

## Annual General Meeting

Notice is given that the Annual General Meeting of the Historical Society of South Australia will be held on Friday 7 April 2006 at 7.30pm at Prince Alfred College, Kent Town.

The HSSA is run by a dedicated Council, all of whom give generously of their time and expertise to ensure a wide and varied program is presented, meetings run smoothly, publications prepared and the affairs of the society conducted in professional manner. The Council is always keen to welcome new members who can assist to further the aims of the society.

Nominations are invited for the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and up to eight council members. Nominations must be forwarded to the Secretary, HSSA, PO Box 519 Kent Town SA 5071 by 7 March 2006.

If you would like further information about participating on Council please do not hesitate to contact me: telephone 8334 1200 (w) or [dcornish@pac.edu.au](mailto:dcornish@pac.edu.au)

**David Cornish**  
President  
1 March 2006

## 25th Year of the History Trust of South Australia

This year will be remembered for the start of the Open Heritage initiative for South Australia. The inaugural SA Open Heritage initiative will form part of the program for History Week to be held 20-28 May 2006. Based on the highly successful and long running UK model of Heritage Open Days, SA Open Heritage will be a joint venture between the Heritage Branch, the Department for the Environment and Heritage, and the History Trust of SA.

It will offer the community a behind-the-doors glimpse inside some of South Australia's less known heritage places. SA Open Heritage will allow public access to privately owned heritage places on the State Heritage List. Owners and occupiers of selected State heritage places within chosen areas are being specially invited to take part in this new initiative.

The program for the event, including details of the places and their opening times, will be released early in April with the program for History Week.

The State History Conference will be held at the end of History Week in Adelaide. The theme, 'In History We Trust,' reflects the fact that the History Trust is celebrating its 25th year. Organisers have been swamped with papers!

More details can be obtained from Margaret Anderson, ph. 8202 9884, e-mail [manderson@history.sa.gov.au](mailto:manderson@history.sa.gov.au).



*A flashback as a part of the History Trust's 25th year — former History Trust staff Brian Samuels, Sue Marsden, Geoff Speirs (Courtesy History Trust) n.d.*

## From the President

The 2006 Historical Society of South Australia year got off to a very pleasing start with 108 members and guests present to hear Gene Vecchio's fascinating lecture on the contributions of George Goyder and Sir Charles Todd. Gene has made an in depth study of these two important South Australians and enthusiastically shared his knowledge of them, including delightful anecdotes such as Sir Charles Todd's response to the persistent enquirer that 'Orroroo would never have a post office as there will never be more than two letters in Orroroo!'

In my President's report at the first meeting I was pleased to pass on the congratulations of the Lord Mayor of Adelaide, Mr Michael Harbison, on the Society's recent commendation in the Edmund Wright Heritage Awards. I was also pleased to receive a Christmas Card from our Patron, the Governor of South Australia, and I reciprocated her best wishes on behalf of us all. The Governor receives each copy of *History SA* and the annual *Journal*.

During February I also attended three functions I think you will be interested to know about. The first was the 90th birthday party of one of our founding members, Miss Daphne Gum MBE, OAM, held at Ashford House School which she established in the 1940s. Daphne is also long time member of the West Torrens Historical Society.

The second function, and one I attend each year, was the annual Banka Day service commemorating the lives of the Australian nurses massacred by the Japanese during World War II. Held at the Women's Memorial Playing Fields, the service was attended by several hundred former service women, service men, families of those who did not return and interested members of the public. An address was given by former POW Dr Harry Medlin and in this he spoke of his memories of the service women, including those who died in the Banka incident, and of the significant body of literature this dark episode has generated. The service is held on the Sunday nearest to the date of the massacre.

The final, and sad event, was the funeral in Canberra of my friend Tom Holland, whose significant donations to various South Australian institutions was the subject of an article in the May 2004 *History SA*, and whose journey to Sydney I wrote about in the last edition of this publication. It was through Tom that I spent a day with the Apnalya welfare organisation visiting slum dwellers in Mumbai (Bombay) in January 2005, just one of several eye opening experiences which resulted from my friendship with this unique man.

May I remind you that all memberships are now due. Please return your subscription as soon as possible and I'd ask that, even though we offer the service, that you please consider paying by cheque or cash at the March meeting to avoid the high credit card fees we incur. The Society's Council is currently investigating cheaper options to enable us to continue to offer the convenience of credit card payment for memberships and tours.

Regrettably the date for the April visit to the Art Gallery of South Australia has had to be altered, and the visit will now take place on a date to be advised in June. The Art Gallery offer their sincere apologies for this change to the Society's program.

May I also ask that you please remember to bring a plate of supper to the monthly meetings. Nothing fancy! Council has recently decided to increase the amount it spends on supper, but would still be very grateful for your contribution.

As I mentioned at the beginning of my report the attendance at the February lecture was a great way to start the year. I look forward to this being continued throughout the year and thank you in anticipation of this.

**David Cornish**  
President

Cassette audio tapes of the HSSA monthly lectures are available at a cost of \$5. If the tape is returned further orders are \$3. Orders from the Treasurer ph.82772953

## Household Hints

Bites of mad dogs; apply caustic potash at once to the wound, and give enough whiskey to cause sleep. (from the newsletter of the Tea Tree Gully and District Historical Society, July 2005.)

If ants are troublesome, place slices of freshly cut lemon in their path. To remove water marks from furniture apply mayonnaise and rub it in well. Let stand for one hour and wipe clean with a soft cloth. (from *Early Settlers Household Lore*, Ballarat Historical Society 1979.)

## Field Trip

May 2006

Sunday – May 7, 9am

### Tea Tree Gully and Environs

The guided bus tour to Tea Tree Gully and environs will include a visit, talk, and morning tea in the lovely grounds of “Glen Ewin”, which are situated off Lower Hermitage Road, Houghton.

From “Glen Ewin” the tour will continue along Range Road North, which gives a glimpse of the Hermitage area and beautiful hills before entering “Old Golden Grove.” Here we will take in the sights of the old Golden Grove School, the Golden Grove Uniting Church and the Golden Grove Cemetery, before moving along to Greenwith Church and learning some of the history of this lovely area along the way.

We will visit the new development of Golden Grove where some historical secrets of the early days still nestle among the modern environs. Heading towards “Steventon” as Old Tea Tree Gully was called, we will view the heritage of yesteryear, including the “Ebenezar” Baptist Church and the “Medcalf Memorial” Baptist Church among others. We will be stopping at the Old Highercombe Folk Museum for a home cooked lunch and a visit to the museum before finishing the tour with a look at other heritage buildings which will include St Wilfred’s Anglican Church, the Old Tea Tree Gully School and Angove’s Winery.

### Carole Simmonds

**President of the Tea Tree Gully and District Historical Society Inc.**

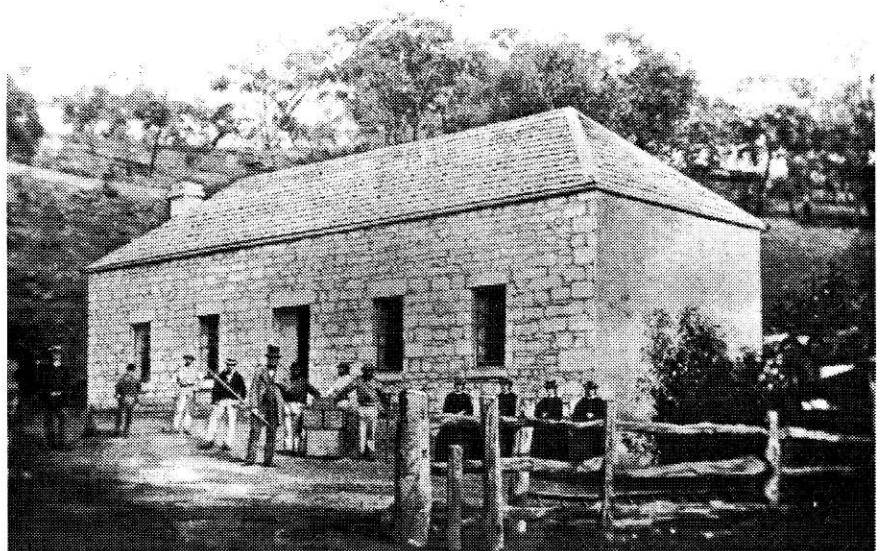
Departs Burnside Council carpark (corner Greenhill and Portrush Roads, Tusmore) at 9am sharp and returning approx. 3pm.

Bookings please contact Avis at the next meeting or on 8277 2953.)

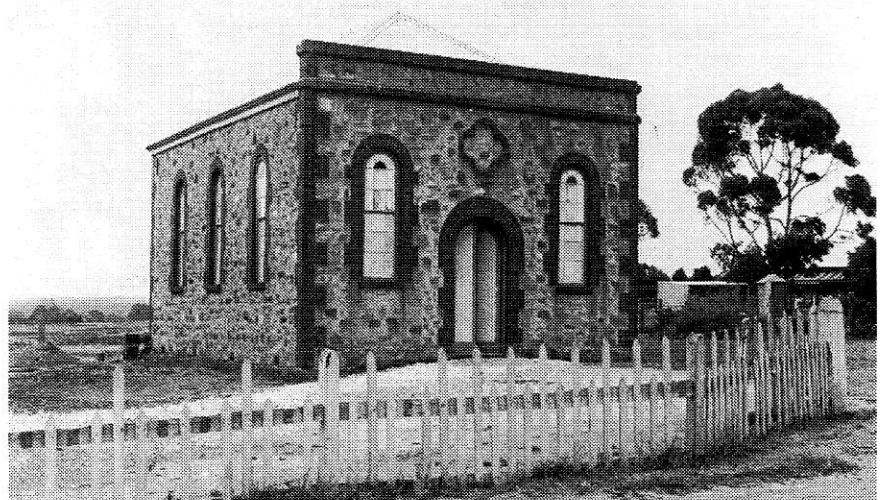
*Old Highercombe Hotel, Perseverance Road, Tea Tree Gully. This building served as a Post and Telegraph Office for nearly 80 years. It is now a National Trust Museum. (City of Tea Tree Gully Library Local History Collection. PH00084)*

### April Field Trip - Postponed

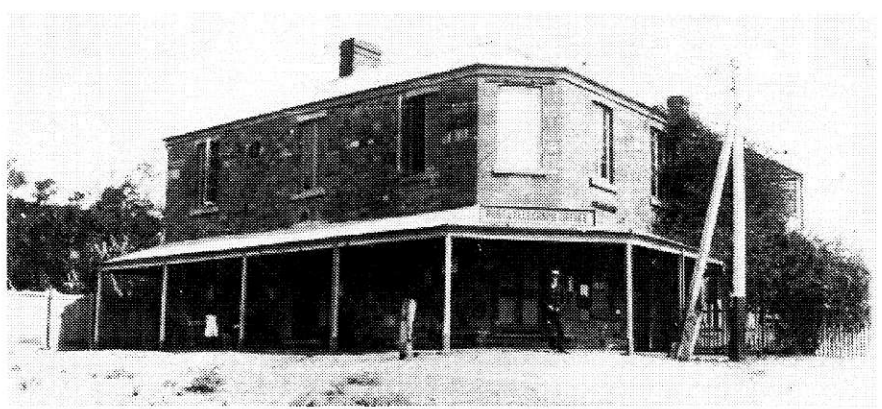
The field trip proposed for 26 April, “Christopher Menz and his North Terrace Perspective,” to be held at the Art Gallery of South Australia, has been postponed. Members will be advised of the new date.



*Glen Ewin Jam Factory, 1864, with George McEwin (standing in front with hoe), L – Rev John McEwin (son) and four daughters, Mary, Margaret, Jessie and Elizabeth and workmen (City of Tea Tree Gully Library Local History Collection. PH01087)*



*Tea Tree Gully Baptist Church, North East Road, Tea Tree Gully, 1862 (City of Tea Tree Gully Library Local History Collection. PH00332)*



## Donald Simpson AO

### *A History of Neurosurgery in South Australia*

**7.30pm Friday  
7 April 2006**

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

This talk will be given by Dr Donald Simpson who is emeritus neurosurgeon in the Royal Adelaide Hospital and Clinical Professor of neurosurgery in the University of Adelaide.

Neurosurgery is the surgery of the brain, the spinal cord, and the nerves. It could emerge only when there was a working knowledge of the functions of the brain. This was achieved in the 1870s when European neurologists began to map out functional areas of the brain. Inspired by this a few surgeons carried out in the 1880s operations to remove brain tumours or to drain brain abscesses.

One of these pioneering operations was done in the Adelaide Children's Hospital on 30 November 1888. It was an operation for hydatid cyst of the brain, done by Joseph Verco (1851-1933.) Born in South Australia, Verco studied medicine in London. He was assisted by John Davies Thomas(1844-1893), a talented Welshman also educated in London. Verco and Davies were the first lecturers in medicine in the new Adelaide medical school.

The Adelaide medical school aimed to produce safe all round medical practitioners; it did not aspire to train specialists in neurosurgery. Nevertheless, two young South Australians who entered this school before 1914 became neurosurgeons, and both exerted great influence on the development of neurosurgery in South Australia, though in different ways.

Hugh Cairns(1896-1952) was a brilliant country boy from Riverton, who entered the medical school in 1912, graduating in 1917. He went on to win a Rhodes Scholarship.

The other Adelaide neurological figure from this period was Leonard Lindon (1896-1978). Also a Rhodes Scholar, he was appointed in 1937 as the first neurosurgeon in what became the Royal Adelaide Hospital.



Lindon was succeeded by Trevor Dinning(1919-2003). Born in Adelaide, Dinning studied neurosurgery in London. He returned in 1953 and set up a well planned neurosurgical unit in the Royal Adelaide Hospital. Among his achievements was the Neurological Research Foundation which endowed a professorial chair of Neurosurgery in the University of Adelaide. This promotes research in the treatment and prevention of brain damage.

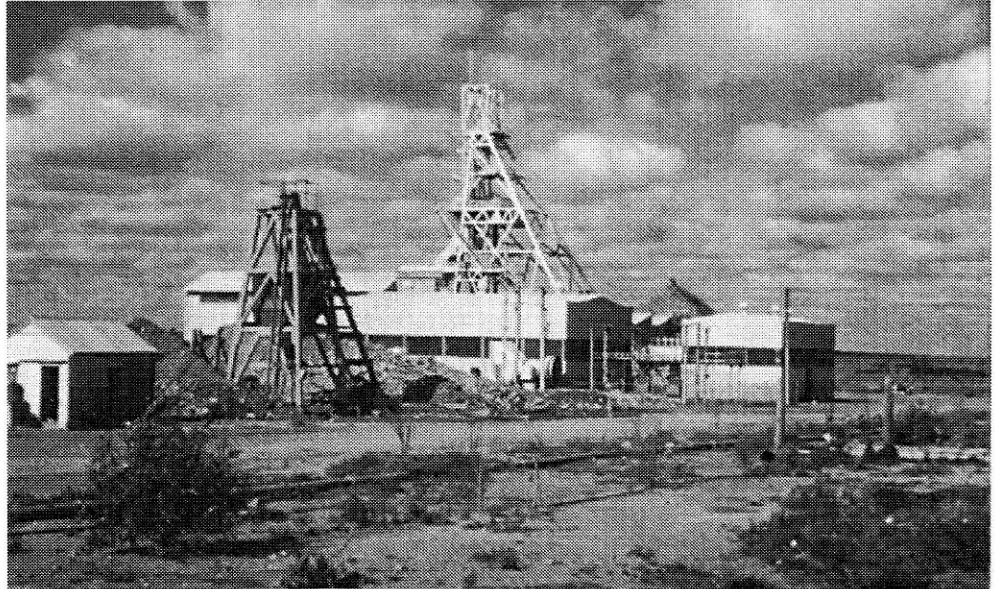
Come to our April meeting and hear more about these famous medical practitioners in Dr Donald Simpson's well illustrated presentation.

**Kevin Kakoschke**

## ***Centenary of Radium Hill - Australia's first uranium mine***

**7.30pm Friday  
5 May 2006**

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



Kevin Kakoschke was raised in a tent and dugout on the Wadnaminga goldfields near Manna Hill in South Australia, in the late 1930s. As a young man he worked in the Radium Hill mines for 9 years. He is the author of the news bulletin *Radio Activity* and co-author of the book *We Were Radium Hill*. At our May meeting he will share with us his reflections on the birth, death, and legacies of the town.

Radium was the most costly and sought after mineral in the world at the beginning of the 20th century and uranium the most sought after in the 1950's for military and energy purposes.

In 1906 Arthur Smith discovered radium/uranium ore 460 km northeast of Adelaide and 110km southwest from Broken Hill. The ore was identified and named Davidite by Sir Douglas Mawson who also proposed the name Radium Hill for the site

Intermittent mining occurred between 1906 and 1931. The main uranium mining activity commenced in 1952. In the early 1950's conditions were harsh in that desert environment and the initial exploration and construction work force was housed in tents. The town of Radium Hill was planned as a model mining town contrasting with ancient landscape.

Migrants formed a large proportion of the work force. Local services included shopping, schools, churches and an A.I.M. hospital. Many sporting clubs and other

organizations were formed to cater for the varied interests of the local community and surrounding pastoral areas and the unique Radium Hill Social Club played a major role in developing a close knit community spirit for this isolated town of up to 1,200 people. Resident June Thomson, a ten year old lass from Scotland, commented that "mum was more than thrilled with her new home, the best and biggest she had ever had, and free electricity and firewood too." Frank Pignitter, a migrant from Austria, commented that "we were strangers when we arrived but became friends; from being individuals we built a community spirit. That was Radium Hill".

The mine closed on the 21st December 1961. The mine and town died, but historic legacies remain as an important part of our heritage. In the ghost town today there are gum tree lined bitumen streets, beer bottle and boulder bordered garden beds, front doorsteps but no houses, a camping ground and the rehabilitated Radium Hill Pioneers Cemetery.

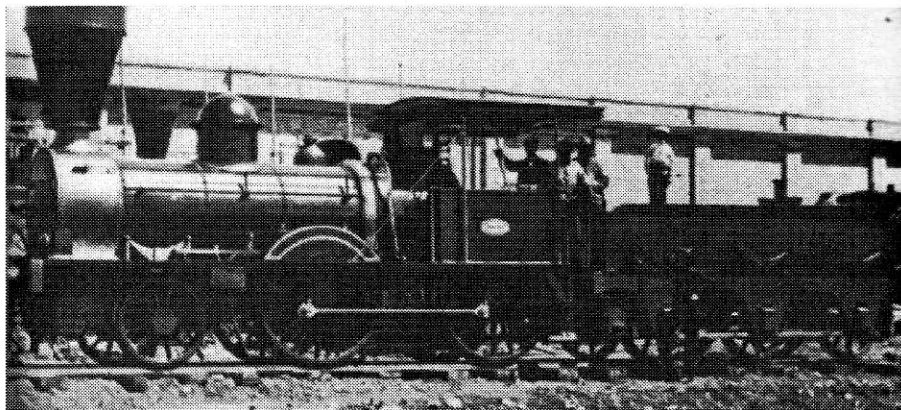
Memorabilia and artifacts of the people who were Radium Hill are housed in The Radium Hill Heritage Museum located 25 km. away at Tikalina Station.

A re-union will be held at Radium Hill during Easter 2006 to mark the centenary of Radium Hill, with its legacies and memories.

# Adelaide to Port Adelaide Railway 150th Anniversary Celebration

The 21st of April 1856 was a momentous occasion for the Colony of South Australia, for on this day the seven and a half mile railway from Adelaide city to Port Adelaide was open for business. It is interesting to consider Benjamin Herschel Babbage's involvement in the line's construction. In 1853 he was appointed as the first Local Chief Engineer of the City and Port Adelaide Railway, and was involved in planning and surveying for the line. To celebrate the railway's inauguration on Saturday 19 April, a special train took 200 invited guests to Port Adelaide where a luncheon, attended by Governor MacDonnell, was held. At this banquet the Colonial Secretary proposed the toast to "the health of Mr Babbage the Engineer, and Officers of the Railway." He remarked that Mr Babbage's name would be handed down in history, even when steam locomotives became superseded by "some improved system."

On the following Monday, 21 April, the line was open to the public. The slow uncomfortable journey from the Port to the city by horse trap or bullock dray had ended.

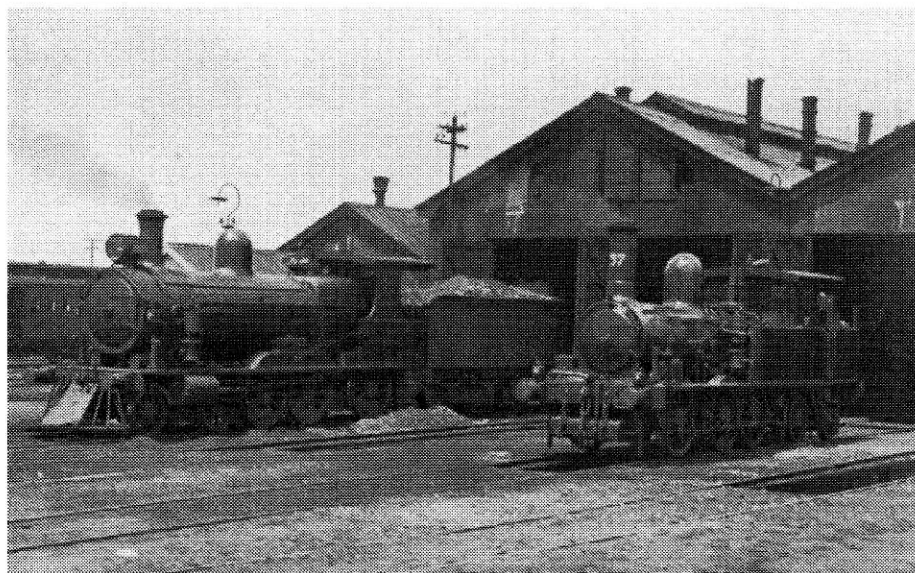


*Locomotive for the first Port train, photo taken in 1869 (from A History of Woodville by Susan Marsden)*

This event will be celebrated on Sunday 23 April when restored Red Hen carriages will leave Adelaide Railway Station taking invited guests to a re-enactment of the first official journey and the luncheon at Port Adelaide. The train will stop at select stations along the way where plaques commemorating the event will be unveiled. For the public there will be a shuttle service of Red hen carriages between Woodville and Port Adelaide. Also, at the museum in Lipson St steam train rides will be available using the 1919 built narrow gauge engine, Peronne. The 18 inch

gauge steam engines Bub and Bill will also be in action. Further details can be obtained from the National Railway Museum, Lipson St Port Adelaide, Ph 8341 1690. You can visit the National Railway Museum website at [www.natrailmuseum.org.au](http://www.natrailmuseum.org.au).

(Details supplied by Des Egan, from his article for *Australian Heritage* magazine. Also from W A Norman, *The History of the City of Mitcham*.)



*Engines Rx106 and K37 rest outside the Port Adelaide locomotive depot circa early 1900's (Courtesy National Railway Museum)*

## Steam Locomotives in Rundle Mall!

The Pichi Richi Tourist Railway, Steam Ranger, and the National Railway Museum have joined forces in a venture to promote Heritage Tourist Railways. With the assistance of the South Australian Tourism Commission on 6, 7, and 8 April the narrow gauge 18 ton locomotive Peronne, that worked at the Port Pirie Smelters, and the Museum's steam loco Bub will be on display in Rundle Mall.

# Fears and Doubts on the Port Adelaide Railway

During the planning of the route fears were held that the trains would terrify horse traffic along Port Rd. Therefore the route between Port Road and Torrens Road was decided upon. For the railway two passenger trains, "Victoria" and "Albert", and two goods trains engines, "Adelaide", and "Australia", were brought from England.

There was the problem of damage to crops along the line because of fires started by sparks from the engine. In the first year it was claimed that there had been eleven fires. In fact Mr J B Hughes proposed that horses be used for traction during the summer. There were complaints from the public about the bumpy ride, the sleepers apparently at first being laid end to end. Church congregations objected to the sound of the whistle during services, and many people had their hats blown off.

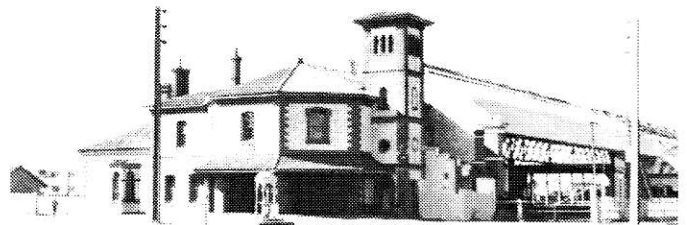
In 1865 there was an accident at Woodville. A carriage overturned on a special train carrying the Governor, and Bishop Short and their families. Fortunately no one was hurt. The press graphically described the event;

The train started off at a tolerably quick pace, and its speed shortly increased to something like the highest rate of railway travelling, Mr Hare stating that the train would make the journey to Port Adelaide in 9 minutes. It flew past the Bowden Station, and when it was within a mile or so from Woodville its rapid motion was accompanied by swaying from side to side and a rough jolting movement... A violent crash behind soon announced the overturning of the third carriage. Then the second carriage...turned over on its near side. The passengers were thrown together in confused heaps upon the doors and windows and the carriage was dragged on its side for a little distance....

It was only due to the ladies to say that they behaved heroically. Not a scream had been uttered, nor did any seem to lose their self possession....

The overturned carriages presented a fearsome sight. The wheels had been torn off, the axles bent, and the floor of the third carriage had been so completely broken in that had it contained many passengers there must have been serious loss of life. The only occupant was the guard ...who sustained a sprain on the wrist. This prevented him from using the brake and checking the speed at which the train was going....  
(taken from the *Register* 14/4/1865)

However, in spite of these early difficulties, the railway has operated safely for a century and a half, and successfully transported thousands of passengers to their destinations. (from S. Marsden, *A History of Woodville, Adelaide, 1977.*)



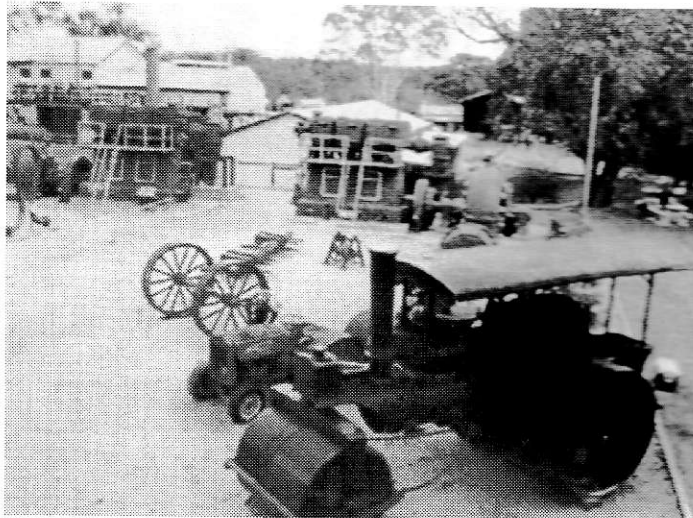
Port Adelaide Railway Station circa 1950, built in 1856 and demolished in 1963. (Courtesy National Railway Museum)



Drawing of the 1865 railway accident at Woodville, (from *A History of Woodville* by Susan Marsden)

# Cobdogla Irrigation and Steam Museum

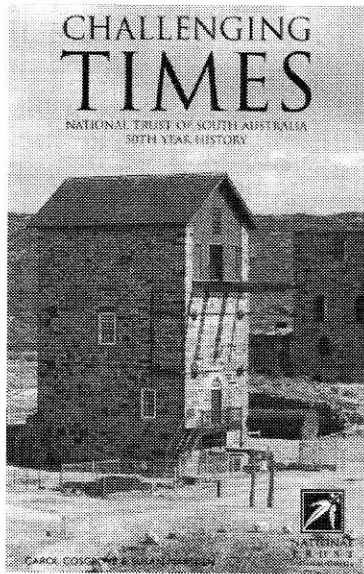
This museum was established by the Engineering and Water Supply Department as a project commemorating the South Australian Sesquicentenary in 1986. The museum focuses on irrigation history. It is run by the Volunteers of the Cobdogla Steam Friends Society Inc and the Barmera National Trust. Features of the museum include the world's only working Humphry Pump, and a 2 foot gauge light railway operated with a 1906 vintage Bagnell Saddle Tank loco. The Cobdogla Steam Friends Society aims to acquire and restore steam and other machinery used in the development of irrigation, and to train people to operate this machinery. The next Operating Day with the Humphry Pump and Steam Train will be on 16 April 2006. For information concerning opening times contact B. Mudge ph (08) 8588 2323 or from [http://www.nationaltrustsa.org.au/properties/bamera\\_cobdogla.htm](http://www.nationaltrustsa.org.au/properties/bamera_cobdogla.htm)



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## New National Trust book

As part of celebrations to mark its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary last year, the National Trust of SA has published a history of its activities by Susan Marsden and Carol Cosgrove. A very professional-looking production, *Challenging Times* is available from the Trust's Leigh Street office or most NT branches for \$35 or \$37.50 if posted. A full review will appear in the *Journal* in November.



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## Gays Arcade Museum

To celebrate 120 years of serving South Australians the Promotions Consultant of the Adelaide Arcade has assembled this museum. The display includes photos of bygone eras in both the Adelaide Arcade and Gays Arcade and there are newspaper articles and memorabilia bringing back nostalgic memories. Butler's Dolls' Hospital, John Davis Records, and the Adelaide Hatters are among the shops brought to life. There is a piece of marble chiselled from one side of the entrance door step set beside the paper thin piece of marble from the centre of the step, indicating the wear of over 120 years of foot traffic. The museum is on the first floor balcony in Gays Arcade and is open during shopping hours and Saturdays 9am-5pm and Sundays 11am-5pm. It is well worth climbing the steep flight of steps to view this permanent display.

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## The Veteran and Vintage Motorcycle Club of SA 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

A wide variety of veteran (pre 1919) through to post vintage (pre 1966) motorcycles will be available for public viewing when celebrations are held for the 50th Anniversary of Australia's oldest vintage motorcycle club. The Veteran and Vintage Motorcycle Club of South Australia, the first of its kind in Australia will run a Figure 8 Rally through the picturesque Adelaide Hills next month. The ride on Sunday the 26th March begins and ends at the National Motor Museum at Birdwood.

The riders will set up in the National Motor Museum grounds from 12 pm to 1.45 pm, when members of the public can view the machines at close range and chat with their owners.

The exhibits will include solo and sidecar machines dating from c1910 through to the mid 1960's – all in running order, albeit slower than the later and sleeker models.

Club President Mr Stephen Hooper said members were looking forward to the day, which was one activity in a calendar of events this year to mark the club's 50 years of existence in South Australia.

For more information about the rally or the bikes contact the Club President, Stephen Hooper on 0401 125 831.

# Avis's Book Table

A feature of HSSA meetings is Avis's Book Table, and many interesting and little known facts about South Australian history can be gleaned from the books for sale. For example the story of the Basket Range telephone line, from the Register of 100 years ago (15 October 1906.)

More than a year ago the people living in that part of the Mount Lofty Ranges approached the Post Office authorities with the view of getting telephone communication established with the city, but they received nothing but discouragement from the officials, it being represented to them that the cost would amount to £50 a mil, and that to connect Basket Range with Norton Summit would therefore involve an outlay of £250. The residents, undaunted, then asked to be connected with Uraidla, which is only 2 miles from Basket Range. The authorities considered that this route would cost £100 and pointed out that it would not pay, and besides it was required that the residents should find a written guarantee of 10% on the outlay for a certain number of years. The Basket Range people then decided to move in the matter themselves, and approached the authorities for permission to be allowed to erect the telephone at their private expense. This permission they had some difficulty in obtaining. They were required to find trustees which they had no difficulty in doing, and after much delay and red tape the permission was granted. Money was soon collected, the posts were presented to the telephone committee, and very soon the 2 miles to Uraidla were connected by a telephone wire at a cost in actual cash to the neighbourhood of £15.12.1. This amount did not cover the cost of the instruments, which were presented by the Federal Government and valued at £10. The insulators the residents paid for at a rate of 25%, more than they cost the post office. The line therefore, even counting £10 for the instruments, was constructed by private enterprise for under £30....

This is taken from *Tier on Tier, a History of Basket Range*, by Geoffrey C. Bishop and Roz McGowan. The book costs \$12. Also available is a history of the nearby area of Norton Summit, *Environs of Norton Summit*, by Lucy Hines (\$12.50). And *Toilers of the Hills*, by E H Hallack, has been released on CDROM at a cost of \$25.

On a different topic we read

Set in a row of brick cottages, it had one schoolroom with an outlook over the street. Mrs Tilney sat alone in the window with a black suit, doing her netting. The three Misses Tilney had different responsibilities. While her sisters oversaw the education, Miss Ann Maria looked after the domestic arrangements. The children sat on forms on each side of a long wooden table going through their exercises. One of the sisters was at the head of the table, while the other walked between them to direct and help them. The boys and girls were encouraged by Miss Charlotte to bring things of interest for the cabinet of curios; a locust from the fence, a curiously shaped pebble, a possible fossil from the quarry. Marks were given for merit and for attitude, including the absence of elbows from the table. The teaching was kindly and capable, encouraging young ideas to shoot.

This observation was made by pupil Joseph Verco who attended the Misses Tilney's school in Morphett St, Adelaide. In 1863 there were 37 girls and 11 boys at the school. The excerpt is taken from *Age of Transition, a Study of Four South Australian Private Girls Schools 1855-1926*. The book is by Helen Reid and costs \$30.

## News from the Mt Horrocks Historical Society

In 2004 the Town Manager of Penwortham County Council in Lancashire UK sought the South Australian society's support in linking Penwortham UK (John Horrocks birth place) and Penwortham in South Australia. This unofficial twinning venture will begin on 22 March, when an afternoon tea will be held here and items of interest from the county in UK will be displayed. On the same day the Penwortham UK Town Council will be holding an "Australia" event at their Council offices with guests, a buffet, and a display about Penwortham SA. As Penwortham in SA is rather small the Watervale district is included in the venture.

## News from the Police Historical Society

The Police Historical Society will open its new museum at Thebarton Barracks on 28 April, the Foundation Day of the establishment of the Police Force in 1838. The museum has been created to honour John McKinna who was Police Commissioner from 1957-1972. It is housed in the building originally built as the dormitory for the Mounted Constables when they were formed in 1917. There are 4 galleries in the museum. They are named after Dorothy Pyatt who is one of our members, and also Robert Cline, Roy Harvey, and the late Robert Potts. The event is still in the planning stages, and details will soon be available from the society, ph 8207 4099.

Neil McDonald (editor) *Chester Wilmot Reports: Broadcasts that Shaped World War 11*, ABC Books, 2004.

ABC Books have produced a volume that is a pleasure to hold and look at and its varying contents (the broadcasts, censor-imposed omissions, the comments by the editor) are indicated by the employment of distinctive types. Two qualifications are in order. A small number of typographic errors have slipped into the text. And there is not a single map. This, for a book ranging from the Western Desert to Greece and Crete and then to New Guinea, is regrettable.

Chester Wilmot continues to fascinate us. His keen reportage from a succession of battlefronts, his notorious conflicts with the top brass in Australian military authority, his publication of the hugely admired *Struggle for Europe*, his selection as Australia's official historian of World War 11, and his tragic demise in the Comet air crash in 1954, have rendered him an almost legendary figure. This volume is a welcome addition to the archive.

The book's title is misleading. It gives no hint that these pages consist mainly of what he sought to broadcast between October 1940 and October 1942. These reports reflect the varying experiences of Australian soldiers on a variety of battlefields. Sometimes they recount conduct of considerable distinction, sometimes only of stern resistance in a context of frustration and grief. The book's first large section relates actions by Australian forces against Italians in North Africa. Wilmot has much cause for satisfaction in this phase, praising the fine conduct and many successes of his fellow countrymen (along with the British artilleryists), but also saving some words for the endurance of some sections of the Italian army.

It is a different story when the Australians were moved to Greece and Crete. Wilmot makes no criticism of the decision to intervene in Greece, stressing the good feelings of Greeks

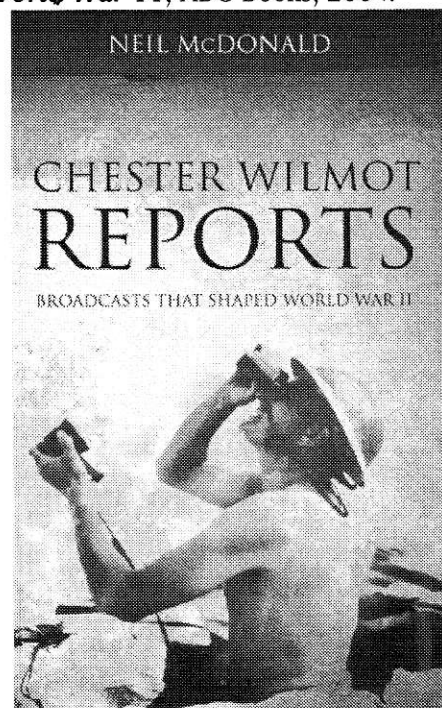
towards Australians. But he soon came to realize the overwhelming superiority of the enemy in manpower and weaponry. His response was to praise the powerful endurance of Australian troops as they were driven into retreat and ultimate withdrawal. The Germans, he concluded (with obvious reference to similar events at Dunkirk), "failed to prevent another successful invasion."

Yet his conclusion on Greece and Crete included a considerable note of negativity: "our thankfulness at this deliverance shouldn't blind us to the lessons of the campaign.... We didn't have the troops or the supply lines.... The air support was never adequate."

This duality of praise and censure became characteristic of Wilmot's style of war reporting. He praised the fighting skills of Australians in places as distant as Tobruk and New Guinea. Yet he insisted that good soldiers are made, not born; "made by months of hard, thorough, scientific training in modern weapons and tactics." This process involved the elimination of softness. "The training given to recruits in Australia is not severe enough."

Coupled with his consciousness of the need for sufficiently trained Australian foot-soldiers was his awareness of the inadequacies of the command, and the costs these might levy. In a passage deleted by the censor, he sent this report from the Kokoda Front on 7 September 1942:

Our troops in the mountains were vitally dependent on air supplies. Ten days before the Japanese made their attack they raided Port Moresby. They found an aerodrome packed with transports and bombers lined up wingtip to wingtip on the runway, a perfect concentrated target. They didn't miss.... In Greece and Malaya



we lost more planes on the ground than in the air, because of inadequate dispersion. But we still had to have the bitter lesson of Pt Moresby before we took real steps to see that it didn't happen again.... I felt bitter as I stood on that spur of the Owen Stanley Range looking down on the tree tops in the valley that leads to Kokoda, I was bitter for I knew that somewhere under those treetops were unnecessary Australian graves.

Prime among the objects of Wilmot's misgivings was the supreme Australian military commander, Sir Thomas Blamey. There were matters of strategy, and also matters of money. In October Blamey struck back, by withdrawing Wilmot's accreditation as a military correspondent. So, with the battle for Kokoda still undecided, this volume comes to an abrupt (and scarcely satisfying) end.

**Trevor Wilson**

By Neil Thomas

## Recent additions include:

Besides additions to the records of the Anglican Churches of St Paul's, Port Adelaide and St Benedict's, Glandore, the collection has received the reminiscences of the Rev. Wilfred Scholefield, priest in charge of Cummins & Minnipa Mission on Eyre Peninsula from 1929-1934, and biographical notes on the second Bishop of the Willochra Diocese, the Rt. Rev. Richard Thomas. Ms Julie Batty has compiled a research paper on funeral statuary in various Adelaide cemeteries with details of monumental masons, and her photographs of statuary examples. Letters from Thomas Davidson to his sweetheart Ethel Malcolm while he worked as a commercial traveller in Western Australia and Broken Hill 1899-1901 have been added; the couple were married in 1901 and returned to South Australia about 1904.

Papers relating to the *Samcor* stock markets at Gepps Cross have been collected by Kevin Regan, who worked there from about 1952 to 1984. They include details of butchers' cattle and pig brands and lists of people who worked for *Samcor*. A small record group about the Knight family who farmed near Port Elliot includes a miscellany of papers 1928-1951 detailing annual produce returns and family activities and interests. John Such, born in 1942, a special education teacher and former principal of Woodville and Ashford Special Schools, has donated his collection of material on his studies and career, as well as papers of the subject of the education of children with learning difficulties and physical disabilities. A small group compiled by the family of Walter Bennett Johann Speed (1913-1979) about his career as a magician includes biographical material, photographs, programs and correspondence. A boilermaker by trade, his concurrent work as a magician saw him appearing under the stage names 'Ricardo', 'Decepto', 'Sirdani' and 'Wally Speed, Magician'.

Elizabeth Dunlop has written a family history of Johannes Noltenius from Germany and his brothers Heinrich and Bernhard, entitled *Borgfield to Billabong*, covering their lives in Australia in the 19th century. Additions have been made to the group created for Dr Susan Magarey about her Catherine Helen Spence research. A separate and unusual item connected to Spence is the point-lace collar she made in 1910 for a present to Janet Doris Hübbe and Alfred Allen Simpson on their marriage. The collar has been mounted and framed.

Amongst the many oral history projects for which tapes have been added, several can be mentioned. (Details are available on the Library's archival database but use copies of tapes and documentation are not yet available.) These include the Gumeracha & District History Centre collection of interview tapes with district personalities; the Wistow Community Hall Oral History project; and the interview with stained glass and sculpture artist Andrew Steiner, born in Hungary and child survivor of the Holocaust.

## From the National Archives of Australia

In 2006 Australia will celebrate 400 years of Dutch contact. Details of the lives and achievements of Dutch migrants and their contribution to Australia's society are highlighted in records held in the National Archives. To celebrate the 400th anniversary of the Dutch in Australia the National Archives is conducting workshops for the Dutch community in each capital city to assist people to view records about their families' migration to Australia. For details of these workshops contact your National Archives State Office or visit [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au), and follow the link to "Australia on the Map." Also, the article entitled *The Dutch in Australia 1606-2006*, by Sonja Peters, is available from Avis.

**Deadline for newsletter articles and entries April 14, 2006.**

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# Coming Events

## **Brighton Historical Society**

Meets at 7.30pm on the first Thursday of the month in the Kingston Room, 24 Jetty Rd, Brighton. On April 6 Enid Sutton's talk is entitled "Unknown Pioneers." On 4 May Wally Luscombe will speak about "Games and Communication in the Bush." Speakers are announced in the Community Noticeboard section of the Messenger newspaper. Contact ph. 8298 1959.

## **Burnside Historical Society**

Meets at the Burnside Community Centre at 8pm on the third Monday of the month. Contact ph. 8379 1039

## **Campbelltown Historical Society**

Meetings are held at the old Council Chambers, 2 Newton Rd, Newton, at 8 pm on the second Tuesday of each month. On 11 April Eddie Mulligan will show a film of transport in Adelaide and South Australia from the earliest days. On 9 May Trevor Powell will tell the story of Tartan.

## **East Torrens Historical Society**

Meets 8pm at the Adelaide Hills Natural Resource Centre, Crescent Avenue, Norton Summit, on the second Wednesday of the month. A working bee and picnic will be held on 13 March, Adelaide Cup Day. It will be to clean up the historic Deep Creek Bridge at Basket Range, commencing 10 am. The Society's Annual Trip this year will be to the former copper mining town of Kapunda 5-7 May. Contact ph. 8390 3138.

## **Enfield and Districts Historical Society**

Conducts evening meetings at 7.15 on the 4th Wednesday of the month and day time meetings at 1.30 pm on the 2nd Thursday of the month. Meetings are held at the Enfield Community Centre, 540 Regency Rd, Enfield. For details contact Seeta Gaston ph. 8367 7838.

## **History of Science, Ideas, and Technology Group**

Meets at 7 pm in the Ira Raymond Exhibition Room at the Barr Smith Library. On Thursday 25 May Dr John Jenkin's talk is entitled "The Brags in World War One." Contact ph. 8352 8949.

## **Kensington and Norwood Historical Society**

Meets at 8pm on the first Wednesday of the month in the Don Pyatt Room of the Norwood Town Hall.

On Wednesday 6 April Isobel Baker's topic is "Alice---On the Line." Isobel is the grand-daughter of Thomas Andrew Bradshaw who, 100 years ago, was Officer in Charge of the Alice Springs Telegraph Station and in the 1920s Post Master at the Norwood Post Office.

On 3 May Geoff Rawson will speak about "The History of Policing." Contact ph. 8363 9003.

## **Port Adelaide Historical Society**

Meets the third Wednesday of the month in the Semaphore Library at 8 pm.

On 15 March Mr R H Karren, Jeweller and Watch Maker, will speak about "Measuring Time"

On 19 April Lawrie Shields will speak about "Monuments" in preparation for Anzac Day." Contact ph. 8248 3344.

## **Salisbury and District Historical Society**

Meets 2nd Wednesday of the month at the Folk Museum, Ann St, Salisbury, at 7 pm. On 12 April Ann Wyatt of the SA Genealogy Society will speak about "Searching for Families." On 9 May there will be a visit to the Police Historical Society. Contact Ph. 8258 3016.

## **Tea Tree Gully and District Historical Society Inc.**

Meets the third Thursday of the month at the Old Highercombe Folk Museum, 3 Perseverance Rd, Tea Tree Gully at 7 pm. On 19 April at 10 am there will be a morning meeting at the Tea Tree Gully Library Learning Centre, 571 Montague Rd, Modbury. Mr Brian Rice will speak about "My Remembrance of DSTO." (Defence Science and Technology Organisation.) On 18 May in the evening there will be a talk about the Country Fire Service. Contact ph. 8288 0195.

## **Walkerville Historical Society**

Meets 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7.30 pm in the Walkerville Town Hall. On 8 April there is a seminar planned hosting historical societies of the Eastern region, to be held at Wilderness School. Contact ph. 8269 5982.

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## **Adelaide Parklands Symposium**

The Centre for Settlement Studies in the Louis Laybourne Smith School of Architecture and Design at the University of South Australia, the Hawke Centre at the University of South Australia and the Adelaide Parklands Preservation Association are co-presenting a public Symposium on the Adelaide Parklands in November 2006. The event will commence on Friday 10 November in the Basil Hetzel Building, Mutual Community Theatre H2-O2 Uni SA City East Campus, and there will be Parkland tours on Saturday 11 November and a public lecture and forum on Sunday 12 November. You are invited to submit expressions of interest in presenting a paper at the event. For dates, guidelines, and dead lines and other information contact Dr Christine Garnaut ph 8302 0204, email [christine.garnaut@unisa.edu.au](mailto:christine.garnaut@unisa.edu.au)