

HSA

History

Newsletter of the Historical Society of South Australia

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No roads to follow

In 1925 three South Australian businessmen, George Hearn, Eardley Forrester and Richard Ford, drove a car across Australia from south to north and back again. They were resourceful amateurs with a sense of adventure, and an adventure is what they had. The car (nicknamed "Leaping Lena") was a four-cylinder, leather-upholstered Crossley, with no back seat, no roof and no windscreen. It carried two tons of gear, including 44 gallons of petrol and a four-valve wireless.

Fortunately for us, they also took a camera, and at our first meeting of the year, Margaret Ford (Richard's granddaughter) will show us a rich selection of photos from the trip as she presents her talk, "An Outback Odyssey: Adelaide to Darwin in a Crossley Car, 1925". This will be held on Friday, February 7th, at 8.00 p.m. in the (air-conditioned) Chapel at Prince Alfred College, Kent Town.

The adventurers used a compass, railway tracks, the overland telegraph line and horse trails to find their way, and drew on the hospitality and assistance of many station owners when they needed shelter or spare parts or when the car got bogged. (The Crossley was frequently up to its axles in water, mud or sand, and had to be dug or winched out.) The travellers developed their own way of crossing some of the creeks between Katherine and Darwin --- they drove the car onto the railway bridges and steered it along the train lines, hoping, rather nervously, that they would not meet a train in the process.

Margaret Ford has a B.Ed. from the University of Adelaide and worked for 38 years as a primary school teacher and principal with the Education Department. From 1993 to 2000 she wrote policy and advised the Minister of Education in the areas of child protection, truancy, and the prevention of violence. She is now the Adviser in the Quality Teacher Programme of the Association of Independent Schools. 



"Leaping Lena" fording a creek in the Top End.
[Photograph courtesy of Graham Ford.]


Protecting our past

There are many elements involved in the process of protecting South Australia's heritage buildings and historic sites --- legislation, surveys, documentation and the resultant planning system. In her illustrated lecture, "Heritage Planning: The Protection of Historic Buildings and Areas", to be given in the Prince Philip Theatre, Prince Alfred College, Kent Town, on Friday, March 7th, at 8.00 p.m., Kate McDougall will describe how we have got to the position of being able to preserve the places that are significant in the development of the State and its local communities. These may range from the large and beautiful to the small and ordinary.

Legislation, in the form of Acts of Parliament, dates from the 1978 Heritage Act. Surveys started with the 1988 Regional Survey Programme of the Department of Environment and Heritage and now extend to inventories of local assets drawn up by district councils. Documentation includes the history of the place, a physical

description and the assessment of its heritage value weighed against the criteria set out in the Act. There is an overall development plan for the State, within which each district has its own section. Local government bodies now have the opportunity to schedule particular sites and to set out principles of development control to manage their protection.

Kate McDougall, after obtaining a B.A. in History from Melbourne University, worked as a consultant historian at Heritage SA and as a lecturer and tutor in Architectural History at the University of Adelaide. She has been active in the field of heritage consultancy for thirty years and since 1987 has been a partner in the firm of McDougall and Vine, Conservation and Heritage Consultants. She is also the Vice-President of the National Trust of South Australia.

Members are reminded that it would be appreciated if everyone could bring a plate of supper. 

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.hssa.org.au

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 readings, lectures, discussions, field trips & 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.

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The same final harbour

The HSSA field trip to North Road Cemetery, Nailsworth, on Sunday, 23rd February, promises to be one of the most fascinating events of our year. Robin McKnight, who has been General Manager of the cemetery for the last four years, has immersed himself in its history and will take us on a guided tour of the grave sites. He has researched the stories of not only the eminent South Australians buried there but also the lesser-known individuals and families.

The cemetery is the resting-place of many of the figures commemorated by plaques on North Terrace, including Harry Butler, Julia Farr, William Christie Gosse, Richard Schomburgk, Sir Keith and Sir Ross Smith, Sir Charles Todd and Edmund Wright. Also interred there are Thomas Bastard, who founded the Turkish Baths on King William Road and styled himself a "Professor of Natation", the pastoralist John Hope, who established the Wolta Wolta property at Clare and whose grave is surmounted by an elaborately carved Celtic cross, and Stephen King, who, in 1862, at the age of nineteen, accompanied John McDouall Stuart across Australia as his expedition artist.


But equally interesting are the stories of the lesser known. The Fry family grave site, holding a husband, wife and two daughters, proved to be the result of a murder-suicide tragedy in 1896. The monument to

Thomas Magor, a travelling provider to mining towns, and his wife Cordelia shows that five of their eleven children died at birth or soon after, in country towns from Port Pirie to Rapid Bay.

Memorial tablets erected by workmates or club-mates often record more details than the standard family headstone. On the grave of Lieutenant Loyal Cherry, for instance, a tablet, placed there by the members of three motor cycle clubs, records that he was accidentally killed in October 1919 while attempting to set a motor cycle record between Adelaide and Melbourne.

North Road Cemetery was established by Bishop Augustus Short in 1853 on two acres of land. It now covers eighteen acres and has seen over 24,000 interments. (One touching statistic reveals that between 1860 and 1900, 25% of the burials were of children under the age of four.) The Chapel, of stone and brick, with leaded windows and a roof of Marseilles tiles, was consecrated in 1905, and in 1965 a striking mosaic of Venetian glass by Napier Waller was installed.

Robin McKnight will also tell us about the different architectural styles of the monuments and the symbolism of the various motifs.

The cost of the two-hour tour will be \$4.00, payable on the day, and you are asked to assemble at the Chapel (in the centre of the grounds) by 2.00 p.m. Enter by Cemetery Road, off the Main North Road, and park on the roadways within the grounds. 

Louis Laybourne Smith School of Architecture and Design Architecture Archive

by Julie Collins and Christine Garnaut

The Louis Laybourne Smith School of Architecture and Design at the University of South Australia holds a unique Architecture Archive, a collection of records pertaining to South Australian architecture and related disciplines. Comprising more than 175,000 documents, including approximately 15,000 drawings and a 1,000-volume library, it represents the work of over seventy practitioners, mostly active in the twentieth century. The Architecture Archive is open by appointment to the public as well as to staff and students of the University.

The Archive has evolved from a private collection initiated in the mid-1970s by architectural historian Donald Johnson. Lamenting the absence of a local repository to preserve documents relating to the history and practice of architecture in South Australia, Johnson began accepting donations of drawings, practice records, personal papers, books, periodicals, photographs and slides from architects and their families. In 1990 he donated his substantial collection to the School of the Built Environment of the South Australian Institute of Technology (a predecessor institution of the University of South Australia). The Archive has continued to grow, accepting donations of the kind collected by Johnson. It is managed by an archivist and is housed on the City East Campus.

The Architecture Archive fulfils the intention of its founder to establish a facility both for the acquisition, preservation and management of architectural and related records and for promoting intellectual enquiry into South Australia's built heritage.

The following summary gives an indication of the range of its holdings.

Drawings

Drawings by architects, engineers and consultants include both built and unbuilt works, primarily of the twentieth century. The collection includes plans, sections, elevations and perspectives. The vast Hurren, Langman and James collection comprises an invaluable record of numerous buildings, and structures such as bridges, built in the city of Adelaide as well as in suburban and rural areas.

Correspondence

Professional and personal correspondence relates to buildings, professional affairs and overseas travels.

Photographs

Photographic items include prints and slides of architects' built works and travels.

Specifications

Specifications relate directly to the architectural drawings and provide written documentation detailing materials, quality of finishes, and manner of construction.

Notebooks and diaries

Business and personal notebooks and diaries contain sketches and newspaper clippings of interest to the authors as well as notes relating to built projects.

Library

Books, monographs, periodicals, trade catalogues and brochures, donated from architects' collections.

Special holdings

Chamberlain collection — predominantly 18th and 19th century British and European architectural prints and engravings.

Artefacts

A limited range of items is held, including drawing equipment, awards and nameplates.

Ephemera

Pamphlets, brochures and posters, relating to architecture, interior design and planning.

Architects, firms and institutions represented in the Archive include Dean Berry, Rolf Boehm, Jack Cheesman, Max Chenoweth, Brian Claridge, Phillip Claridge, Robert Dickson, Russell Ellis, Harold Grigg, Hurren, Langman and James Engineers, James Irwin, Donald Johnson, Jury Burden Architects, Roderick Lawrence, F. Kenneth Milne, Colin Schumacher, Walter Sedgley, Marjorie Simpson, Peter Simpson, Louis Laybourne Smith, John Twopeny, Robert Viney, Gavin Walkley, Woods Bagot Architects, Gordon Young and the Royal Australian Institute of Architects.

The Archivist can assist with research enquiries and in identifying relevant records. Finding aids are available for each series of records. Items may not be borrowed but photocopying and reprographic services are available. Enquiries may be directed to the Archivist either by telephone or e-mail. Researchers are requested to make an appointment prior to visiting the Archive.

Contact details:

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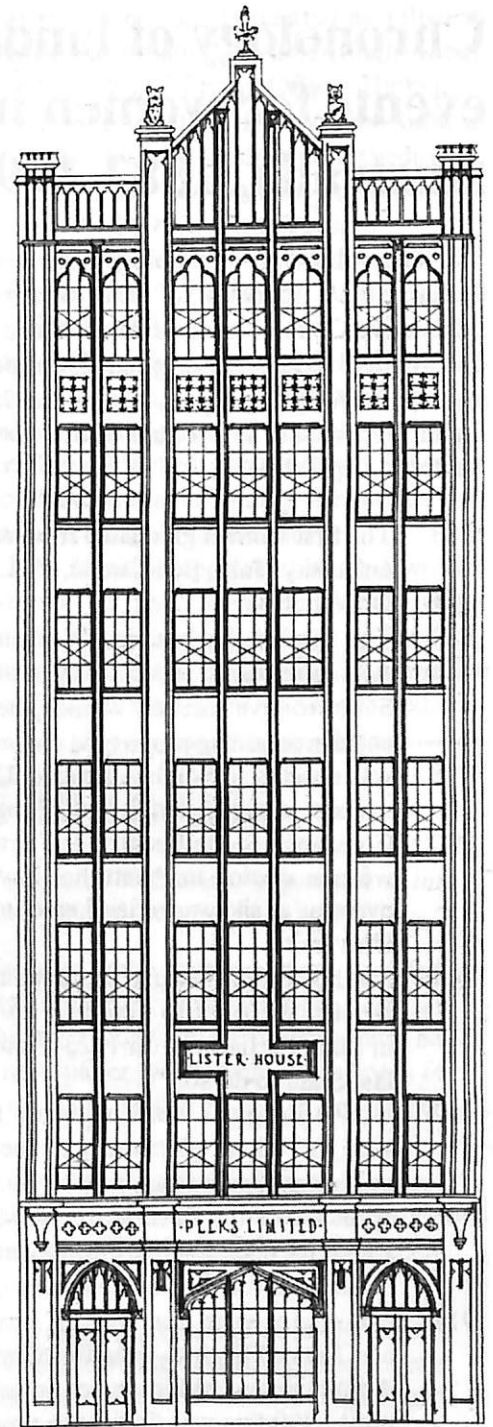
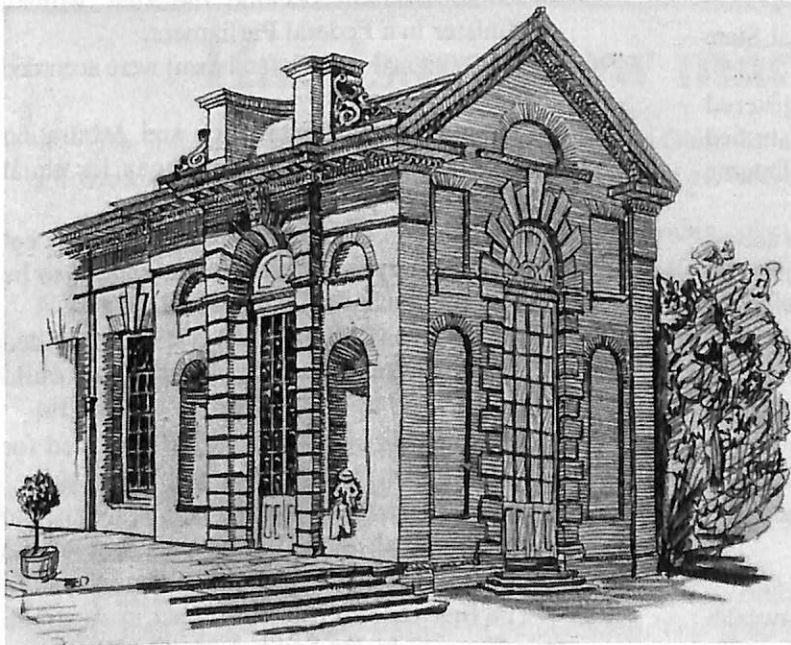
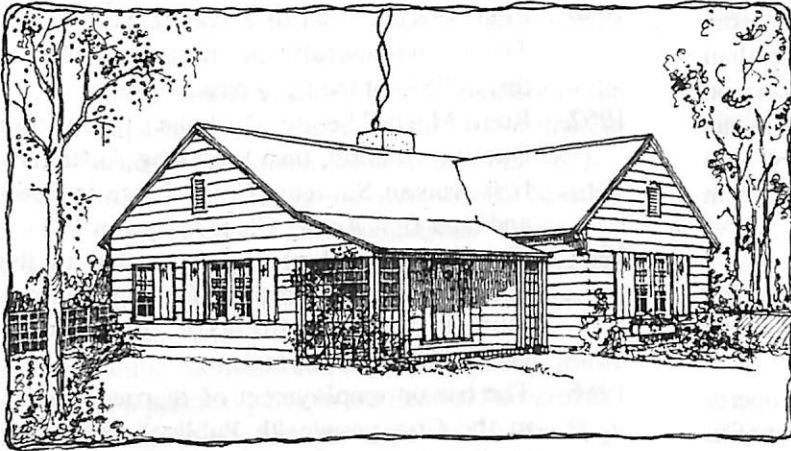
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Location

University of South Australia, City East Campus,
North Terrace, Adelaide.

Playford Building 7-02 (Enter off Frome Road.) ☐

The accompanying illustrations are just four of the thousands of items held in the Architecture Archive at the University of South Australia.



Top left: Sketch of cottage at Callendale (near Penola) for R.J. Legoe, September 1928. Architects: Woods, Bagot, Jory and Laybourne Smith.

Centre left: The Orangery, Kensington Palace, London. Sketch by G. Makin, 1905.

Bottom left: Claude M. Eatt's tailor shop in Adelaide, either at 50 King William Street (1937-42) or at 113 or 194 Gawler Place (1943-61). Does anyone know which it is?

Top right: Lister House, North Terrace, now Tobin House (opposite the Institute Building), elevation, c. 1929. Architects: F. Kenneth Milne, Evans and Russell.

Chronology of landmark events for women in Australia, 1883-1992

The following chronology was read into the Parliamentary Debates of the South Australian Legislative Council by the Hon. Bernice Pfitzner on 12th August 1992. The original list appeared in the report, *Halfway to Equal*, from the Inquiry into Equal Opportunity and Equal Status for Women in Australia, April 1992.

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|------|---|------|---|
| 1883 | The first woman graduated from an Australian university (Julia Bell-Guerin, B.A., Melbourne University). | 1947 | Florence Cardell-Oliver, elected in 1936, became the first woman Cabinet Minister in an Australian Parliament (Western Australia). |
| 1883 | The first of the Married Women's Property Acts to be passed successively in the Australian States to give married women the same legal position regarding property as unmarried women was enacted in South Australia. The last State to enact such legislation was Tasmania (1935). | 1949 | Dame Enid Lyons became the first woman to be part of Federal Cabinet (as Vice-President of the Executive Council). |
| 1890 | Constance Stone became the first registered woman doctor in Australia, having studied overseas as she was refused entry to Melbourne University. | 1950 | First determination of a female basic wage. The Commonwealth Arbitration Court set this at 75% of the male basic wage. |
| 1894 | South Australia became the first State to accord women the right to vote and the right to sit in State Parliament. In 1923 Victoria was the last State to do so. | 1962 | Roma Mitchell became Australia's first woman Queen's Counsel, then becoming Australia's first woman Supreme Court Judge in 1965 and later first Acting Chief Justice in 1983. |
| 1902 | Non-Aboriginal women gained the right to vote in Federal elections and the right to sit in Federal Parliament. | 1963 | The Women's Bureau was created in the Department of Labour and National Service (now in the Department of Employment, Education and Training). |
| 1903 | Vida Goldstein became the first woman to stand for election to Parliament when she nominated for the Senate elections. | 1966 | The bar on employment of married women in the Commonwealth Public Service was abolished. |
| 1912 | Minimum wage for women's work set by Mr. Justice Higgins — the first Commonwealth Arbitration award for women (most commonly until 1960 this was 54% of the male rate). | 1966 | Senator Rankin became the first woman Minister in a Federal Parliament. |
| 1912 | Maternity Allowance Act provided for a grant of £5 on the birth of a child. | 1967 | All Aboriginal women (and men) were accorded the right to vote. |
| 1921 | The first woman was elected to an Australian Parliament — Edith Cowan to the Lower House of the Western Australian Parliament. | 1969 | Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission ruling on "equal pay for equal work", to be phased in by 1972. |
| 1937 | Mary Gilmore, poet, was awarded an O.B.E. | 1972 | Commission extension of equal pay concept to "equal pay for work of equal value" to be fully implemented by 30 th June 1975. |
| 1941 | Child Endowment Act provided for payment, directly to the mother, of an allowance for each child after the first under the age of 16 years (five shillings per week). | 1972 | The Federal Child Care Act 1972 provided Federal involvement and funding for child care. |
| 1942 | The Women's Employment Board was formed to draft women into essential war-time work at higher rates of pay. | 1973 | The Maternity Leave Act 1973 provided for maternity leave for Federal public servants. |
| 1943 | The first women were elected to Federal Parliament (Enid Lyons to the House of Representatives and Dorothy Tangney to the Senate). | 1973 | Elizabeth Evatt became the first woman to be appointed as a Deputy President of the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. |
| | | 1975 | The first sex discrimination Act in Australia was passed by the South Australian Parliament (the Sex Discrimination Act 1975). |
| | | 1975 | Family Law Act 1975 passed by the Federal Parliament. |
| | | 1976 | Elizabeth Evatt became the first Chief Judge of the Family Court. |
| | | 1978 | The National Women's Advisory Council was established. This was replaced by the National Women's Consultative Council in 1984. |
| | | 1979 | A.C.T.U. maternity leave test case. |
| | | 1979 | Deborah Wardley won the right to be employed as a pilot with Ansett in a case heard by the Victorian Equal Opportunity Board. |
| | | 1981 | Mary Gaudron became the first woman Solicitor-General (for New South Wales). |
| | | 1983 | Ratification by Australia of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. |

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| <p>1983 The first woman University Chancellor was appointed (Dame Roma Mitchell, University of Adelaide).</p> <p>1984 Sex Discrimination Act 1984 passed by the Federal Parliament.</p> <p>1985 The Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission affirmed the equal pay principles of the 1972 equal pay case but rejected the comparable worth concept.</p> <p>1985 Helen Williams appointed as Secretary of the Department of Education, the first woman to head a Government department (1985-87).</p> <p>1986 Joan Child became the first woman Speaker of the House of Representatives.</p> <p>1986 The Affirmative Action (Equal Employment Opportunity for Women) Act 1986 was passed by the Federal Parliament.</p> <p>1986 Janine Haines became the first woman leader of a political party in the Federal Parliament.</p> <p>1987 The first woman was appointed to the High Court (Mary Gaudron).</p> | <p>1988 The first two women graduated as pilots in the Royal Australian Air Force (Flight Lieut. R.D. Williams and Flying Officer Hicks).</p> <p>1989 Women were included for the first time in Australian National Antarctic Expeditions, and in 1990 the first woman station leader was appointed (Diana Patterson).</p> <p>1990 Two women became State Premiers --- Dr. Carmen Lawrence in Western Australia, and Joan Kirner in Victoria.</p> <p>1990 Deidre O'Connor became the first woman Federal Court Judge and President of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.</p> <p>1991 Dame Roma Mitchell was appointed Governor of South Australia, becoming Australia's first woman vice-regal representative.</p> <p>1991 The Law Institute appointed its first woman President in its 132-year history (Gail Owen).</p> <p>1992 First woman Clerk of the S.A. Legislative Council, Mrs. Jan Davis, was appointed.</p> |
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Handsome new machine in use

The following article appeared in the Adelaide Observer on 8th August 1896, and is reprinted as an illustration of the fact that in some cases progress can actually be a very good thing!

The reporting staffs of the leading papers in the other colonies have for some time past been supplied with typewriting machines, and the Proprietors of the *Register* and *Observer* have not been long in following the example. In these days of labour-saving machinery the very latest improvements must be secured to keep pace with the times. Especially is this the case with newspaper work, where smartness is such an important factor. The typewriter is undoubtedly a time-saving machine, so that its use in newspaper offices has become a necessity.

The literary staff of this paper has now been provided with the most recent appliances for turning out their copy, and a number of the latest pattern of the "Yost" machines have been secured from the agents, Messrs. Reeves and Co., of Grenfell-street. These have all the most modern improvements, and do their work remarkably well, printing clearly and cleanly.

With only a little practice the members of the staff have been able to attain a greater speed in producing reports than by the ordinary method of penmanship. This is all the more surprising because Pressmen are noted for the speed with which they can transfer their thoughts to paper. For "Hansard" work the machines will be found to be very serviceable, for, with the power to transcribe their notes at a rapid rate, the labour of the reporters will be much reduced.

Compositors are supposed to be able to read anything, but it is said that the copy turned out by some reporters has caused more "sulphurous" language in the "chapel" than anything else ever could; and the "comps." are to have a special thanksgiving meeting now that they will no longer have to worry over the peculiar calligraphy of certain bad writers. Thus the introduction of these machines, besides reducing the cost of corrections and making the work of the reporters lighter, will remove the cause of worry to the composing staff.

The rapidity with which the members of our staff have been able to attain a fair rate of speed illustrates how easily the apparatus can be mastered. Compactly put together, and having complete alphabets for the lower as well as the upper case, and with all the stops, numerals and signs used in commercial life, the "Yost" machine is a handsome affair.

It would appear that the introduction of the typewriter was effected with much less frustration and resulted in far more reliability than the adoption of the computer almost a century later, one of the reasons no doubt being that it was still completely under the control of the operator.

The River Torrens and its bridges

by James Potter

Part III: William Wilkins' Cranky Bridge

William Wilkins arrived in South Australia on the *Emma* in 1836 with his wife Mary and one infant. By the end of the year they were camped at Glenelg, where another child, Harry, was born. Shortly after, a fire destroyed all their property. Here was a family, therefore, with no ties to the past and nothing but a future. By 1840 they had moved to Thebarton, a village of about 100 houses and growing. On the last day of that year, William became the landlord of the newly erected Market Tavern (later the Market House or Market Inn), situated on the site of the present Mile End Hotel on Henley Beach Road. It was a wise choice for a sound business, placed strategically on the route from Adelaide to the potentially valuable holdings along the south side of the River Torrens. The roadway, then named Reedbeds Road, was declared a public thoroughfare in 1841, being the first macadamized road in the colony.



The River Torrens at Hindmarsh, near the site of Wilkins' Bridge.

There was a major problem however --- there was no bridge across the river in the Hindmarsh area. A meeting called in May 1840 raised the matter of the severe inconvenience caused to Thebarton residents and other travellers having to detour to the City Bridge or Frome Bridge. This could add hours to the journey. Being a very low time for the new colony's finances, no action was taken in the next few years. Wilkins therefore decided to act and during 1844, using his own finances (between £30 and £50) and presumably his own labour, he built a wooden bridge. The *Register*, in October 1844, using language that today has rather a humorous edge, commented:

We perceive that the inhabitants of Thebarton, Hindmarsh, &c, have determined no longer to remain excluded from intercourse with each other. A substantial bridge made of rough logs in the American fashion is in course of formation across the river immediately above Hindmarsh. It is close to the Port Road and will be a very great convenience to the inhabitants of

Thebarton, Reedbeds, and to those on the west side of Adelaide, and will greatly improve property in that quarter. The wonder is that the step now adopted was not taken years ago. [19/10/1844]

No record remains of its appearance, but recently-built wooden bridges in the south and east parklands may give some idea since they resemble (at a distance) the truss styles that were common in America in the nineteenth century. (See photo next page.)

The bridge linking Shierlaw Terrace and Port Road, presumably in much the same position as the present Hindmarsh Bridge, was in use by November 1844 and was officially opened on 16th December by J. Neales, the Government auctioneer, who, after a "short but appropriate speech, broke a bottle of wine upon it and christened it 'The Wilkins Bridge' ". He then drove across it, followed by numerous vehicles and gentlemen on horseback. About 70 citizens later sat down to an excellent dinner at the Market House.

The bridge was to see service for only three years, but during that time, while successive wet winters caused havoc to other grander and more expensive stone bridges, it often served as the only means of vehicular transport across the river. In June 1845 it was "shaken but not carried away". Two months later it was partly undermined, and in November the *Register* reported:

The bridge between Thebarton and Hindmarsh is in a sadly neglected state. The side rails especially are almost wholly gone. It is a great public convenience particularly now that there is no city bridge and we think it should be kept in repair by the Government. [12/11/1845]

This disrepair was blamed for a mishap that took place that month when:

... an awkward accident occurred to Mr. Gepp the livery stable keeper on Friday last. In exercising a horse in a gig he took occasion to pass over the so-called Wilkins Bridge near Thebarton, and the horse taking fright went over the road into the river --- a height of 15 feet. [19/11/1845]

Following the floods of July 1846 the Wilkins Bridge was in a very precarious condition.

The piles fixed in the bed of the stream which supported the centre have been carried away by recent floods. It is now, again, unsafe for heavily laden drays. The danger of crossing especially on a dark night is

increased by part of the parapet being broken down.

[10/7/1846]

Extensive repairs were carried out, including the addition of a solid handrail for pedestrians and several piles to protect the foundations. Finance for this was partly provided by a local resident, John Ridley. The *Register* was therefore able to report:

The rustic "Wilkins bridge", so much admired by all who are in search of the picturesque, has lately been repaired and the job was pronounced a very substantial one; indeed it has resisted all but the raillery, although inundated to the depth of two feet by the highest flood remembered by the colonists.

[11/7/1846]

And following another severe flood in August:

Not only was this bridge passable on the afternoon of the day of the late enormous flood, but it has since been and still is the only means of communication for heavily laden drays between Adelaide and the Port, and the northern districts.

[5/8/1846]

The power that was generated by the River Torrens in flood was well documented by the following event at the Frome Bridge in the same month:

It is very difficult to calculate or estimate the immense power of the waters of a river accumulated so rapidly by the numerous mountain streams which pour into it within the distance of 12 to 14 miles. Some correct idea may be formed of it by observing the fact now so apparent at the Frome Bridge. It will be seen that a mere force of the current has absolutely lifted out of the bed of the river, where they had been laid, many tons of large stones, weighing from 1 to 2 cwt. each and laid them upon each other in the middle of the river forming a small island therein.

[Register, 12/8/1846]

The security offered by the Wilkins Bridge arose from the "very great weight of trees forming the abutments. The great mass of timber seemed capable of withstanding the utmost power of floods." However, the floods of 1847 were devastating. On 22nd June the Wilkins Bridge was "a yard or so under water and this perhaps saved it as the logs floated clearly over". That night all other bridges in Adelaide succumbed to the river, and only "the little rustic bridge at Hindmarsh" remained. Three days later, however, it was swept away "because the great tree to which it was attached was itself washed away".



A present-day bridge "in the American fashion" in the east parklands.

In August 1848 a new bridge was opened nearby and, despite some early concern when it began sinking at its centre, it survived until replaced by a wider bridge in 1880.

However, let us return to that evening in December 1844 when celebrations were taking place at the Market House. Unfortunately absent from the event was Wilkins himself, being at the time incarcerated in the Adelaide Gaol, not as a criminal, but as a madman. His mental malady had become apparent during the last days of his bridge construction, and by mid-December he was a danger to himself and others. Although gaol offered a haven from his own actions, he was released early in the new year in the care of friends, who appointed two keepers and Dr. Edward

Wright to attend to him. He was kept tied to a chair during the daylight hours in a house in Thebarton, near his family.

It was here that he died on 23rd January 1845. Reports in the newspapers suggested that the financial pressures of bridge building had affected Wilkins' mental health. More specifically, it might have been due to his decision to erect a toll

gate at the northern approach to the bridge in order to recover some of his outlay. Thebarton Council archives mention a toll keeper's house situated between the Globe Hotel (on the north bank of the river) and the Commercial Hotel (still occupying a site a short distance away). The concept of paying a toll was not welcomed by the residents of Adelaide, the *Register* declaring:

... there is something undignified in laying hold of a horse's bridle and demanding a daily fee. It is not what strangers would expect to see in the approach to the capital of a thriving and wealthy colony.

[3/10/1846]

Soon after the bridge was opened, the chain used to bar access to the bridge was stolen and found buried nearby. Public pressure against a toll bridge might have manifested itself in Wilkins' mind as a protest against all his efforts. Some records use the title "Wilkins' Cranky Bridge". Whether the extra adjective arose because of its appearance or because of the malady of its builder has not been recorded.

The future did not look too bright for Wilkins' widow. W.B. Ashton, keeper of the Adelaide Gaol, wrote to the *Register* in February 1845: →

I know you will be sorry, though hardly perhaps surprised, to hear that the widow of the truly unfortunate but worthy Wilkins is from recent events placed in very straitened circumstances. Her husband had much impinged upon his means by the building of the bridge which will be the lasting memento of his public spirit. His illness was expensive and his poor wife on his decease found herself the almost penniless supporter of six little orphans; her only dependence is upon the business which she must close unless in the course of a month she can pay the sum of £25 pounds for the renewal licence.



The restored Wilkins homestead at Mount Bryan East.

Wilkins spent more than double this for the convenience of the public and to the anxiety arising from a consciousness of having exceeded his means may be attributed the loss of his reason which resulted in his premature death. Is it too much to ask the public to help his widow? The sum wanted is not very large and without it the power of supporting herself by honest industry will be taken from her. May I beg of you to make public my intention to contribute my mite to her assistance and the willingness of myself and her undermentioned friends to receive donations: Mr. Athorn, Morphett-street; Mr. Hornsby, Hindley-street; Mr. Bean, Rundle-street; Mr. Payne, Hindley-street. [22/2/1845]

The extent of support offered to Mary Wilkins is not recorded, but she took over the licence of the Market House and by the end of the year had remarried. Two years later she and her husband relinquished the licence and the hotel was renamed the Butchers' Arms.

Back in 1845, however, public attention was turning toward Dr. Edward Wright. Clearly the editor of the *Register* had something in mind when on 25th January he wrote of the inquest into Wilkins' death:

It is known that he had suffered under the severest, perhaps, of providential afflictions --- the loss of reason. He had been awhile in the jail as a dangerous lunatic, but his friends who were suffered to remove him placed him under the care of a keeper, and engaged the professional services of our old colonist Dr. Wright, long the house surgeon at the Bethlem Hospital in London. We understand that sanguine hopes had been entertained for his recovery. An inquest was held yesterday at the Red House, Thebarton, which at 4 o'clock was adjourned to this morning. It would be improper at present to hint at the opinions hazarded as to the cause of his death. When the verdict of the jury is returned we shall not shrink from publishing the proceedings.

The coroner's jury returned the following verdict:

We find that the deceased, William Wilkins, died from the effects of morphine, administered to him while under the medical treatment of Dr. Wright and that his death was accelerated by want of more nourishment than it appears to us he was able to take.

[Register, 27/1/1845]

In March of that year Dr. Wright faced a manslaughter charge based on two counts: administering excessive doses of morphine and neglecting to watch the effects of medicines. On the Sunday four days before Wilkins died, Wright had prescribed morphine, amongst other drugs, and was heard to make the unfortunate remark:

I am sure I can cure him: it is a very severe case of chronic lunacy but in seven days from this he will be either in perfect health or a dead man.

[Register, 15/3/1845]

Wright did not visit Wilkins until Tuesday and then in a drunken state. The next day he ordered further morphine from Paxton, the chemist, but was too drunk to write out a prescription. He administered the morphine to the patient later that day, but Wilkins spat it out. The doctor then returned, via a public house, to the chemist for a further supply of the drug, had it sent to Wilkins' carers, and then went home to bed. Early on Thursday morning Wilkins awoke, shouting "my children are all on fire", went back to sleep and did not regain consciousness.

Wright's defence argued that the chemist had supplied muriate of morphine whereas the doctor had ordered acetate of morphine. Wright, being too drunk, was not aware of the change and was therefore administering medicine which he assumed incorrectly to be that which he had ordered. It was also argued that the chemist should not have made up a prescription requested by an intoxicated man. Wright was acquitted with a severe reprimand, the judge stating that he was morally responsible for Wilkins' death.

Edward Wright, an 1836 emigrant to South Australia, had left England as a somewhat shady character. The Mortlock Library holds a short publication entitled *Minutes of Evidence taken at Bethlem Hospital, Thursday Sept. 30, 1830* (London, 1831). Wright had been Apothecary and Superintendent of Bethlem Hospital, and the publication shows that he had been accused of drunkenness, indecent exposure, molesting female patients and nurses, and interfering with bodies in the dead house. The basement where bodies were kept had not been washed out for months, since this, it was alleged, would have interfered with Wright's place of debauchery. The Court of Governors had dismissed Wright in November 1830.

Newspaper reports of the trial in Adelaide had mentioned his previous employment, but nothing of his dismissal. Perhaps someone in Adelaide, either then or later, had these documents sent from England, but there is no record of their having been used. Wright's lawyer in Adelaide concluded his defence as follows:

The misery he has felt during the last 24 hours and the degrading place he has occupied in that dock will prove a lesson sufficient strong to induce him finally to abjure the destructive habit which has brought him into such a position and to become henceforth a blessing to the society he is so well qualified to adorn.

[Register, 19/3/1845]

Wright may have become a blessing to society, but not in Adelaide. Records show that he lived in various country areas before his death in 1859.

It is interesting to pursue the Wilkins family a little further. The son Harry, born in 1836, left his mother and siblings when fifteen to join the gold rush to Victoria, returning later to South Australia as a drover. These activities gave him the capital to buy a 2,000-acre sheep station near Mount Bryan in the mid-north. One of Harry's sons was George Hubert, later Sir Hubert, who had a remarkable life. After studying

engineering at the University of Adelaide, his love of cinematography took him to World War I where, as a war correspondent, he shot the first known aerial films of battles. A bent for polar adventure saw him crossing the Arctic by plane and attempting, unsuccessfully, to do so by submarine, and in 1921 he joined Shackleton's Antarctic expedition. He led a British Museum expedition through northern Australia, his efforts in climatology and meteorology being recognized by geographic and scientific societies. In his later life he wrote extensively on his experiments in mental telepathy and his belief in the supernatural. He died in 1958.

The homestead of his birth, at Mount Bryan East, like many others in that area, decayed to a heap of rubble. The Australian Geographic Society, believing that in any other country the birthplace of such an explorer, pioneer and adventurer would be a national shrine, undertook the project of restoring the homestead. This was completed in 2001. It stands in magnificent isolation twenty kilometres from Mount Bryan (*see photo previous page*). Keys to gain access can be borrowed from the Mount Bryan Hotel.

Among the many achievements and points of information about Sir Hubert Wilkins that the Australian Geographic Society has set out to recognize and make known could be added: "Grandson of an early colonist who used his creative energy to build one of Adelaide's first important bridges."


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Photographs by James Potter.

Next issue: Part IV: A River or a Lake?

HSSA subscriptions due


Membership subscriptions for 2003 are now due. Please complete the renewal notice issued with this Newsletter and forward it to the Secretary, HSSA, P.O. Box 519, Kent Town 5071. Payment may be made either by cheque or money order (payable to the Historical Society of South Australia Inc.) or by Visa, Bankcard or Mastercard. The Treasurer, Mrs. Avis Huckel, will also accept credit card payment by phone on 8277 2953. 

History SA deadline


The deadline for all material for the March 2003 issue of the Newsletter is Friday, February 14th. It should be addressed to John Healey, Editor, *History SA*, 27 Germein St., Semaphore 5019. Enquiries to (08) 8449 2268. 

2003 Journal deadline

Articles on historical subjects relating to South Australia or Australia are invited for the 2003 issue of the HSSA Journal. They should be of no more than 6,000 words and should initially be submitted in printed or typed form to the Editor, HSSA Journal, P.O. Box 519, Kent Town 5071. Photographic essays, with short explanatory captions, are also sought. The deadline for all material is 30th April 2003.

Before forwarding articles or photographic features, authors should request a copy of the "Notes for Contributors", which outlines the length, style and format requirements for all material. 

New members

The Historical Society welcomes the following new members: Mr. Bruce Bott and Miss Anelis Innocenti. 

Who invented “Australia” ?

Part II

by John Healey

Having traced the name “Australia” through the works of an English naturalist, a Portuguese explorer, a disgraced Franciscan, a French chronicler and a Scottish antiquary, we now move on to another Scot, Alexander Dalrymple (1737-1808), pictured below. Although his use of the word “Australia” is of minor significance, he is worth a lengthy digression for he is one of the most idiosyncratic of our personages. In 1752 he entered the service of the East India Company and shortly after was sent to Madras, where, over a period of several years, he amassed a large collection of hydrographic information and copied many extracts from logs and old accounts of voyages in East Indian waters.

Returning to London in 1765, he continued his collecting of books, maritime accounts and manuscript charts, becoming at first fascinated and then obsessed with the concept of the unknown southern continent. He corresponded with Charles de Brosses (see Part I of this article), who encouraged him to publish some of the narratives he had collected.

The result was *An Historical Collection of the Several Voyages and Discoveries in the South Pacific Ocean*, issued in two quarto volumes in 1770-71. It contains accounts of the voyages of Magellan, Mendaña, Quiros, Le Maire & Schouten, Tasman, and Roggewein. In the preface Dalrymple says:

M. de Brosses has, in his table of voyages, made a very judicious arrangement under the three heads of Magellanica, Austral-Asia, and Polynesia. . . . I have inserted another head of partition, Australia, comprehending the discoveries at a distance from America to the eastward.

He reprints de Brosses’ list of voyages, with some additions, and makes clear that by “Australia” he means “the Lands or Islands to the Eastward of South America”. So, for Dalrymple, Australia was to consist of the scattered islands in the South Atlantic! He also printed his own translation of Quiros’ eighth memorial, rendering “Austrialia Incognita” as “Australia Incognita”.

In 1779 Dalrymple was appointed Hydrographer to the East India Company and in 1795, on the establishment of the Hydrographic Office of the British Admiralty, became its first Hydrographer. This involved

both the organizing of the department and the onerous task of collecting, analyzing and publishing a great many charts. A difficult man to work with and a demanding taskmaster, he nevertheless earned respect for the enormous amount of hydrographic knowledge he compiled. He was somewhat indiscriminate, though, publishing every sea chart and harbour plan he could lay his hands on, without regard for their reliability. He issued them privately and expected naval officers to purchase them from the chart-sellers. When directly commanded by the Admiralty to supply charts to His Majesty’s ships, he for a long time refused, and this obstinacy did not endear him to his superiors. In addition, his chronic ill-health made it difficult for him to carry out his duties efficiently and he was dismissed in May 1808. He died three weeks later, allegedly “of a broken heart”.

Dalrymple’s name is commemorated by Port Dalrymple (on the north coast of Tasmania), named by N.S.W. Governor John Hunter, probably on the recommendation of Matthew Flinders, who had discovered it in 1798 on his circumnavigation of the island, and by Dalrymple Islet in Torres Strait, discovered by Captain William Bligh on his 1791-93 voyage in the *Providence*, on which Flinders was a midshipman.

But let us go back for a moment to what is, for the history of Australian exploration, the most significant period of Dalrymple’s life. In 1767 his unshakeable belief in a great southern land had led him to print privately a book entitled *An Account of the Discoveries made in the South Pacifick Ocean previous to 1764*. It was officially published two years

later. In it he gives “a geographical description of the islands and countries hitherto discovered . . . between America and Papua”, followed by an analysis of the conduct of the respective navigators. The third section of the book, “Investigation of what may be farther expected in the South-Sea”, contains his arguments as to why a large continent had to exist in the South Pacific. In addition to drawing conclusions from the empirical observations of the explorers (which to him suggested a continent having its eastern extremity at the island of Juan Fernandez, 400 nautical miles from South America, and its western extremity at New Zealand), Dalrymple propounded the counterpoise theory.

It has been commonly alleged, and perhaps not without good reason, from a consideration of the weight of land to water, that a Continent is wanting on the South of the Equator, to counterpoise the land on the North, and to maintain the equilibrium necessary for the earth’s motion.



Alexander Dalrymple,
drawn by George Dance in 1794.

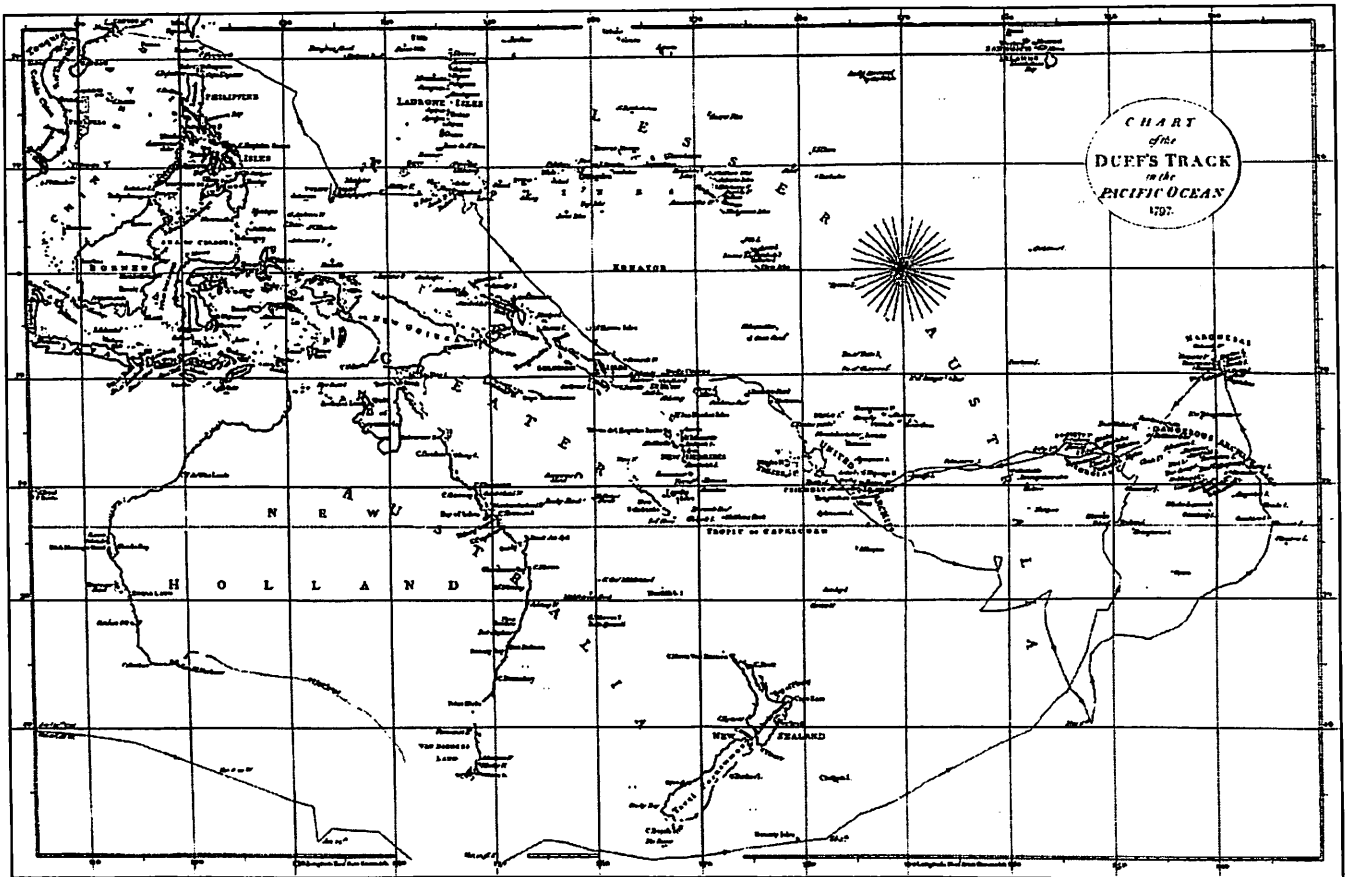


Chart of the Duff's track in the Pacific Ocean in 1797, printed with the narrative of the voyage in 1799. The inscription "Greater Australia" appears over New Guinea, New Holland and New Zealand, and "Lesser Australia" over the islands of Polynesia to the eastward.

coast of New Holland northward, he could thread the Torres Strait and return home without having to round Cape Horn again. On the way, of course, he charted and took possession of the territory he named New South Wales.

One more instance of the word "Australia" must be mentioned before we come to Matthew Flinders. In 1796 the London Missionary Society financed an expedition to Polynesia with the aim of saving the souls of the poor savages who were unfortunate enough to live in a tropical, rather than a heavenly, paradise. The *Duff* was under the command of James Wilson (1760-1814), who had lived a very adventurous life. He had worked for the East India Company, had been captured in India by the French (from whom he escaped by swimming across a river full of crocodiles), and had been recaptured, this time by the soldiers of the Sovereign of Mysore, who tortured him. He then became a trader and made a considerable fortune before returning to England and embracing Christianity.

Between 1796 and 1798 the *Duff* visited Tahiti, the Friendly Islands, the Marquesas, and Fiji. An account of the voyage was published by the Missionary Society in 1799 with a chart of the *Duff's* track (shown above). The islands of Polynesia, together with the Marshall Islands to the north, are labelled "Lesser Australia", while the region comprising New Guinea, New Holland, the Solomons, the New Hebrides and New Zealand is labelled "Greater Australia".

We come now, at last, to Matthew Flinders. His first uses of the word "Australia" date from the time he spent imprisoned on Île-de-France (Mauritius) from December 1803 to June 1810. His initial chart of our continent, completed during 1804 and forwarded in November of that year to Sir Joseph Banks in England, was labelled "Australia or Terra Australis". In a letter to Banks, originally dated 23rd August 1804, then re-dated 4th November (when he was finally able to send it), Flinders wrote:

The propriety of the name Australia or Terra Australis which I have applied to the whole body of what has generally been called New Holland must be submitted to the approbation of the Admiralty and the learned in geography.

The chart and letter were delivered to Banks, who passed them on to the Hydrographic Office at the Admiralty, where Alexander Dalrymple was still in charge. He, apparently, put them away in a drawer to await Flinders' return.

In a letter to his brother Samuel, dated 25th August 1804 and also forwarded in November, Flinders said:

By this conveyance I send to Sir Joseph Banks a general chart of New Holland upon a large scale, which contains all our examinations and discoveries.

In a note at the foot of the page, he added:

I call the whole island Australia or Terra Australis.

Flinders used the term again, a little over two years later, in an article entitled "On Wreck Reef and on the Fate of M. de la Pérouse" (dated 17th January 1807), which he presented to the Société d'Émulation on Île-de-France. (Wreck Reef, 200 miles north-east of Fraser Island, was where Flinders himself had been wrecked in the *Porpoise* in 1803.) The Société was a literary, philosophical and scientific association which had been founded in 1802 by some of the French naturalists who had deserted from Nicolas Baudin's expedition. The members greatly admired Flinders' achievements and in 1806 had appealed (in vain) to the Institut National de France for his release.

The article (written in French, for Flinders had learnt the language while on Île-de-France) was forwarded to Conrad Malte-Brun in Paris, who published it in the tenth volume of his *Annales des Voyages* (1810), commenting in his introduction:

The noble sentiments of Mr. Flinders will easily make us overlook some tedious passages and likewise the nautical terms and anglicisms of his style, which we thought should be deliberately preserved, in order to retain in his letter all its original character.

In the article Flinders referred to "my voyage to Australia" and in a footnote he wrote:

The great island, once called New Holland, is separated, politically, into two sections. The coasts of the western part were discovered and investigated in a very imperfect manner by the Dutch, on the voyage which their natural bent made them undertake for commercial purposes at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The investigation of the eastern part was begun in 1770 by Captain Cook and has since been completed by English navigators. The first is the so-called New Holland, and the second bears the name of New South Wales. I have thought it appropriate to unite them under a common designation that will appear impartial to the respective rights of Holland and England, as regards precedence of discovery, and, to this effect, I have had recourse to the name of "terre Australe" or "Australia". But it remains to be seen whether this name will be adopted by European geographers.

Finally, in the introduction to his great work *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, published in London in 1814, Flinders wrote:

I have, with the concurrence of opinions entitled to deference, ventured upon the re-adoption of the original Terra Australis; and of this term I shall hereafter make

use, when speaking of New Holland and New South Wales, in a collective sense.

And in one of his frequent footnotes he added:

Had I permitted myself any innovation upon the original term, it would have been to convert it into Australia; as being more agreeable to the ear, and an assimilation to the names of the other great portions of the earth.

In the collection of charts published with the book, the one showing the whole continent was labelled "General Chart of Terra Australis or Australia", the Latin term presumably being given priority on this occasion because the Admiralty Hydrographer (now Captain Thomas Hurd) would have insisted that common usage be followed.

The word "Australia" was also used in a work published in London while Flinders was on Île-de-France. James Burney (1750-1821), a captain in the Royal Navy, issued *A Chronological History of the Voyages and Discoveries in the South Sea or Pacific Ocean* in five volumes between 1803 and 1817. Burney had sailed with Cook on his second and third voyages to the South Seas and in 1782-83 had served against the French in India. His book contained a great many accounts of maritime explorations in southern seas, including the stories of Magellan, Alcazova, Mendaña, Cavendish, Hawkins, Quiros, Tasman, Dampier and Roggewein, as well as a boatload of buccaneers.

In the second volume, published in 1806, Captain Burney described the discovery of the New Hebrides

by Quiros, who, he said, "imagined that this land was the so long sought Southern Continent, and in this belief named it the Australia del Espiritu Santo". He also mentioned that Quiros took two of the islanders with him to New Spain, one of whom was "a boy, a native of the Australia". Burney quoted the first sentence of Quiros' eighth memorial, using, as did other English writers, the translation by Samuel Purchas, with the words "Australia Incognita". He also made numerous other references to "the Australia" (meaning the New Hebrides). Included in the *Chronological History* was a chart, "published according to Act of Parliament", of the islands discovered in the South Seas up to the year 1620, on which the New Hebrides were still shown as "Australia del Espiritu Santo".

Following Flinders' use of it, the name "Australia" caught the imagination of Lachlan Macquarie, Governor of New South Wales, who had asked the Colonial Office to send him a copy of *A Voyage to Terra Australis*. ⇨



Matthew Flinders' silhouette, made in the Strand, London, in 1812.

His first recorded use of "Australia" was in a dispatch, dated 4th April 1817, to Earl Bathurst, British Secretary of State for the Colonies, in which Macquarie acknowledged "the Receipt of Captn. Flinders' Chart of Australia, and the Journal of his Voyage". And on 21st December of the same year, in a dispatch to Henry Goulburn, British Under-Secretary for the Colonies, Macquarie referred to "the Coasts of the Continent of Australia, which I hope will be the Name given to this Country in future". His use of the word contributed largely to its general adoption and the name was in common use by the 1820s.


Thus, although George Shaw and Matthew Flinders were the first to use the name "Australia" to refer to the actual continent, the word (or its derivatives) was previously used by at least six other writers -- the translators of Quiros and de Foigny, as well as de Brosse, Callander, Dalrymple and Wilson. Whether Shaw knew of any of these is not known, but Flinders was certainly familiar with most of them. It is clear from the introduction to *A Voyage to Terra Australis* that he was well-versed in the history of maritime exploration in the southern hemisphere. He refers to Quiros' discovery of "a land which he named Australia del Espiritu Santo" (using the emended version of the word that was common in most translations). He quotes from de Brosse's *Histoire des Navigations aux Terres Australes* several times (translating the passages himself rather than using Callander's less accurate version), so he knew of de Brosse's "Australasie". In addition, there are numerous mentions in the introduction of particular charts and books published by Alexander Dalrymple, with whom Flinders had frequent contact. It is also likely that James Wilson's use of the word "Australia" would have been known to him. According to Geoffrey Ingleton's scholarly biography of Flinders, "Undoubtedly [he] had these charts by Wilson with him in the *Investigator*, indeed he probably had the book in his own personal library." Flinders also refers, in his introduction, to the first three volumes of Burney's *Chronological History*, where he would have seen the quotation from Quiros and Burney's other frequent mentions of "the Australia".

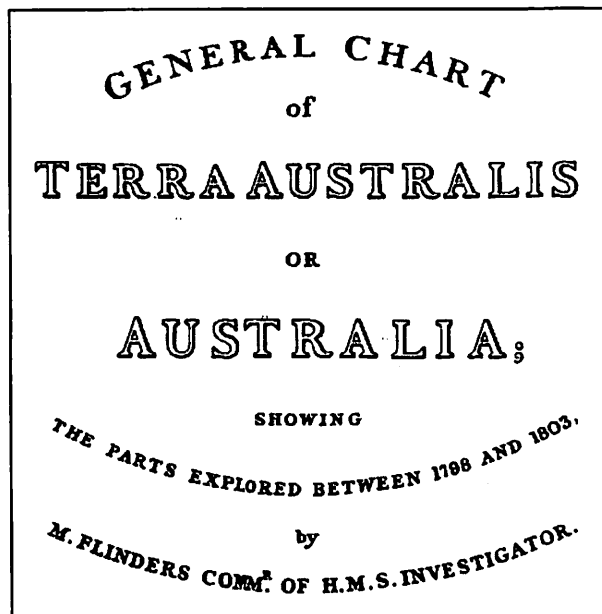
We can therefore trace a direct line from Pedro Fernandez de Quiros' "Austrialia" in 1606 to Samuel Purchas' alteration of it to "Australia" in 1625, then through the writings of Dalrymple (1770), Wilson (1799) and Burney (1806), leading finally to Matthew Flinders' definitive use of it between 1804 and 1814.

So, for the distinctive and euphonious name of our country we are indebted to a number of writers, not least among them being Flinders for being well-read enough to have been familiar with the others.

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Note: All the above books and periodicals can be found either in the Barr Smith Library of the University of Adelaide or in the State Library of South Australia. 



Title of Flinders' chart of the whole continent, issued with *A Voyage to Terra Australis* in 1814.