilia. 3rd floor, South Australian Museum, North Terrace. Until February 28.


Disc e-dition

The Origins & Creation of the People's Parklands of Adelaide

This is another excellent effort by Kath Crilly who has put together a collage of useful references and pertinent quotes relating to the parklands, derived from the founders of South Australia and the figureheads of its early development. It comes in the form of a floppy disc, formatted as a web-site, with links to other sites if you are on the Internet.

Chapter headings include "The Inspirers & Role Models", "The Laying Out & Dedication of the Park Lands of Adelaide", "Occupation of the People's Park Lands", "The Municipal Act of Adelaide 1840" and "Alienation & Misappropriation".

The present State Government would do well to heed the words of Sir George Strickland Kingston, Speaker of the House of Assembly, who wrote to the *Advertiser* on November 12th, 1877, saying: "I deny the right of the Government to interfere with or make use of any portion of the Park Lands not specially reserved or set apart for Government purposes by Colonel Light, and so described on his original plan of the city."

The disc is priced at \$5.50 and may be obtained by phoning Kath Crilly on 8294 2904. 

The future of the past

The National Inquiry into School History was established early last year by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA) to examine the nature and status of history teaching in Australian schools. The report has now been issued and readers will not be surprised at most of its findings. The following summary is taken from the report itself and from an article written by the inquiry team leader, Associate Professor Tony Taylor of Monash University, printed in the September issue of *History*, the magazine of the Royal Australian Historical Society.

The team adopted a primarily qualitative approach to the task. Members went to all states and territories to meet and listen to teachers, visit schools, conduct focus group meetings, lead round-table discussions with subject associations, attend conferences and interview curriculum officials. In all, the team interviewed or met about 150 teachers, covering all school sectors, all socio-economic backgrounds and all geographic areas. This process represented, in simple arithmetic terms, about 1500 years of recent history teaching experience. At the same time, a review of current national and international school history policy was conducted and an analysis of national and international research and best practice was undertaken.

The findings may be summarized as follows:

First, it was discovered that there was a substantial body of empirically-based evidence, accumulated since 1980, to suggest that the study of history in schools was a unique and specialized form of study, requiring a separate school identity in the curriculum as well as expert teaching.

Secondly, the generic approach to social studies, SOSE (Studies of Society and the Environment), seemed to have been opportunistically manipulated at the school level in most states to force SOSE (and therefore history) into the margins of the school curriculum. This had led to large numbers of teachers with little or no history background being allocated history lessons. The SOSE phenomenon, called "Social Slops" in South Australia and Western Australia, appeared to create uncertainty amongst school students about what historical study really was --- thus leading to poorly informed choices being made about senior school subjects.

Thirdly, there had been a consequential overall decline in the numbers of senior high school students taking history. In the strongly generic SOSE states of South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania, senior history numbers seemed to have suffered quite badly during the 1990s. In South Australia, for example, the number of students taking all histories fell from 3,444 in 1993 to 2,153 in 1998, and in the same period the number of students taking Australian history fell from 1,561 to 628. Although the number of students

in this state successfully completing Year 12 rose from 9,359 in 1993 to 10,236 in 1998, the percentage of them studying history fell from 37% to 21%.

Finally, the team ascertained that, partly because of the primacy of SOSE, there was a very low level of informed debate and research about school history in Australia. What was remarkable was that, since 1977, not one book on the teaching and learning of history in Australia had been published. Indeed, it could be said that Australia was about ten years behind the European nations in the development of professional attitudes to school history. In Australia, we were still discussing whether we should have history in school at all, whilst other nations were debating, in very sophisticated terms, what kind of school history they should have.

The main recommendations of the report were:

- A national seminar on the teaching and learning of Australian history in schools should be convened by DETYA as soon as practicable. Participants would include selected academic historians, leading history teachers and curriculum officials from Commonwealth and state departments.
- A National Centre for History Education (which would include Civics and Citizenship Education) should be established and supported by Commonwealth funding for the first three years. The Centre would act as a national and international research centre for history education, as a focus for the advocacy of information technology in teaching and learning history in schools, as a curriculum and professional development reference source and as a centre for the dissemination of best practice in history in order to improve student results. A National Association should also be established to promote history education, to share professional information and to foster research initiatives.
- There should be sufficient opportunity for studies in depth, as opposed to the "chronological dash", and there should be teacher/community ownership of local syllabus implementation.
- DETYA should commission a handbook on the teaching and learning of school history. The book would cover primary and secondary teaching issues and would have a national and international research and best practice background.
- Pilot schemes should be established in each state based on local professional development consortia, comprising faculties of education, university history departments, subject associations and employers.
- There should be special emphasis on professional development for regional and rural primary school teachers, with greater use of information technology to support isolated staff.

Now all that remains is for the Government to do something about it. □

“I respectfully beg to state . . .”

by Judy Jeffery and John Healey

The Government Record Group (GRG) 5, held by State Records (S.A.), comprises 360 series from the South Australian Police Department. As might be expected, some are restricted for reasons of privacy but many are freely available to researchers and contain fascinating historical material. The range of topics is extremely broad, not surprising since the police deal with every sector of society and, in early colonial times especially, were responsible for many tasks unrelated to crime. GRG 5 includes an Angaston mortuary register dating from 1885, a Port Augusta horse and camel record book covering 1894 to 1901, a “Totalizator Record” from the Franklin Harbour Racing Club (no date) and a 1936 Hamley Bridge register of dairy farm licences.

Series 2 is a set of correspondence received into the Department between 1844 and 1979, much of it being letters sent to Headquarters by officers in charge of regional police stations. They provide not only a wealth of historical information but also some touching insights into the lives of isolated police officers struggling to deal with unfamiliar situations. The following extracts give some idea of the treasures to be found.

On 19th December 1859, Police Trooper Paul Foelsche, stationed at Strathalbyn, wrote to George Hamilton, Chief Inspector of Police:

Sir,

With reference to the Commissioner's Memorandum, I beg leave to state that I joined the Force with the intention to remain in it and to devote my time to Police duty. I have always taken great interest in it and do so still and have, as long as I am in the Force, strived to gain the confidence of my officers by means of zealotness, which rule I shall continue as long as I remain in the Force, and trust that my officers never have any cause to believe that I should misuse their confidence by granting me permission to marry.

I therefore trust you will be pleased to grant my request for permission to marry.

*I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
Paul Foelsche, P.T.¹*

Hamilton's reply was immediate and brief:

The applications for permission to marry are becoming too numerous in the Mounted Police. I would be very glad if P.T. Foelsche could get this fancy out of his head and remain in the Police as a single man for a few years more. I should be very sorry if he rendered his position in the Mounted Police insecure by marrying, which he would do as the number of married men is already inconveniently great.²

Trooper Foelsche evidently pursued the matter with some determination because he was married two weeks later. It did not hinder his career. In 1870 he was appointed Sub-Inspector in charge of the newly-formed Northern Territory Mounted Police, a position he held until his retirement in 1904. He became an authority on the language and customs of Northern Australian Aborigines and was a prolific photographer and botanical collector.

On the 16th November 1874, Sergeant Bentley of the Moonta Police Station wrote the following letter to Police Headquarters, enclosing a form from the Moonta Gas Company offering to supply gas at a rate of 15/- per 1000 cubic feet.

I respectfully beg to state that there are three rooms at this Station which I believe would, if lighted by Gas, be cheaper than kerosine, as it is really necessary to keep a light in this Station for at least three nights per week until after midnight, which causes the half-yearly allowance of kerosine to be expended before the time, & for the remainder I have to pay from my private purse.

*Edward Bentley,
Sgt. of Police³*

Again, the Commissioner's reply was brief:

I cannot recommend that the Police Station at Moonta be lit with gas --- it is too expensive.³

On 9th December 1874, the Police were notified of a Glenelg Council resolution, designed, no doubt, to protect the morals or the sensibilities of the citizens.

*Town Clerk's Office, Glenelg
To the Commissioner of Police
Sir,*

I have the honor, by direction of the Council of the Town of Glenelg, to inform you that a Resolution has been passed by the Council that no Male will be permitted to bathe in the sea (except from machines) within the Corporation Boundry between the hours of nine o'clock in the morning and five o'clock in the evening after the 20th day of December 1874, except from the beach on the north side of the Creek, and to request that you will be pleased to give instructions to the Policeman stationed at Glenelg to see that the resolution of the Council be strictly carried out.

*I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
J. Soal, Town Clerk⁴*

And finally, a series of three letters from P.T. Shaw, stationed at Willunga, to Senior Inspector George Hamilton, reporting on the wreck of the *Manhow* in August 1857 and the problems that ensued.

Aug. 20th 1857

Sir,

In compliance with a dispatch received from Headquarters by P.T. Smith requesting a statement

of the particulars connected with the wreck, I have the honor to forward the following for the information of the Commissioner.

That about 10 a.m. on Monday morning I received information of a wreck at Port Willunga from Mr. T. Turpin, Collector of Customs, upon which I, in company with P.T. Howe, proceeded immediately to render any assistance. Having arrived at the place where the vessel was laying, being about 1½ miles on the southern side of the Port Willunga jetty, I made enquiries and was informed by one of the officers that it was a vessel called the "Manhow", of 1113 tons burthen.

Bound from Hong Kong to Guichen Bay with 388 passengers and 50 of a crew, all Chinamen, had 113 days out on their passage, also that they had run short of firewood and had brought to anchor at the light ship on Sunday night the 16th inst. when it came on to blow very hard and they parted their anchor and were compelled to get under weigh. The wind still increased and at half past three on Monday morning were drifted ashore. The vessel has got no cargo, only provisions and ballast. Every endeavour was made to land the passengers but the ship's boats were not fit for that purpose, the surf being too rough at that time, until a large boat was got and being well manned a number of them were got off from the ship that night. . .

On Tuesday 18th the whole of the passengers were landed safe, also a quantity of their luggage and ship stores and on Wednesday 19th the whole of their luggage was landed from the ship on to the beach. . .

Thursday 20th the passengers, having got all their stores ashore, removed from the wreck up to Port Willunga where they have pitched their tents and remain at present. A person from Adelaide has engaged to act as guide for 220 of them who intend to leave for Melbourne on Monday 24th inst. And I further beg to state that not the least disturbance has taken place amongst them up to the present time. . .

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
J. Shaw, P.T. in charge⁵

He wrote again on August 25th:

Sir,

I have the honor to report for your information that the Chinese having left Port Willunga arrived at Willunga about twelve o'clock today. Edwards, the person who has contracted to take them to Melbourne was about to leave four of them at Willunga in consequence of sickness. . . I reported the case to J. Colville, J.P., that gentleman, seeing that the contractor could not be compelled to take them with him (as he had only engaged to show them the way to Melbourne), he thought the only alternative was to have them sent to the hospital. P.T. Shaw requested Dr. Jay to examine them as to the nature of their sickness. He has also prescribed for one who is very bad with inflammation and in a very bad state.

Three of those who are sick appear to be determined to go with the others, although they do not appear to be able to do so. They are encamped in a paddock, the property of Mr. Toll, Publican, Willunga. Edwards the contractor intends to begin his journey with those who are able to go on Tuesday morning and I respectfully beg to be instructed how I am to act with the sick who are left behind.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
J. Shaw, P.T. in charge⁶

And again, the following day:

Sir,

I have the honor to report for your information that an inquest was held on the body of Jen Song, one of the Chinese who died on Tuesday evening about five o'clock, and the jury returned the following verdict --- "That the deceased Jen Song came to his death by paralysis in his lungs, accelerated by cold and damp, and not otherwise."

Presentment of the jury: "The jury who have now returned a verdict on the body of the deceased Jen Song cannot separate without expressing their alarm and terror at the terrible disease introduced amongst our population --- namely, the Leprosy --- and consider the Government are in duty bound to suppress the disease from spreading and to endeavour to stop the influx of the Chinese into this colony."

I have also the honor to inform you that the body of the deceased was removed from Toll's public house, Willunga (at which place he died), at half past eight this morning to the cemetery (near Willunga) and was buried. I further beg to state that the Chinese left Willunga this morning at 10 a.m. and took with them the other three men that were sick, they promising if they got worse that they would carry them on their back.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
J. Shaw, P.T. in charge⁷

Footnotes:

¹ GRG 5/2/1309/1859

⁵ GRG 5/2/511/1857

² GRG 5/2/1277/1859

⁶ GRG 5/2/no number/1857

³ GRG 5/2/1345/1874

⁷ GRG 5/2/526/1857

⁴ GRG 5/2/1435/1874

Note: The State Records Reading Room is located at Netley Commercial Park, 222 Marion Rd., Netley.

Opening hours: Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri 9.30 a.m.-5.00 p.m.
Thurs 1.00 p.m.-8.00 p.m.

Most of the records referred to above are stored at the Netley repository, adjacent to the Reading Room.

Judy Jeffery has a Ph.D. in American Studies (Political History) from Flinders University, where she tutored in History and Politics for three years. She has worked as a Reference Archivist at State Records since 1989.



The HSSA in action

Above: On Sunday, October 22nd, Brian Samuels led members on a fascinating tour of Port Adelaide. Here he explains the history of Blackler's Buildings, St. Vincent Street, which date from 1865. The loading bay on the side of the building features a timber wall protector which prevented loads from damaging the stonework as they were lifted.

Right and below: On Wednesday, November 22nd, members and supporters of the HSSA protested on the steps of the Jervois Wing of the State Library against the permanent removal of the Mortlock Collection from the building. (Photographs by Peter Bell)





The Historical Societies Picnic in Elder Park on Sunday, November 19th, saw thirty-five organizations setting up displays of books, journals, photographs, vehicles and a wide variety of memorabilia. It provided an opportunity to make useful contacts and to publicize past achievements, present activities and future programmes. Feedback has been very positive, with many of the societies looking forward to the next picnic. It is hoped that this will become a biennial event.

Above: Conversations flow freely as the band plays on.

Right: Two ladies from the Victoriana Society in full regalia.

Below: The S.A. Police Historical Society's Black Maria and Chrysler Royal.



The memoirs of “Honest Tom” Playford (1837-1915)

Part II

Further extracts from the memoirs of the Hon. Thomas Playford, supplied to History SA by Ruth Playford Smith, of Hawthorn, Victoria.

When I had learned all Mugg could teach me and I was between 13 and 14 years of age [c. 1850] my father took me from the school. My education was but poor. I had learned no grammar, geography or history. I was eager to learn more and when my father asked what I would like to be in the future, what work I would like so that I might be able to earn my own living, I asked for a day or two to think the matter over before I gave an answer.

When I did answer him, I said I wanted him to send me to St. Peter's College to be educated with a view to my being articled to a lawyer and then earn my living as a professional man. The answer I received was, "I have not the means to send you to St. Peter's. It is too far for you to walk there and I cannot afford to keep a pony for you to ride, nor afford to board you there. As for articling you to a lawyer, I would just as soon article you to the Devil. I believe no lawyer can be a strictly honourable man, for in the interests of guilty clients he has to suppress the truth as far as he possibly can and his moral nature must get warped. I hardly know what to do with you. You are young. In the meantime I will be your teacher and to give you employment will in a short time rent some land and you can farm it, and grow wheat and hay. The wheat we can get ground into flour pollard and bran, and the hay will feed the horses and cows."

This was done, and I was set to work to learn geography, grammar and mensuration, and to improve my writing and to ground me in English I had to write from the Spectator (Addison's) the best of its essays. In the meantime my father rented from Sheriff Newenham 20 acres of good agricultural land just beyond the Church adjoining Mitcham. A wooden plough, harrows and other necessary implements were purchased, the 20 acres were divided into two paddocks, another horse was purchased, and yearly I

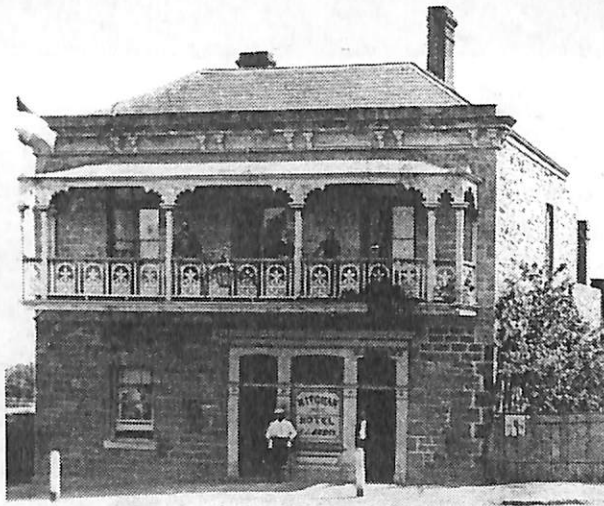
ploughed, sowed, reaped and mowed the crop. 10 acres were mowed for hay and 10 reaped with a sickle for wheat, which was the first year thrashed by a flail by a Mr. Lock, an old agricultural labourer, for 1/- a bushel, cleaned of chaff by a borrowed winnower from Mr. Finlayson. I soon learned to use the flail, and the second year did the thrashing myself. It was fearfully hot work. One had to work in the blazing sun, for it was then that the grain shed most freely. The next and subsequent years we paid a Mr. Cant 19d a bushel for thrashing with a horse machine.

In my young days the work on the farm was fearfully laborious. Take ploughing. With a swing plough, the ploughman had to regulate the width and depth of the furrow, walking all the time. Now that is done for him by wheels and he can, in gang ploughs, ride as well. Good ploughing was then a work of skill, and ploughing matches for prizes were held all over the Colony. They have not been held for many years, because there is no skill required in ploughing now. We used to reap with a sickle, with a bent back all day long in the blazing sun; now with a scythe, swinging it from morning till night. I found both reaping and sowing very laborious work. I used to consider ½ acre reaped and 1 acre sowed a good day's work. Now the harvester reaps, thrashes, winnows and bags the grain in one operation; the mower and binder takes the place of the scythe; and all this work is done by men seated on the machines.

When farming work did not occupy my time I used to cart stone from the freestone Mitcham quarry for my cousin, Joseph Hague, sand from the creek, stone for the roads, and bricks from Hindmarsh. After some years my father purchased 20 acres of land below Mitcham and he then gave up Newenham's land.

I joined the Mitcham Building Society on its being founded, and at a salary of £20 a year was its first Secretary, which position I held until I left Mitcham, when Mr. Nisbett, a carpenter, took my place. Theatres and dancing were an abomination to my father, but I did manage to go once to the first theatre built in Adelaide and I heard sing and act the notorious Lola Montes and the comic actor Greville. I also, unknown to my father, learned to dance.

We had a publican, a most respectable man, a Mr. Taylor, with some grown-up daughters. He had a large room in his hotel built by my cousin Hague, for which I had carted stone, sand and lime. It was



The Brownhill Creek Inn, Albert Street, Mitcham, where Tom Playford attended dancing classes.

*Photo c. 1885, after the inn became the Mitcham Hotel.
[Courtesy of Mitcham Local History Collection]*

quite apart from the bar, and this room was used by a dancing teacher who used to come from Adelaide once a week to instruct those who wanted to learn to dance. I joined the class and got the day fixed for the dancing lessons to be fixed on a day when my father would be in town preaching in the evening and would not be home at the earliest till 9.30. The Public House was only about 60 yards from our home and I used to manage to run home in time to take his horse, unsaddle him and put him into the stable, then into the bedroom, and then up went the window (which I had previously greased so that it should make no noise), and then back to the dancing.



*Henry Taylor, photographed by Duryea, c.1880.
[Courtesy of Mitcham Local History Collection]*

I could not have done this with any safety unless my mother connived at it, for good mother that she was, she always made it a practice just before going to bed to give a look into her children's bedroom to see that we were all right and properly covered up.

Now at that time in Mitcham there were two families of the name of Prince in no wise related. The father of Harry had come from the city of Derby in England and he used to supply the people of Mitcham with water from the creek by means of a barrel fixed to a frame with shafts attached and drawn by a horse. We used to call him water man Prince; the other we called crockery ware Prince.

The history of the crockery Prince boys, except the youngest, is a very sad one. Billy was taken from Mugg's school, sent to, I think, Young's school in Adelaide. This was the best private school in the Colony at the time and among others who were of note in after life who were educated there were the Right Honourable C.C. Kingston, Q.C. and P.C., Caleb Peacock, J.H. Finlayson, Editor of the Register.

After leaving Young's, Billy was articled to lawyer Parker and it was then that he picked up with a fast lot of young men and took to drink and other vices. Parker was indignant and handed him over to Boucaut and he somehow managed to pass his examinations and became a full fledged lawyer. He went to Strathalbyn and practised his profession but drink was his curse and he had to leave stone broke. His father would do nothing for him and in his distress he went to Boucaut who very kindly interested his father-in-law, McCulloch, a squatter, who agreed to send him to one of his stations in the far north as book keeper and boundary rider, where he could not

get his curse, drink. He stayed there until his wages had accumulated, got his cheque, started for Adelaide, got down as far as the Burra, stayed at a public house and proceeded to knock down his cheque as was then so common among station hands, drinking heavily himself and treating to drink all who would join him. The end was the purchase of a bottle of laudanum, going to his bedroom, drinking it in the night and being found dead in his bed in the morning.

The second son, James . . . came home mostly drunk and Annie [his wife, and Tom Playford's sister] had to go to market, but Prince did not stop home and work, for while she was from home he very often walked about two miles to Cole's public house on the top of the hill at the back of Mitcham to get drink and come back with a can of beer to the garden to give to his men. This went on for some years until at last his father interfered, turned him off the garden, paid to passage to New Zealand and packed him off. My father in the meantime bought Annie a house in Norwood, and Prince and my father supported her and her children.

James Prince took the pledge in New Zealand, wrote penitent letters to his wife and father, the result being that he was brought back, was procured a place in a store in town and lived apparently for some years a reputable life free from the craving for drink. It appeared he took to drinking chlorodine and one night he took an overdose and died.

The third son, whose name I have forgotten, was employed in a shop at Kapunda and killed himself by cutting his throat. It was said that he had robbed his master and, fearing detection, made away with his life.

The fourth son was employed at White Counsels and Co., Adelaide, took to drink and behaved like his eldest brothers for a time, repented, took the pledge, married Miss Gardiner, storekeeper of Mitcham's daughter, and is now (1909) a reputable member of society.



'The notorious Lola Montez', singer and dancer, who visited Adelaide in 1855.

Possums, when we came to Mitcham, were very plentiful on the front hills. On moonlight nights we used to shoot them in the trees. Dogs were used to find them; they were trained to stop at the foot of the tree when they had found one, and bark until the hunters arrived. I had a dog called "Carl" who was a celebrated possum finder. As time went by possums became scarce on the front hills and latterly we had to go further afield. We frequently went as far ⇨

as the Government Farm, now Victoria Park, coming home in the early morning with as many as we could carry. I used to skin mine, tan them, and my mother sewed them together. They made nice warm rugs. The ring-tailed variety was scarce; the common possum very plentiful in Mitcham's early days. I am told both kinds are extinct or nearly so now.

As time rolled on, the population increased and by the time I was 20 years of age I think there were then about the same number of people in Mitcham as there is now in 1909. Like Magill and other old-established townships at the foot of the Mount Lofty Ranges, the distance from town and the expense of travelling, in spite of the trams, has prevented their progress, while Unley and other townships near the city have vastly increased, tram fares being lower being the principal cause.

Of notable people who made their home in Mitcham I might mention Mr. Arthur Blyth, afterwards a K.C.M.G.; Mr. Morgan, afterwards Sir William, at one time Premier (I was his Commissioner of Crown Lands); Mr. Parker, a leading lawyer; Mr. Grainger, a nominated member of the old Legislative Council, which was partly nominated by the Governor and partly elected. A little [out] of the township lived the Sheriff, Mr. Newenham; Mr. Barclay, a leading lawyer; Mr. Higgs, a lawyer; Mr. Murray, who founded the company that took his name (He was in Parliament for a time); Mr. Torrens, the author of the Real Property Act. All these resided on land immediately adjoining Mitcham between the years 1850-57 or 1860.

Of those of lesser note were Mr. Gardiner, the storekeeper, a great friend of mine (He came from Glasgow and gave me an insight into Scottish life in that part of Scotland); Mr. Nisbett, a carpenter from Edinburgh (From him I obtained much information about Scottish literature and a very fair knowledge of the Ayrshire dialect, so that I was able to read Burns, my favourite poet, with pleasure); Mr. Heritage, a stonemason from Cheltenham, who dressed all the stone of the old Church of England.

With these and their families I was very intimate, but I was most intimate with a family who came to Mitcham about the year 1852-53, of the name of Kinsman, for I married into that family. Some of the children were named Rashleigh and some Kinsman. Mrs. Kinsman, whose Christian name was Phillis --- not a very common one --- had been married twice; first to a Mr. Rashleigh, a farmer who rented a farm

in Cornwall on the sea coast near the little town of St. Kevern --- rented not for any given period but as is, or was, usual in Cornwall for the term of three owners of the fee simple. By him she had one son, John, who stayed in Cornwall; Elizabeth, who married a Mr. Rowe and emigrated with him to the Colony before the Kinsmans; William, who is now alive. John dead, Caroline was the last of the Rashleigh family.

Mrs. Rashleigh's husband was bed-ridden for years before he died and she managed to farm well, skilfully developing good business capacity. A Bible Christian Minister during his rounds used to stop at the farm at the time Rashleigh was alive and subsequently, after Rashleigh's death, Kinsman married



*Mrs. Kinsman's conveyance in front of the Edinburgh Inn, c. 1870.
[Courtesy of Mitcham Local History Collection]*

his widow, then he left the Ministry, but continued to preach as a local preacher for the sect. On the farm he was nearly useless and his wife kept the management in her hands. For some 15 years after she married Kinsman she did this and during the time she gave birth to Mary Jane, Eliza, Grace, Phillipa (who was blind), Rosey, and the last of the family, William. Mr. Kinsman did not like farming and thought they could do better in South Australia where his wife's eldest daughter was living and who had written in glowing terms of its prospects. For some years they had lost money from a disease in the potato crop and only one life was left before their lease would terminate, so it was resolved to sell out and come to South Australia, and they came to Mitcham.

In the meantime gold had been found in Victoria and the men in the Colony were flocking there. Mr. Kinsman resolved to go also and take William and John with him. He stayed in Mitcham long enough to see the rest of his family comfortably settled, and then departed by ship for Melbourne. I heard him preach twice in our little Chapel and thought he was a good preacher. He was a tall, well-built man, with a pleasing serious-looking face, much liked by his own children.

He and the two Rashleighs duly landed in Melbourne and joined with a large party who were leaving Melbourne with horses and carts to carry their luggage to the diggings near Bendigo. It was not then safe to travel alone for robbers abounded in the Black Forest they had to travel through. They made a late start, and camped for the first night not far from Melbourne. Mr. Kinsman was troubled in the afternoon with a bad attack of dysentery, and said to the Rashleighs

that he would walk back to Melbourne and procure some medical advice and medicine, that they were to go on with the party in the morning. If he did not turn up, he would overtake them later on. They went on; he never turned up, and that was the last time he was seen alive by anyone that could be ascertained by the most diligent enquiry made by Mrs. Kinsman and others.

Mrs. Kinsman was informed that a man answering his description had boarded a craft bound to Port Adelaide, that he had died before the vessel got to the Heads, and was taken on shore there to be buried.

It possibly might have been him; the name of the man was unknown and could not be ascertained. Victoria was in a turmoil at the time and disorganization was rampant in every department. No complete record of passengers was kept, nor of burials, or registration of death. All were searched without result. He disappeared like many another in Victoria at the time, leaving no trace behind.

Poor Mrs. Kinsman was thus left to fight her own way in life, mysteriously bereft of her husband. The Rashleighs were old enough to get their own living. With the little money she had, she purchased some cows and sold milk and butter. She saw there was an opening for a passenger conveyance to the city. She started a cart and drove it to town in the morning, returning in the evening. She obtained the mail contract. The traffic increasing, she procured a bus, and her son William drove it. Mr. James of the Norfolk Arms, Rundle Street, kindly gave her the use of his stables. Opposition buses ran against her, but the people of Mitcham and Unley supported her, and they soon gave up running.

Soon after the Kinsmans' arrival in Mitcham, I fell in love with Mary Jane, a very handsome girl, obtained her love, and we courted for 7 years before we married [in 1860]. Mrs. Kinsman did not die until a few years after our eldest son, Thomas, was born. He was born in Mrs. Kinsman's house in Mitcham. His mother had come there to be near a doctor for her confinement. There were at that time no doctors at or near Norton's Summit.

My father brought from England a small library. Among the books were Shakespeare's works, Pope's works (Iliad and Odyssey among them), Swift,


Addison's *Spectator*, Burns, Goldsmith's poems, Butler's *Analogy*, Voltaire's history. I was very fond of reading and with the exception of Butler I had read them all more than once.

Having exhausted my father's small collection of books, I subscribed to the Adelaide library and I recollect the first book I took out was Xenophon's *Retreat of the Ten Thousand*. I have been all my life an historical reader, and works on theology and social questions I have not neglected. Novels I have read mostly as a pastime to while away an idle hour. When I was about 18, six of us in Mitcham paid 20/- each

and with the money we purchased books. They were left in the charge of Mr. Gardiner, who gave them to us one at a time. They consisted mostly of works of fiction; among them were Bulwer Lytton's novels, Sir Walter Scott and Dickens. Later on, when at Mitcham the Mechanic's Institute was started, they were given to that Institution, and formed at first no inconsiderable part of the Institute Library.

In Mitcham at this time there were a number of young, unmarried men, and some married ones, that were content upon improving their minds; and Mr. Taylor, who had in London been a member of a debating society, proposed that one should be formed. This was done and I joined it. We use to meet once a week at Mr. Taylor's, read essays and

debated them, on all sorts of subjects. I recollect reading one on the subject of "Should men shave off their beards?" I took the negative side of the question, and adduced arguments in favour of my contention. Others spoke on the other side, the debate being adjourned till the next day of meeting.

This was the occasion of my trying my powers of writing an essay and of my aptitude for extempore speaking. If I had not received this training it is a question with me whether I should have ever entered public life as a District Councillor or a Member of Parliament. Mr. Taylor was our Chairman. He kept excellent order, calling on the speakers as they do in Parliament, kept a record of the notices of motion given. In fact, practically in every respect Parliamentary procedure was followed. To me the benefit was unmistakably great in my after life. 

[To be concluded in the next issue of History SA]



*Mary Jane Playford, née Kinsman,
the wife of "Honest Tom".
[Courtesy of Mary Playford-Snarskis]*

A mixture of mystery and murder

by Russell Smith

When the Overland Escort from the Victorian goldfields arrived in Adelaide on November 19th 1852, successfully delivering the largest consignment of gold to be brought into South Australia to that date (13,875 ounces), most Adelaideans were elated by the news. But one lady, Mrs. Merah Gorge of Hindmarsh, was shattered. The official notice gave the reason for the Escort's later-than-expected arrival --- there had been a delay at Wellington in the south-east as the police were absent down in the Coorong where three bodies had been found washed ashore from the wreck of the *J. Lovett*. Merah's husband Sam was the cook on the ship.

News of its stranding in Discovery Bay near Cape Northumberland on September 19th had reached Adelaide a few weeks earlier but the report had clearly stated that all the crew and passengers were safe and that they were actually making their way across country, heading towards Portland.

The *J. Lovett*, sometimes referred to as the *Jane Lovett*, was making its third voyage between Melbourne and Adelaide. On the previous trip in July, the passenger list had totalled fifty-four but on the fateful September voyage there were, thankfully, only three. Most of the available space was taken up with much-sought-after and therefore easily saleable goods, predominantly wine and spirits, drapery and clothing, tea, sugar and coffee. The cargo was valued at £5,100.

The night of September 19th was a wild one. A vicious current sweeps towards the shore along the dramatically rugged section of South Australia's coastline between the Victorian border and Carpenter's Rocks. A tiring captain's error and poor conditions were regular companions in the region. Captain John Broadfoot of the *J. Lovett* made one error of judgement and the violent weather did the rest. The little ship was caught in the current and dragged through the darkness towards the rocks. Miraculously it passed through, around and over numerous dangerous reefs and finally crashed onto a beach, to remain sitting there high and dry in an upright position, relatively undamaged.

No-one was injured. Captain Broadfoot decided to remain with the ship and its extremely valuable cargo,

along with some of the crew, while the three passengers and the remaining crew walked towards Portland in the hope of locating a station property and somehow getting word of the disaster to the ship's agents in either Melbourne or Adelaide.

Five crewmen stayed with the captain, but not for long. Mate John Phillips, steward Thomas Pilkington, cook Samuel Gorge and seamen Henry Scott and George Foot saw an opportunity. They simply took one of the lifeboats, loaded it with wine and spirits and left the captain alone to fend for himself. No doubt the deserters gambled on reaching Port Adelaide in the open boat, quietly selling the grog and disappearing with the proceeds, but that was a fatal mistake.

A few days later, somewhere near Salt Creek, a group of natives made the gruesome discovery of the remains of a shark-mangled, headless body of a white

man, dumped on the beach by the pounding surf. They buried the body in the sandhills, marking the location with driftwood and then continued on their way along the beach in a northerly direction. Two miles distant they found another two bodies and gave them a similar burial. Further along the beach there was a happier discovery --- an upturned lifeboat.

This they managed to manoeuvre across the sandhills to the quiet waters of the Coorong. A landholder named Robinson saw the natives in the boat and commandeered it. They told him about the bodies on the beach and he immediately sent details of the mysterious disaster to the police stationed at Wellington.

News of the stranding had already arrived in Wellington and it was assumed that the unfortunates found near Salt Creek must have been from that vessel. George Mason, Sub-Protector of Aborigines, along with Mounted Constable Hall, promptly left for the scene. It was during their absence that the Gold Escort reached Wellington and via that news of the bodies on the beach was taken on to Adelaide and subsequently to Mrs. Gorge. The distraught wife of the ship's cook was to wait some time before it was eventually confirmed that her husband was indeed one of the victims.

But back to the *J. Lovett* and Captain Broadfoot at Discovery Bay. The Cornwall Fire & Marine Insurance Company of Adelaide was the insurer of the vessel and its cargo. When information about the stranding reached them they immediately requested the Colonial Secretary to provide police protection to guard the wreck and its valuable contents. A huge operation would need to be mounted to retrieve the various goods,



Discovery Bay, where the *J. Lovett* ran aground in 1852.

which would then have to be either moved overland to the nearest shipping port or perhaps sold on the spot. Until that was arranged, they would have to ensure that the ship was not plundered. It was subsequently agreed that an armed constable from Mount Gambier would join Captain Broadfoot and set up camp until a decision was made on what could be done.

So the guard and the captain settled in beside the wreck. There was clearly not a lot to do and the time was spent fishing, socializing with local landholders and their shepherds and, at least in Captain Broadfoot's case, more than a little drinking. There was, after all, a considerable quantity of grog on the ship.

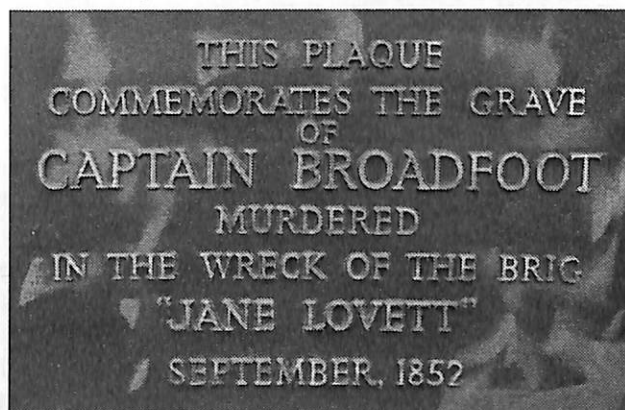
Visitors to the isolated pair became more numerous as locals realised that exchanges of bread and meat could be made for a small quantity of wine and spirits. Two shepherds in particular became regular callers, John Crawford and Alex Stephens, both former convicts from Van Diemen's Land, who, on their release, had crossed to the mainland and been given positions as hut-keepers on Mount Schank station. Captain Broadfoot was not a young man, was slightly disabled in that he had a paralysed arm, and as he was fast becoming an alcoholic he needed some assistance in everyday things such as shaving. Crawford and Stephens came to an agreement to shave him every now and then in exchange for grog. Unbeknown to the old captain, the two very quickly began helping themselves to more than the quantity agreed upon.

Several months passed before anything happened but then Alexander Tolmer, Commissioner of Police, undertook an inspection tour of the south-east and visited the wreck. He was appalled to find that the policeman was still camped there and that absolutely nothing had transpired regarding the salvage of the slowly diminishing cargo. Tolmer suggested to the Colonial Secretary that action be taken immediately and that the policeman's wages be repaid into the Treasury by the insurance company.

In June of 1853 the company finally decided that the hull of the stranded ship, plus the cargo, would be sold at public auction on a date to be announced but that did not eventuate for another three months. On September 2nd, Samson, Wicksteed & Co. advertised that the hull of the *Jane Lovett*, with all masts, sails, standing and running rigging, chains, anchors and boats, as well as a lifeboat that was in the charge of the police at Wellington and a portion of the cargo that had been saved from the wreck, would be sold by auction at the Mart at 12 o'clock on the following Thursday, September 8th.

Meanwhile, back at the wreck, shepherds Crawford and Stephens were still regular visitors to the declining captain. Very likely they heard rumours about the impending cessation of their free supply of grog for they conspired to take what was left before officialdom stepped in. Another of Broadfoot's regular visitors was a stockowner named Ferguson and when he went

down to the vessel on 13th September he found the captain dead in his bunk, with his throat cut. A razor was in the left hand and Ferguson immediately came to the conclusion that the unfortunate old man had committed suicide. An inquest was held on the beach the following day and one of those in attendance was Captain McKenzie of the *Witness*, a friend of Broadfoot. McKenzie noticed that the razor was actually in the captain's paralysed hand and, while the razor itself was covered in blood, the hand was clean. His old friend had clearly been murdered. It was also found that most of the remaining cargo had disappeared. Suspicion immediately focused on Crawford and Stephens.



Plaque situated on the sandhills at Discovery Bay.

Two policemen, Constables Olliver and Dewhurst, were sent from Mount Gambier to track down the suspects. They were relatively inexperienced, Dewhurst having been appointed only three months before. An Aboriginal guide accompanied them and led them straight to Crawford's hut. It was late at night and Crawford was easily arrested. He was handcuffed and left under the supervision of Constable Dewhurst while Olliver and the Aboriginal took the two horses and moved on through the darkness to surprise Stephens, whose hut was a few miles distant. The second arrest was successfully accomplished but when captors and captive arrived back at Crawford's hut it was empty. There was no sign of either Constable Dewhurst or his prisoner. Olliver feared the worst. After an unsuccessful search around the hut he headed back towards Mount Gambier with his guide and prisoner. Still no sign there of his colleague and Crawford.

What occurred that night at Crawford's hut would have been the worst kind of nightmare for any young policeman new to the Force. One moment's carelessness changed the rest of Dewhurst's life. For what was later claimed as being just a short minute, Dewhurst stepped outside the hut and on re-entering found the handcuffed, suspected murderer pointing a double-barrelled gun at his head. A reflex step backwards resulted in his tripping himself up and falling heavily to the ground, while at the same time his belt, which held two pistols he was clumsily attempting to draw, promptly broke. Crawford disappeared into the darkness during the confusion. ⇨

Perhaps Dewhurst should have remained in the vicinity of the hut until the expected return of Olliver but instead he elected to set off on foot in the direction of a nearby station in the hope of borrowing a horse and enlisting help to begin a search for the escaped prisoner. He arrived there an hour or so later and was given no co-operation at all. All he could then do was to keep walking through the night back towards Mount Gambier to report the whole embarrassing incident to his superiors.

Crawford moved quickly away from the area. After his escape he made his way through the bush towards Mount Burr where a fellow ex-convict helped remove his handcuffs. He then stole a horse and rode frantically towards Mount Schank station, where he calmly collected money owing to him and made for the Victorian border, neatly avoiding police and settlers who recognized him as he neared the Glenelg River. After that, he was never seen again.

That left Alex Stephens alone to face the charge of murdering Captain Broadfoot. He co-operated fully with the police and eventually was able to convince them that he was an innocent by-stander and that Crawford, whom he held in fear, had slit the captain's throat. In time Stephens was set free and an attempt was made to use him to help track down Crawford but, like Crawford, he disappeared, never to be seen again.

And what became of the unfortunate Constable Henry Dewhurst? A few weeks after the terrible experience at the hut, he deserted rather than face the magisterial enquiry that was imminent. He was later seen near Portland, so the Victorian police were also given the task of locating him, along with his former short-term prisoner. It took fourteen months for Dewhurst to be found, at Port Fairy. He was then escorted up to Adelaide to face trial, charged with wilfully and negligently allowing a prisoner charged with murder to escape from his custody.

Judge Boothby was sympathetic towards the young man. He was of course dismissed from the Force but the expected severe punishment did not eventuate for he was let off with a lecture and a fine of ten pounds, with the proviso that he remain in gaol until the fine

was actually paid. The Judge assumed that this would be done quickly but the luckless Dewhurst had no money and no friends in Adelaide on whom he could call for help. He languished in Adelaide Gaol for over five months before successfully petitioning the Governor for his release.

So an error of judgement by a sea-captain during a routine journey between Melbourne and Adelaide resulted in a multitude of life-ending and life-altering dramas. It is a moving experience to touch the brass handle of the cabin door of the *J. Lovett*, preserved in the Maritime Museum at Port MacDonnell, and dream back over a century and a half to when the old sea-dog with the paralysed arm drank away endless dreary days behind the door, becoming more and more insensible of his surroundings and, thankfully, quite unaware of his own impending fate.

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 Petition from Henry Dewhurst, 16/6/1855
 Letter from the Sheriff's Office, 3/7/1855

Russell Smith is the author of *A Very Good Year in the Colony of South Australia* and many historical articles in magazines and newspapers. Following the outstanding success of *Curiosities of South Australia, 1 and 2*, he has recently published the third volume in the series. His wife Pam assists in the research.

Extract from the petition written by former Constable Henry Dewhurst in H. M. Gaol, Adelaide, to Governor MacDonnell, 16th June, 1855, begging to be released.

it was in the early part of January that I was taken into custody & hope Your Excellency will take in to consideration the time I have been in confinement as a sufficient punishment for the charge laid against me, so that I may be liberated & return to honest industry & in duty bound
 Yours
 Humble Servant *Wm. ever, pray*
 Henry Dewhurst