

From the President

As a part of the April fixture of the Historical Society of South Australia the annual general meeting was conducted. I am delighted to be serving as President for the coming year and will work hard with the Council (all of whom are volunteers) to ensure that the high standard of speakers and outings is maintained.

Our Society is, as I often say, in the wonderful position of having strong support for the program that it offers, and through membership which is excellent value for money. Many thanks to all members who have renewed, if you haven't please do so as it costs the Society and is a poor use of volunteer hours to have to chase those who haven't done so (we know who the repeat offenders are!)

Society Friday night meetings were held in March (Amanda Nettlebeck *In the name of the Law: William Willshire and the policing of Central Australia*) and April (*Peter Monteath Australian Prisoners of War in German Captivity*). Both meetings were attended by over one hundred guests and members, which always brings a smile to my face! Field trips have also been held to Gawler and Fort Glanville, unfortunately affected by problems beyond the Society's control.

I would like to congratulate Society member and former Premier of South Australia Dr John Bannon AO on the launch of his biography, *Federation Father Sir John Downer*. Unfortunately I was unable to attend the book's launch at St Mark's College (Sir John's former home), which I hear was a wonderful occasion attended by a much larger number of people than anticipated. At my invitation John spoke briefly about his book after the March speaker.

The Society has entered into a sponsorship arrangement with the History Trust of SA for the annual State History Conference, to be held at Kadina from July 31 -2 August. Council hopes this will bring with it the opportunity to generate new members through an awareness of what we do in promoting and recording the history of South Australia.

I look forward to welcoming you to HSSA functions.

David Cornish
President

Visiting SA's History

Wednesday 10 June, 9.30 am *Tour of Pilgrim Church, 12 Flinders St, Adelaide*

We will meet in front of the Church, 2-10 Flinders St, at 9.30am. Pilgrim Uniting Church (formerly Stow Memorial Congregational Church) was built in 1865-67 as a memorial to Reverend T Q Stow, a leading figure in the Congregational Church in SA. The church was designed by Robert George Thomas.

The hour long tour will be led by Brian Ward, and it is possible to stay for a lunch hour music concert beginning 12.10pm.

There is a limit of 25 people for this tour and bookings are essential. Please book with Margaret Cliff ph 8362 9517. The cost is \$5, payable when you book, to confirm your booking

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also available for booking
Wednesday 12 August, 10am-noon
History Walk in Kensington
Meet 10am at the Kensington Hotel

Bookings essential

Contact Ms Margaret Cliff ph 8362 9517 to book for this tour.

History Week 22 May-31 May

History Week is always brim full of guided history walks, lectures, bus tours, and exhibitions all over South Australia. This year as well as week day sessions two weekends are involved. For details of History Week events and bookings contact the History Trust of SA ph 8203 9888, or <http://www.history.sa.gov.au/history/history_week/historyweek.html>

Printed programs are now available from libraries, councils, visitor information centres and local museums throughout South Australia, and from the History Trust of South Australia, Torrens Parade Ground, Victoria Drive, Adelaide, 5000.

Discovering SA's History

All meetings commence at 7.30pm Friday,
Burnside Community Centre, Cnr Portrush Road and Greenhill Road, Burnside

June 5, 2009

Neville Collins

The Jetties of South Australia: past and present

The history of jetties mirrors the development of South Australia. Jetties were erected at Reeves Point, Kangaroo Island, shortly after the *Duke of York* arrived with the first emigrants to the new colony. Following the founding of Adelaide small settlements were established to the south and because of poor roads at the time conveyance of cargo by sea was a far more efficient method of transport. Consequently the need for jetties arose.

A surge in jetty building began in the late 1860s, when, with the passing of the Waste Land Amendment Act, pastoral holdings were taken up for more extensive farming. One of the first areas to be affected was Yorke Peninsula. With closer settlement, the construction of jetties along the coast line within a short distance from Adelaide began in real earnest. This was the era of the ketch trade.

The pattern of jetty construction gradually spread to other parts of the state as more and more land was opened up for farming.

At one time there were over 100 jetties in use. Some, like Port Victoria and Port Germein, were at the port of call for the huge windjammers of the time, and others were erected to service lighthouses. Those on the metropolitan coast line were mainly erected for recreational use.

As roads became more advanced and railway networks were established the once great ketch and cargo ship trade began to wane. Very few jetties were erected after 1925 to service purely pastoral and agricultural interests. With the advent of bulk handling the demise of the coastal jetties was accelerated. Some were shortened, others removed.

At the June meeting Neville Collins will speak on the history and the construction of jetties, and will touch on the various jetties that have been, or still are, sited around our coastline.

The talk will be complemented by a visual presentation.

Neville Collins was born at Ceduna and is a descendent of early settlers of the area. Since retiring from the Police Force in 1999 he has been involved in historical research, and is the author of *The Jetties of South Australia, Past and Present*, and several other works.

July 3, 2009

Sara King

Agriculture in South Australia: the Italian contribution

After completing a BA (Hons) in languages, and a Dip. Ed., Sara King worked as an Italian/Spanish-speaking tour guide around Australia, an English teacher in Turin and as an Italian teacher in Sydney. She then returned to Flinders University to undertake research on Italians in South Australia for her PhD thesis, which was completed in 2007. She now works in the Adelaide branch of the National Archives of Australia.

Her paper presents the findings of her PhD research project, undertaken from 2003 –2007, discussing the Italian involvement in agriculture in South Australia from a socio-historic perspective. Through a detailed analysis of the individuals and families who have worked in the agricultural industries in South Australia for the past 100 years, the length and breadth of the Italian contribution is presented, within the larger context of Italian migration.

This portrait of Italian involvement in agriculture details the settlement processes of South Australia's Italian agriculturists, and tracks the changes and adaptations Italians have made in the industry over the last century and the contributions they have made. While due recognition is given to market gardening, particular focus is given to rural areas beyond Adelaide's metropolitan area, especially the Riverland and the McLaren Vale region. Given that the main activity of Italian agriculturists in these two regions is viticulture, this study also focuses on the Italian involvement in the wine industry.

Report on the HSSA Fort Glanville Tour 2009

At first we thought we would not be able to see the Fort at all. At 1.45pm the gates were locked with chains and the Visitor Centre was deserted. At 2pm nothing had changed but a couple of phone calls made a difference. There had been a mix-up with the date and we were not expected, but two guides would be with us in 20 minutes and the tour would proceed. In the meantime we had good chats sitting on the wall under the trees. Our group of 30 was taken firstly to the Visitor Centre which was built as a State project to mark the 150th anniversary of the foundation of South Australia and was finished for a visit by the Queen in March 1986. The reception rooms contain an interesting display of military uniforms of the late 19th century, guns, photographs and objects belonging to the site and largely found during restoration. One glass case has a display of lead bullets used in the garrison in the 1880s and 1890s (for practice only of course) and also items found during repairs to window cavities, including a 19th century Norwegian box of matches, a shoulder badge of the SAA (South Australian Artillery) and some clay pipe fragments. Another cabinet has several small slotted metal plates used to protect uniforms when cleaning the brass buttons.

A path behind the Visitor Centre leads to the Fort itself. We entered through a white-painted rear defence wall and saw before us, from the lower level assembly ground, the full extent of the crescent shaped earthwork surrounded by cement and brick walls with four elevated gun placements and associated support structures, and the barracks. And none of this impressive site is visible from the sea.

In 1870, with increasing fears of a possible Russian sea attack, three forts were planned, Fort Glanville, Fort Largs and Fort Glenelg. They were to be constructed on a military road behind the sand dunes with large guns pointing out to sea. They were to protect the ports and commerce. We were told that nearby Semaphore jetty was particularly important. Fort Glanville was built between 1878 and 1880, and by 1882 was equipped and manned by the Permanent Artillery with volunteer forces trained to assist with the guns if required. The barracks could accommodate one officer and about 12 to 16 men. The guns covered a firing range of up to 6500 yards and were surrounded by well designed and efficient loading arrangements, very much "state of the art" at the time. However, as soon as 1889, the fire power of Fort Glanville was superseded by that of Fort Largs with its more modern breech-loading guns. Fort Glenelg was never built.

With both luck and neglect, Fort Glanville survived into the late 20th century with little damage to the basic structure. Restoration was possible and proceeded carefully over several years. The results are remarkable. Gun-associated equipment has been replaced, buildings have been repaired and rooms furnished as fully as possible. Much of the work was done and continues to be done by volunteers. We were led around for two hours and were shown all parts of the Fort, dark underground passages and rooms included. Everything was explained and our questions were answered.

As a final treat, while we stood outside the barracks in the warm Autumn sun, our guides showed us a Martini Henry artillery carbine and described its features, even the fearsome bayonet attachment. The carbine was then loaded and fired twice, and the second report did not startle us as much as the first. This ended an altogether very pleasant and interesting afternoon.

Enid Howard



Russ Sheldrick demonstrating the breach loading of the Martini Henry artillery carbine



Jeffrey Bishop, Leith McGair (our guide), Mike Leach, Beth Andrews, Avis Huckel



Looking down on the Parade ground and Barracks entrance



Members in the Loading Gallery where the gunpowder was stored

Report on the HSSA Gawler Tour 2009

Forty three people boarded the bus at Burnside. On arrival at the Gawler Information Centre, Roger, our driver, produced morning tea whilst we waited for our guide, Mr Graham Tucker. Our tour of the town was accompanied by an excellent commentary from Graham. We were shown the mansions built by some early settlers and given insight into the owner's contribution to the development of Gawler. One of the most famous, James Martin, built the Phoenix Foundry and started producing agricultural machinery. His company built the Ridley Stripper and was later asked to build steam locomotives for the SA Government. In all 200 locos were built, the first being delivered in 1890 in the presence of the Governor, Lord Kintore. The last was delivered in the early 20th century. James Martin was Mayor of Gawler and also a Member of the Legislative Council.

Para Para, to the west of Gawler, is being restored by the owners with the help of the Federal Government. Ms Laurel Hosking kindly allowed us into the three front rooms and told us some of their history. The mansion was built in 1851 for Walter Duffield, pastoralist, mill owner, wine maker and a member of the Legislative Council. *Para Para* was visited by Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, in 1867.

Before lunch at the Old Spot, the oldest hotel in Gawler, Colin was contacted by Mr Fielke, cricket bat maker, who informed us that his mother had just died and so our organised afternoon tour was cancelled. Condolences were offered. Guide Graham was able to arrange a visit to a mystery destination, which turned out to be the Thumm family's winery and rose garden, the *Chateau Barrosa*, established by Hermann Thumm after he sold *Chateau Yaldara*. *Chateau Barrosa* houses a magnificent collection of antiques including a display of Meissen Porcelain. After being shown around by guide Colleen there was a modicum of wine tasting and we returned to Gawler for a visit to the National Trust museum in the old Telegraph Station built in 1860.

We then departed for Adelaide, arriving at Burnside at 5pm, concluding a very pleasant day.

Harry Greet



Colin Deed, Marg Cliff, Liz Sawyer; Margaret McRitchie and Joan Ramsay outside Para Para Mansion



Chateau Barrosa, The Hermann Thumm porcelain collection.

Deadline for newsletter articles and entries June 12, 2009

Historical Society of South Australia Inc.
PO Box 519 Kent Town, SA 5071
email secretary@hssa.org.au
website www.hssa.org.au

President: Mr David Cornish
Vice-President: Dr Geoffrey Bishop
Secretary/Treasurer: Mr Terry Saunderson ph 8354 2736
(business hours)
Bookings: Ms Margaret Cliff ph 8362 9517
Newsletter Editor: newsletter@hssa.org.au
Journal Editor: Dr Brian Dickey ph 8278 5386 or
email: brian.dickey@flinders.edu.au

ISSN 1444-8459

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4 *HISTORY SA*, the Newsletter of the Historical Society of South Australia, May 2009