

No. 171  
March 2004

# HISTORY SA

The Newsletter of the Historical Society of South Australia Inc.

## Editorial

Response to the new look for *History SA* has been favourable and I thank you for your support. Our aim for the newsletter is to emphasise news. Your Council wishes to provide you with pictorial examples of our activities as well as information on the activities around town, intrastate, interstate and overseas. It is acknowledged that many of our members may be travelling to many different locations throughout the world and therefore we would like to let you know what is happening in historical circles, wherever you may go. Please consult our website for contact details of historical societies in other states and territories to find out about conferences, activities and resources for historical research.

Our objective with *History SA* is to provide a high standard of articles as well. With this in mind I would like to hear from as many people as possible who have undertaken research, in any area of South Australian history, so that I may publish interesting, thought provoking and enlightening articles. I will consider all material submitted. Publication will depend on the theme of the newsletter and current events.

Thank you again for your support and I hope to hear from you soon.

Alison Houghton  
Editor



Alison Houghton looks at her relatives' names on the Lone Pine Memorial

## Journey of Remembrance

AN ACCOUNT OF MOUNT BARKER HIGH SCHOOL'S REMEMBRANCE 2001 PROJECT



The book 'Journey of Remembrance' tells of Mt Barker High School's commemoration of 99 WWI soldiers and includes previously unpublished primary sources, invaluable to the student of Australian History.

Following the success of her presentation at the February meeting of the HSSA, Julie Reece proudly shows a copy of her book *Journey of Remembrance*, which tells of the research, travels and experiences of the students from Mt Barker High School who visited Gallipoli and the Western Front in 2000. With the support of the HSSA a second Journey of Remembrance will be undertaken in 2004 and Julie and her students have offered, where possible, to lay a wreath and photograph the graves of HSSA members' relatives. For further information, or to purchase your copy of *Journey of Remembrance*, please contact Jayne Huxtable, telephone 8388 7730.

## Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Historical Society of South Australia will be held on Friday 7 May 2004 at 7.30pm. Nominations are invited for the positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and up to eight Council members, and must be forwarded to the Secretary, HSSA, PO Box 519, Kent Town 5071 by 16 April 2004.

## From the President

2004 for the Historical Society of South Australia got off to a very good start with the first of our Friday evening lecture series on 6 February. Our guest was Julie Reece, a history teacher from Mt Barker High School, who presented the story of the group of students she took to Gallipoli and the battle fields of the Western Front.

Each of the students researched servicemen from the Mt Barker area (many of whom had attended their school) and who gave their lives during World War I. The group visited 42 cemeteries in its quest to visit the graves of these soldiers, to tell their stories and to photograph their head stones. One of the highlights of the trip was attendance at the daily commemorative ceremony at the Menin Gate, where the Ode was given by one of the students.

The preparation for the journey and the journey itself were wonderful experiences for these young people. However, what was not quite so expected was the impact their work would have on the surviving children and families of these men. In many

cases their work brought closure after more than 80 years, and in some cases provided information of which families were unaware.

A book, *Journey of Remembrance*, has been produced documenting the project and I encourage you to purchase a copy by contacting Julie at Mount Barker High School. Funds raised from the sale of the book and through donations will help take a second group of students to France and Turkey later this year. The Society Council is keen to support the teaching of history in schools and at its meeting following the February lecture, resolved to donate the sum of \$1000 to help the group get up and away. In acknowledgement of the Society's support, students who undertake the trip, and Julie, will give a presentation to us as a part of our 2005 calendar. I look forward to hearing of their experiences.

At our March meeting Susan Woodburn, special collections librarian at the Barr Smith Library, provided a wonderful insight into the collection for which she is responsible. Of

particular interest was her work with the papers of HSSA's former patron, the late Sir Walter Crocker, which is the largest single personal collection in the Barr Smith. With the passage of time, I am sure the collection has many more treasures to reveal to researchers.

Our first field trip for the year, a visit to St Mark's College, on Sunday 8 February, was postponed due to forecast high temperatures. This proved to be the right move as the mercury rose above the old century. I shall advise you of the rescheduled date when this has been determined.

Membership renewals are now due and I ask that you please return the form on the back of your program with your payment as soon as possible. I also remind members that our monthly lecture now commences at 7.30pm, rather than 8.00pm as has been the custom.

Best wishes

**David Cornish, President**

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## SA History Week 22-30 May 2004

The History Trust of South Australia is inviting organisations and community groups who wish to promote their part in South Australia's history to register their interest. Plans include dinners, museum open days, seminars, special exhibitions and events, historical walks, family reunions and displays to name a few. SA History Week culminates in the 13th State History Conference at University of Adelaide on 29 & 30 May. The conference is entitled 'Town Talk' and will explore aspects of urban life in Adelaide.

**Monday 24 May** 1.00 – 4.30pm at Mt Barker High School \$30 students \$40 teachers

Julie Reece, Convenor: 'Unexpected Journeys to Surprising Destinations'

Focus – Remembering Australians in Wartime (WW1), the Research Essay and Discovering New and Interesting Sources.

Cost includes fully catered lunch and afternoon tea, a copy of *Journey of Remembrance* and source booklets from the conference.

Contact Mt Barker High School for more details.

**Wednesday 26 May** Pioneers Association of South Australia Inc. at the State Library of South Australia, Institute Building, Lecture Theatre. Cost \$15 includes lunch and lecture. Bookings essential.

Lunch at 12 noon, Lecture at 1.15pm. Contact Elizabeth Mittons, Program Co-ordinator, 8264 3356

'A Pioneer Conversazione' Speaker: Dr Jeff Nichols  
Topic: 'Women of Substance and the Paradise of Dissent'  
The systematic colonisation of South Australia was not the brainchild of one man. Rather, it sprang from a reformist response to the social and economic malaise, which beset Georgian England in the early 19th Century. Along the way some outstanding and impressive women provided succour and inspiration and we must now acknowledge their contribution to our beginnings.

**Friday 28 May** at Drill Hall, Torrens Parade Ground  
Cost \$10 – morning tea included  
History Council of South Australia

Forum on insurance for historians and heritage groups.

## Steve Gower AO *Australian War Memorial*

**7.30pm Friday  
2 April 2004**

**Prince Philip Theatre,  
Prince Alfred College,  
Kent Town**

The Australian War Memorial is a great and unique national institution conceived in the midst of World War One by the official journalist and later Official Historian, C.E.W. Bean. It was opened in the national capital on Remembrance Day 1941.

By then Australia had been at war again with Germany for over two years, and the Pacific War was about to engulf Australia. The AWM now covers all those external commitments involving Australian forces over the years, starting with the Maori Wars.

The presentation will cover the origins and history of the AWM, to the present day. It will particularly cover the recent developments that have seen the institution

win the prestigious award of Australia's Major Tourist Attraction for three consecutive years.

The Memorial remains true to Bean's vision of commemorating through understanding the service and sacrifice of Australia's men and women in external conflict.

### **Our Guest**

Steve Gower was born in South Australia and educated at Unley High School and Prince Alfred College. On leaving school he was accepted for the Royal Military College, Duntroon, where he topped his year. During his career with the Australian Army, Steve Gower served in Vietnam, as an Aide de Camp to Princess Margaret, and as Assistant Chief of Defence Force (Logistics). He retired with the rank of Major General in 1996 and was conferred an Officer of the Order of Australia the same year.

Steve Gower was appointed Director of the Australian War Memorial in 1996. During his tenure extensive refurbishment of existing galleries has been undertaken, including the popular Air War In The Pacific feature in the former aircraft hall. ANZAC Hall, the most recent addition to the memorial located behind the memorial proper, is home to three stunning sound and

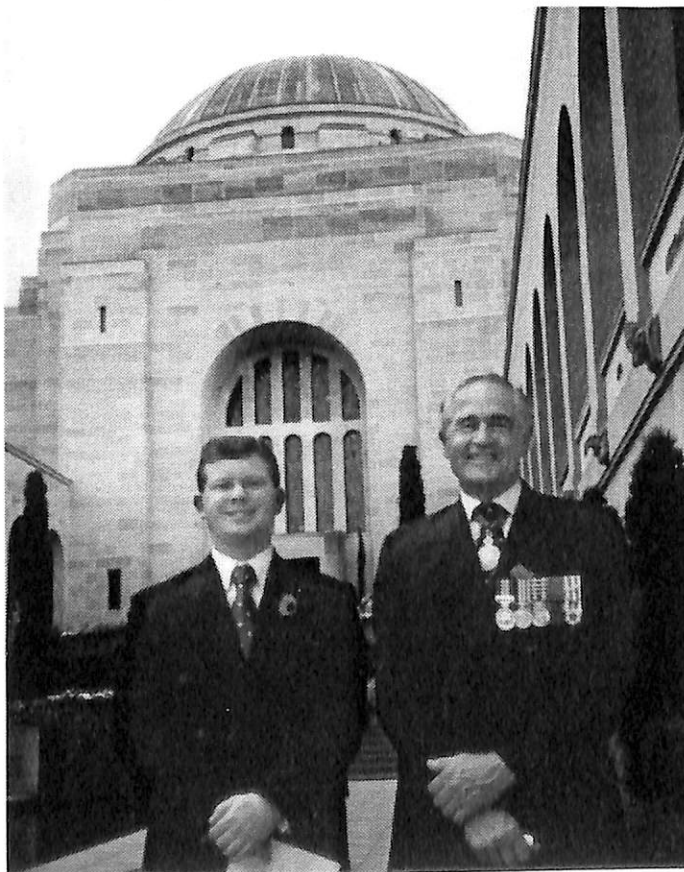
light shows which interpret key moments from World War I and World War II using objects from these events. **Strike by Night** is centred around the Lancaster G for George, **Sydney Under Attack** has the midget submarine which infiltrated Sydney Harbour as its focal point, and **Our First Naval Victory** the guns from both the German raider Emden and HMAS Sydney. Steve Gower is currently the Chairman of the Council of Museum Directors of Australia.

Steve Gower has a strong interest in history, the arts and sport. His work *Guns of the Regiment* was published in 1981 by the Australian War Memorial, and he wrote the entry for the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* for fellow South Australian Colonel W.C.N. Waite, DSO, MC.

### **From the President**

I am delighted that Major General Gower is able to present to us at the April meeting and invite HSSA members to bring guests to share in his presentation. I especially encourage school students with an interest in history to join in what will be an informative and enjoyable presentation.

David Cornish



*HSSA President David Cornish and Major General Steve Gower AO, Director of the Australian War Memorial, photographed at the Australian War Memorial following the Remembrance Day observance, 11 November 2000.*

## Julia Pitman *The Central Methodist Mission and the Resettlement of Jewish Refugees at Kuitpo SA in 1939*

**7.30pm Friday  
7 May 2004**

**Prince Philip Theatre,  
Prince Alfred College,  
Kent Town**

Ms Julia Pitman has been the Justice and Solidarity Research Officer for UnitingCare Wesley Adelaide and the Uniting Church Synod of South Australia since December 2001. She is currently finishing her PhD in history at the University of Adelaide. The topic for her dissertation is 'Prophets and Priests: Women in Australian Congregationalism, 1927-1977'. She has published articles on the history of the Uniting Church and is currently co-editing a collection of essays on religion and social policy topics for the United Nations/World Council of Churches' Decade to Overcome Violence, 2001-2010.

Her paper explores the role of the Central Methodist Mission in the resettlement of Jewish refugees at Kuitpo Colony, an agricultural training scheme established to address male unemployment during

the Depression. Drawing on recent historiography, the paper assumes that inter-faith relations in Australia have been marked by respect rather than by violence. The paper briefly considers the reasons why Jewish refugees came to Australia in the context of the generally low settlement rate of Jewish refugees in South Australia, before exploring the experience of the refugees at Kuitpo. The Mission provided a community service that refugees found useful. Its success was highly dependent upon the voluntary labour of women. The advocacy work of the Mission also influenced public opinion in favor of refugees during a formative period in the liberalization of Australia's refugee policy. This favorable view of refugees was not based on their right to seek asylum, but instead it emphasised their value to the Australian community as hard workers.



**All monthly  
Talks will  
commence  
at 7.30pm in  
2004!**

## Field Trips

April 2004

**Norton Summit and Environs** Sunday April 18, 2004  
– Departs Burnside Council Chambers 10am - All day tour with lunch at St Johns Church. Led by Geoffrey Bishop, Vice-President of HSSA.

An area quite close to Adelaide, this tour offers the opportunity to see places not generally open to the public. Being Playford and Baker country we will visit various places associated with these families, highlighted by a glimpse of the Giles family property, Grove Hill; it has been owned by the family for 158 years. Our tour will end with a visit to an interesting mystery destination.

- 10am Depart Burnside, travel via Magill & Old Norton Summit Roads
- 11am Arrive Norton Summit. Visit Morialta Barns & Norton Summit Cemetery
- 12noon Back at Norton Summit. Met by Jon Richards, President, East Torrens Historical Society. Lunch at St. John's Church. Inspection of the church guided by Mrs Mary Playford Snarskis. Inspect Old Council Chambers Museum & Playford Memorial.
- 2pm Depart Norton Summit – SURPRISE!
- 3pm Return via New Norton Summit Road to Magill; Morialta vineyards; views over Morialta Gorge & Adelaide suburbs
- 4pm Arrive Burnside Council Chambers
- Contact Mrs Avis Huckel 8277 2953 for bookings for Field Trips

## Notes

Launch of the History Council of South Australia will take place on April 28, between 5.30 and 7.30pm. Please contact the Editor for more details on 8296 5706 or 0417 178 687.

### REMINDER

Your membership subscriptions for the Historical Society of South Australia are due by March 30. To renew your membership please complete the slip attached to the HSSA 2004 program and return to the Treasurer by post, or pay in person at the April meeting. Thank you for your ongoing support.

## Query Forum

Australia's largest woolbroking company, G.H. Michell & Sons Pty Ltd (now known as Michell Australia), was established by George Henry Michell at Undalya in 1870. George and Catherine Michell arrived in SA in 1866 and George worked as a boot maker in Adelaide. In 1867 or 1868 they reputedly moved to Cudlee Creek. An early 1900s Michell wool brand was GUH standing for Gumeracha – Undalya – Hindmarsh. Can anyone provide any information of their leasing land at Cudlee Creek or Gumeracha (nothing shows up in official records)?

Contact Geoffrey Bishop, PO Box 194 URAIDLA 5142 or telephone 8390 3911

## New Members

Mr Tim ANSON, Adelaide  
Mr Neville, COLLINS, Woodside  
Mr Robert FISHER, Newton  
Mrs Pat JACKSON, Waterfall Gully  
Ms Colleen KENNY, Wallaroo  
Mr Robert SAGE, Burnside  
Ms Elizabeth SEXTON, Fullarton  
Rev. & Mrs Malcolm THOMAS, Oaklands Park  
Mr John TURNER, Norwood  
Mrs Kathleen ZAKIS, South Plympton

## Historical Society Profile

### *The Military Historical Society of Australia*

The South Australia Branch was formed in 1966. It meets on the 2nd Friday of each month at Keswick Barracks, starting at 8pm. At these meetings there is a guest speaker and displays of members' works. Other social activities happen at various times throughout the year. Members of the society also receive a quarterly journal.

The aim of the society is to encourage research and study in military history, customs, traditions, dress, arms and equipment. In doing this it wishes to promote public interest in these areas. A major objective of the society is the preservation of historical military objects, particularly from the Australian Armed Forces.

For more information please contact Tony Harris on 8271 8619.

### *Victoriana Society of South Australia*

Monthly meetings are held at Partridge House, 38 Partridge St, Glenelg on the 2nd Monday of the month at 8pm. The society is devoted to the Victorian and Edwardian eras with members displaying keen interests in areas such as costume, music, history, jewellery, dance, sociology, militaria, cuisine and arts and crafts. The aim of the society is to encourage an interest in the history of the 'Victorian' era, emphasising preservation of original artefacts, research and re-enactments. This society covers a vast array of topics and there is bound to be something for everyone.

For more information please contact Kay Inverarity on 8449 1948 or [jarity@merlin.net.au](mailto:jarity@merlin.net.au)

*Members of the Victoriana Society of SA Inc. travelled from Mt Barker to the Strathalbyn Picnic by steam train in Oct. 2001. Fifty members of the Society were in costume.*



## Book Review

### *From the Ground Up*

The name Hickinbotham is well-known to South Australians. From humble beginnings in 1954, Hickinbotham Homes has grown to be the largest builder of homes in the State. The story of this company (and much more) is told in good style by HSSA member Alan Hickinbotham AM in his recently released memoirs, *From the Ground Up*.

Alan is a man of considerable drive and displays great enthusiasm for whatever project he is working on and there have been many of them over the years. His interests are many and varied – football, the arts, estate and community development, water conservation and wine. He has made a huge contribution to all of these areas during his working life. Alan has never been one to simply follow the crowd and this shows in the stories and events related in this book.

In the area of house building, for instance, Hickinbotham have been trend-setters both in house design and in planning large residential subdivisions as self-contained communities. Many of Alan's initiatives only came to fruition after lengthy battles with government agencies and then, a few short years later, they became accepted practice.

Alan relates his years in teaching, playing and coaching football, the building industry, and most recently, the wine trade. He has a keen eye for a good story and a nice sense of

humour comes through in his writings. The book is a picture of life in South Australia over the past 50 or so years and is a pleasure to read. It is tastefully designed and illustrated with a host of black and white and coloured photographs.

*From the Ground Up: the memoirs of Alan Hickinbotham* by Alan Hickinbotham (Lythrum Press, Adelaide, 2004: \$39.95 available from Wakefield Press, Dymocks, Borders, Holdfast Books).

Geoffrey Bishop



*Alan Hickinbotham, 2001*

## Book Review

### **Governor's Travels**

*Governor's Travels* is a 90 page book depicting the preferred modes of transport used by the Governors of South Australia for their official duties. Carter has used a chronological methodology to highlight the development of the transport industry. Firstly there is a complete list of the Governors of South Australia from the incorrigible Captain John Hindmarsh to our dedicated Marjorie Jackson-Nelson, present Governor. Each section begins with text referring to the particular Governor and their involvement, influence or preference in modes of transport. The author has restricted his work to those Governors for which there is pictorial evidence for the topic. Transport by dignitaries of South Australia is an area of history that has been void until now.

This book is a light read, fascinating to those with a passion for the various styles of transport and an interesting statement about fashion, tradition and

*Her Excellency Marjorie Jackson Nelson, AC, CVO, MBE, travels by horse and carriage to her swearing in as Governor of South Australia in 2001.*

Vice-Regal Etiquette. Carter has covered the development of the transport industry by emphasising horse and buggy, rail, sea, river, air and road vehicles.

*Governor's Travels* by Alan Carter (self published) 2003 \$25.00 To obtain a copy of this delightful book please contact Seaview Press on 8235 1535 or [seaview@seaviewpress.com.au](mailto:seaview@seaviewpress.com.au)

Alison Houghton



## Feature Article

### **City of Archives - reflecting on the 25th anniversary of the Adelaide City Archives**

The recent gathering of archivists and others from kindred professions in Adelaide during mid September to attend the Australian Society of Archivists' 2003 National Conference focused attention on this City's relatively high concentration of archival institutions.

This is quite an achievement for a city the size of Adelaide, as well as being a real smorgasbord for historians. Within a one mile radius of the Adelaide GPO there is the State Library of South Australia's Mortlock Collection, the relocated National Archives Regional Office, the Adelaide City Council Archives, the Catholic Church Archives, the Anglican Archives and the Lutheran Archives at Bowden, the University of Adelaide Archives and the Architectural Archives and Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Library at the University of South Australia. This impressive list of publicly accessible archive offices is soon to be supplemented by a new South Australian State Records facility, returning to the CBD after an absence of some 15 years.

Of these establishments the Adelaide City Council Archives is this year celebrating its 25th anniversary. The Council first appointed an archivist in July 1978. An on-site

archives was subsequently established with a public search room and offices located on the first floor of the Adelaide Town Hall's Prince Alfred Chambers (where the Town Hall Function Centre offices are now). The records were all stored in the basements underneath the Town Hall in far from ideal circumstances. The City Archives was later moved to new purpose-built facilities nearby, when the Council erected the high-rise Topham Car Park in 1986.

This is the only purpose-built local government archive office in Australia. It is considered state of the art so far as long term preservation of municipal records is concerned. It cost the Council around \$3million to set up and comes complete with its own in-house materials, conservation laboratory and archival displays formatting area.

The City Archives accentuate the Adelaide City Council's long and often overlooked involvement in preserving and promoting South Australian history. This really began in earnest in the 1920s with the establishment of a municipal museum responsible for collecting historic records and memorabilia relating to the City, including the Colonel

Light and Queen Adelaide relics some of which are on public display in the Town Hall.

The Council's commitment continued, intermittently but consistently, to the present day, culminating in the 1980s with the establishment of the Topham Archives facility. During 2002 the Council extended its commitment by allocating additional resources and space to its archives and embarking on a proactive programme of historic displays both independently and in conjunction with other local archival and community organisations. The Council's support for archives and the preservation of history in general was again affirmed by Adelaide's new Lord Mayor, Michael Harbison. His welcoming address at an official Council reception held in the Queen Adelaide Room at the Town Hall for archivists attending the Australian Society of Archivists' 2003 National Conference emphasised this endorsement.

Perhaps it's because Adelaide City Council is the oldest municipality in Australia, having been formed in 1840, that it's been so mindful of the importance of its documentary heritage and the need to preserve it intact for posterity. But Adelaide's association with preserving archives goes much deeper than just the Council's commitment to looking after its own historic records. Adelaide is really the spiritual birthplace of public archives in Australia.

The nation's first government archives was established here in 1919 by George Henderson, Professor of History at the University of Adelaide, to ensure preservation of important documents relating to the foundation and early history of the state. The Archives Department of the Public Library of South Australia, as it was then known, opened to the public in October 1920 in the old Armoury building at the rear of the South Australian Art Gallery. George Pitt, a librarian and one of Henderson's students, was chosen as the state's – indeed the nation's – first officially appointed government archivist.

Though Adelaide's trail-blazing official archives was really designed as an historical manuscripts branch of the library for the use of Henderson's history students rather than as a proper public records office, the little archives nevertheless soon outgrew that function and began to take on a more bureaucratic role.

In 1925 the South Australian parliament passed the nation's first archives act, based on similar legislation in Britain and the United States, requiring state government departments to notify the archives a month before any intention to destroy documents. This allowed time for Pitt to inspect and take into custody any records he considered historically important.

Since then the archivist profession has grown to become a major player in the information management industry in Australia. Fuelled by the public's seemingly insatiable thirst for information about the past, by a belated but continuing focus on our unique cultural heritage, and by

the increasingly pressing need for governments to become more open and accountable in their decision-making and deliberative processes.

The new challenges presented by rampant advances in technology during the past couple of decades have revitalised the archival profession worldwide. Injecting new direction into it, and precipitating much internal debate and soul searching as the profession has grappled to find solutions to the new ways in which information is being created and managed.

The relevance of the profession in today's brave new world of electronic recordkeeping and imaging technologies is assured because it is archivists who provide such a crucial link between the traditional time-honoured ways of recording and managing information and the new paperless, digital environment of the 21st century. Of course the Internet has revolutionised the way the profession does business and has enabled it to reach a much wider audience than ever before. The archivist of today is likely to be a highly trained information specialist working with the latest high tech digital computer and scanning equipment, light years away from the image of the archivist that Pitt presented. The only concessions to modern technology that Pitt possessed were an ancient Imperial typewriter and a new fangled vacuum cleaner, which his archives obtained in 1923.

And yet, for all that, there is an element of Pitt's world that many archivists can perhaps still identify with to some extent. In 1967, just before his death, Pitt recalled that he spent much of his early years working as an archivist crawling into damp cellars and climbing through dusty attics, manhandling bundles of boxes and sorting through acres of loose papers. Most modern archivists have had to endure similar experiences at one time or another, a kind of atavistic initiation rites of passage into the profession.

I'm sure Pitt and Henderson would be amazed at the growth of public archives in Adelaide during the past eight decades, from those humble origins in the old Armoury tucked away behind the Art Gallery all those years ago.

More than that, they would urge all local archivists and historians to join with them in celebrating Adelaide's proud beginning.

**Robert Thornton**  
**Adelaide City Council Archives**

To contact the Adelaide City Archives you can write to:  
**Adelaide City Archives**  
**GPO Box 2252**  
**ADELAIDE SA 5001**

Or Phone: (08) 8203 7439

Email:  
cityarchives@adelaidecitycouncil.com

Website:  
[www.adelaidecitycouncil.com/archives](http://www.adelaidecitycouncil.com/archives)

# Is your family history recorded in maritime records?

If you have relatives who came to Australia by sea in the 20th century or who were involved in shipbuilding, lighthouse keeping, coastal protection, coastal exploration, the navy or fishing industry, then you may be able to locate records about those family members in the National Archives collection.

Records in the National Archives relating to people and the sea fall into three broad categories. First, there are records of those travelling both to and from Australia by sea. Second, there are records of those employed in maritime activities, and third, records kept on the construction, registration and operation of ships.

## Relatives who travelled to Australia by sea

The National Archives holds records about people travelling both to and from Australia by sea. Most maritime records date from 1901, but there are some exceptions. For example the National Archives office in Brisbane holds port records from 1852 and the National Archives office in Perth has maritime records dating from 1898. Most records of arrivals prior to 1901 are held in the archives of the relevant State government.

Passenger arrivals from outside Australia were usually recorded at the port at which the individual left the ship. However, after World War II, entire ships were processed in the Port of Fremantle, even when the passengers disembarked at other Australian ports further east. A person from England bound for Tasmania may be recorded as arriving at the Port of Melbourne. From there they would have transferred to Tasmania via an interstate ferry. The record of the ferry ride to Tasmania is not a Commonwealth record, only the record of their arrival into Port Melbourne.

The National Archives is currently undertaking indexing projects that will provide lists of individuals arriving in Australia. The passenger

indexes completed recently cover the Port of Fremantle 1926-1930 and can be accessed through the passenger index link on the RecordSearch catalogue online at [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au). Shipping reports, which give the name of the vessel, date of arrivals and departures, destinations, name of master and the number of crew are located in the National Archives collection and can also be accessed on the RecordSearch database.

## Seafaring or maritime support

The second group of records of importance to family historians relate to maritime employment. People running lighthouses as well as those maintaining and supplying transfers and provisions to remote light stations are extensively documented in the National Archives collection. Lighthouse keepers, for instance, wrote daily logs of their observations and activities, recording visitors to the station and the identity or type of ships passing their isolated post. There are also correspondence files and photographs.

The Navy, both armed and merchant, employed significant numbers of men and women. Their personnel files are retained as public records and might include trade-related certificates of competency and certificates of discharge.

People employed as hydrographers and meteorological forecasters also created records for the Commonwealth, and these records can be found in the National Archives.

## Ships and their owners

The settlement of the Australian population primarily on the coast meant shipping was important for transport and commercial trade. Prior to the *Shipping Registration Act 1981*, all Australian ship registrations were approved under British legislation in the Register of British Ships, which was maintained at various Australian ports. The National Archives website has a searchable index of microfilmed registers located

at [www.naa.gov.au/the\\_collection/transport/sea/search.html](http://www.naa.gov.au/the_collection/transport/sea/search.html)

Records of individual ships also occur in ship registration files, docking books, Navigation Act surveys and boat license books.

The Commonwealth Government owned dockyard and engine construction facilities. Important dockyards include Cockatoo Island (NSW), Garden Island (NSW) and the HMA Naval Dockyard at Williamstown (VIC).

Researchers can locate family history information related to ship construction, ownership, registration and decommissioning. You may be surprised to discover the high numbers of family-owned small businesses based on a single trading or fishing vessel. Records also include information about shipping operations and cargo. There are records on the wartime shipbuilding activities and the sequestration and destruction of privately-owned vessels as part of the war effort.

## For more information

The Archives online RecordSearch catalogue at [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au) is a good place to begin maritime research. Some passengers and ships will be registered by name on RecordSearch.

The Archives has published several research guides, and some provide information on maritime records. They include *More People Imperative*, *Cockatoo Island Dockyard*, *Collections in Melbourne*, and *Collections in Perth*. All of these guides can be downloaded from the National Archives website, purchased from Publication Sales on (02) 6212 3609 or ordered online at [shop.naa.gov.au](http://shop.naa.gov.au).

If you need assistance from our reference staff, please phone 1300 886 881 or email your query to [ref@naa.gov.au](mailto:ref@naa.gov.au).

**supplied by Derina McLaughlin,  
National Archives of Australia.**

# Archives of the Imagination

Would you know where to look to confirm a family story that Great-Aunty Madge once wrote a book that no-one's ever seen? Do you know where there might be some photographs your father is supposed to have taken at a historical event? Was your grandfather known for giving public lectures, or perhaps your grandmother was a singing star in her day? There are no guarantees, but you just might find evidence of these things in the collection of the National Archives of Australia.

From 1854 until 1968 anyone who wished to protect their creative endeavours under copyright could register their work by completing a registration form and submitting it, along with a copy of the work, to the Registrar of Copyrights. Each registration was recorded in a large register and given a number, and the work itself was filed.

Until 1907, copyright was registered in the each colony, except in Tasmania which did not have copyright legislation. After 1907, it was registered with the Commonwealth government. When Commonwealth legislation superseded the Colonial Acts, early registrations were still within copyright, so all the documentation passed to the Commonwealth. As a result of these registrations, the National Archives now holds a wonderfully eclectic archive of Australian social history, containing copies of everything from well-known paintings by famous artists and stills from early Hollywood films to early brochures for weight-loss programs and models of sculptures – and everything in between.

Whether you are searching for genealogical information or studying the career of a painter, photographer, artist, theatrical entrepreneur or playwright, you will find a variety of information if you delve into this archive. The most delightful aspect of this archive is the 'exhibits' (the copies of the works submitted at registration).

These are the direct evidence of the creative work of Australia's early artists and musicians: a manuscript for a play or a book of poetry, printed sheet music trumpeting the fact that the song was a 'tremendous success' for the singer, a plaster model of a sculpture and so on. You can view these items in our Reading Room and possibly even hold an object created by your ancestor.

If you are looking to flesh out the lives of your family, there are other sources within this collection that might help you. You can look at the photographs of places and events. Do you have a diary that records a visit to the theatre? That production might be reviewed in one of the many theatrical journals in the Archives collection and you will be able to see what stylish women were wearing from the fashion pages in these and other publications. You might have an ancestor who was a cook in a large

private home and want to know the wages and conditions of household servants and how advertisements for them were worded, or the sorts of things they could have purchased or made. You will find the exhibit material in this collection most helpful.

If shorthand is the bane of your existence, have a look at the many different systems developed by eager transcribers. Or find ideas for your next spy thriller in the old code books. Early street directories show not only the name and address of each occupant, but also their occupation so you might be able to recreate an entire neighbourhood.

Not all the exhibits have survived to come into the collection, but even when this is the case, there is a wealth of documentation to pore over. There are details of the person registering the work: their address at the time; the date they created or published the work; or in the case of theatrical pieces, the date and place of first performance. Sometimes there is associated correspondence which adds to the picture of the people involved. This correspondence can include letters outlining a person's credentials, documents transferring ownership of all or part of the copyright, wills and documentation of business transfers.

For anyone researching a career or the works of an artist, this collection is extremely valuable in providing dates when works were created or first exhibited. One keen researcher, Alan Tierney of Goulburn, has already published a booklet detailing the works of the photographer Melvin Vaniman, entitled *Dating of photographs and other fine arts: copyright registration records in Australia up to 1968 as a research source*.

Documents often contain the signatures of several people. I found my grandfather-in-law had witnessed the signature of the artist William Stuart Reid when he completed a registration form to protect his painting *Phar Lap (J Pike up)* in 1931. You can see this documentation, and a copy of the exquisite sketch Reid submitted, on the National Archives website, under the reference A1861, 6207 in RecordSearch. This find was, of course, pure luck. It is impossible to actually search for the signature of a witness, but there are registers which enable you to search for details of applicants, creators and the titles of the works they created. The applicants and creators of the main Commonwealth literary applications are all itemised on our RecordSearch database.

To find out more about the copyright collection and what it comprises, look at our research guide, *A Nation's Imagination: Australia's Copyright Records, 1854-1968*, and Fact sheet 105. Both are available online on our website [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au). The guide (148 pages) can also

## Society Activities

be purchased for \$10.00 from our offices in Canberra and all State capitals, by phone on (02) 6212 3609, or online from our Publications e-shop. Our reference staff can also help with any inquiry you might have on 1300 886 881.

Don't forget patents, trademarks and designs as a source of inventive thought – we have those registrations too. You might be surprised by the creative spirits lurking in your family tree!

Merilyn Minell  
National Archives of  
Australia  
13 November 2003

### Weekend Functions

April 10-12, 2004, Gawler Gourmet & Heritage Festival

Contact Gawler Visitors Centre – 2 Lynch Road, Gawler – Ph (08) 8522 6814

April 24-26, 2004

Victor Harbor Heritage Celebrations

– Anzac Weekend

Contact Victor Harbor Visitors Information Centre on (08) 8552 5738

May 14-16, 2004

Sesquicentenary Celebrations of St Martin's Anglican Church, Campbelltown

Friday, May 14 – Parishoners Dinner & Dance

Saturday, May 15 – Cemetery Walks between 2 & 4pm

Dedication of historic flag pole and laying of time capsule

Historic Exhibition – Old St Martin's Church (Chapel)

Sunday, May 16 - Historic Exhibition

– Old St Martin's Church (Chapel)

Thanksgiving Service & Blessing of the Wall Hanging – Archbishop officiating (9.30-11am)

Old Fashioned Picnic with games (12noon onwards) at Athelstone Scout Hall, Foxfield Oval, Maryvale Road

For more information please contact Di Love on 8336 6959

May 15-18, 2004

'Australia's First Public Railway'

Goolwa, Middleton, Port Elliot. Contact Mark Przibilla on (08) 8555 3488 or visit the website [www.visitalexandrina.com/firstrailway](http://www.visitalexandrina.com/firstrailway)

### Interstate Activity

April 16-18, 2004

'Settlers In The Sun' - Victorian Family History Conference being held in Mildura

Contact [SettlersintheSun@telstra.com](mailto:SettlersintheSun@telstra.com)  
Ph (03) 5023 2313 or (03) 5027 6228 after hours

April 24 – May 2, 2004

The National Trust Heritage Festival 2004

'Foundations of tomorrow in the year of the built environment'

Contact (02) 9258 0123 or email [mfisher@nsw.nationaltrust.org.au](mailto:mfisher@nsw.nationaltrust.org.au) or visit the website [www.nsw.nationaltrust.org.au](http://www.nsw.nationaltrust.org.au)

### International

June 23-26, 2004

13th International Oral History Conference

Enquiries to [info@ioha2004.it](mailto:info@ioha2004.it)

Or Janis Wilton [jwilton@pobox.une.edu.au](mailto:jwilton@pobox.une.edu.au) or visit website <http://www.ioha.fqv.br>

**Deadline for newsletter articles and entries March 30, 2004.**

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## Coming Events

### **Campbelltown Historical Society**

2 Newton Road, Newton at 8.00pm  
Tuesday 13 April Speaker Dr Pam Smith Topic 'Heritage of the Hills Face Zone'

Tuesday 11 May Speaker Di Love Topic 'St Martin's Church, Campbelltown - 150 years'

### **John McDouall Stuart Society**

Stuart's Statue in Victoria Square at 2.30pm, Sunday 21 March, Annual Commemorative Ceremony

### **Kensington & Norwood Historical Society Inc.**

Don Pyatt Room, Norwood Town Hall at 8pm, Wednesday 7 April, Speaker Major Bill Denny, Topic 'A Digger At Home and Abroad'

### **Migration Museum**

Gallery 8 & 9 Every Stitch Tells A Story: Needlework in the lives of South Australian Women Till December 2004  
Gallery 2 Memories and Dreams: Cultural Diversity in Banners 18 March to 30 May 2004

Community Access Gallery: The Forum Friendship and Understanding: Australia - China Till May 2004

### **Mt Barker & District Branch of the National Trust of South Australia**

Tuesday 6 April 'Beer, Business and Buildings' Bus excursion to Oakbank, meet at the Swimming Pool on Cameron Road at 12.30pm Cost \$5.00 includes afternoon tea at 'Fresh Temptations' at Balhannah.

Tuesday 4 May at the CWA Hall at 1.30pm  
Speaker Eugene & Simone Poznanski, Topic 'Antarctic Adventure'

### **Port Adelaide Historical Society**

Semaphore Library, upstairs foyer at 8pm, Wednesday 21 April, Speaker Dr John Doyle, Topic Legacy

Wednesday 19 May, Speaker Mr Tony Harris, Topic 'Royal Flying Doctor'

### **Royal Geographical Society of SA Inc.**

Prince Philip Theatre, Prince Alfred College  
Thursday 25 March at 5.30pm, Speaker: Dr John Radcliffe AM, Topic: 'Trams - past, present and future'

Thursday 22 April at 7.30pm, Speaker Prof. David Coventry, University of Adelaide, Topic 'Hanrahan's Doomsday - management of drought in dryland cropping areas of Australia'

### **Salisbury & District Historical Society Inc.**

Sunday 18 April, Annual Picnic BBQ  
Sunday 23 May, Salisbury Historical Walks For more information please contact Peter Gray on 8250 5077

### **South Australian Genealogical & Heraldry Society Inc.**

Contact Society for more details on 8272 4222 or 201 Unley Rd, Unley. Meetings at 7.45pm

Wednesday 24 March

Speaker: Andrew Wilson, Senior Aboriginal Project Officer, State Records, Topic Reflections on the history and experience of the Aboriginal people of South Australia using the primary sources of the South Australian Government held by State Records.'

Wednesday 28 April, Speaker Sven Kuusk, Curator, Army Museum of South Australia, Topic 'Military Sources for Family History'

### **Friends of the South Australian Museum Inc.**

Friday May 28, 2004 Ancient flint boxes and flint firearms. Contact the 'Friends' on 8207 7389 for times and venues.

### **Tea Tree Gully & Historical Society Inc.**

City of Tea Tree Gully Library Learning Centre at 9.45am  
Wednesday 21 April, Speaker Dr Ross Both, Topic 'The Glen Osmond Silver-Lead Mines; the first metal mines in Australia'

The Old Highercombe Hotel Folk Museum at 6.45pm  
Thursday 20 May, Speaker Ian Stratford, Topic 'Mediaeval Life and Times, and in particular Archery'

### **Victoriana Society of SA**

Partridge House, 38 Partridge Street, Glenelg at 8.00pm  
Tuesday 13 April, Speaker Mr Ian Schomburgk  
Topic 'A new high tech society; South Australia in the mid 19th Century'

Monday 10 May

Speaker Sandy Whitelaw, Topic 'Ballet & Costume, its history and links to Victorian fashionable dress'

### **Walkerville Historical Society**

Walkerville Town Hall at 7.30pm, Wednesday 21 April  
Speaker Bruce Gordon, Topic 'For God and Country - A Gallipoli Story'

Wednesday 19 May, Speaker Lannah Sawers, Topic 'Gilberton Swimming Pool'

### **West Torrens Historical Society**

Kandahar House, 327 Marion Road, North Plympton at 7.45pm, Monday 24 May  
Speaker Craig Hill  
Topic 'Olives in West Torrens'