

No. 202

September 2009

# HISTORY SA

The Newsletter of the Historical Society of South Australia Inc.

## From the President

Welcome to the final edition of *History SA* for 2009.

Since the last edition members have enjoyed the opportunity to hear two quality speakers at the monthly meeting. In July Sara King gave a fascinating presentation concerning the contribution of Italian migrants to agriculture in South Australia, touching on areas of their contribution which were less well known, and showing a genuine affinity with her topic and those who participated in her research.

In August Jude Elton's topic *Tailor made to sweated trade; the clothing trades in Adelaide 1836-1915* generated much discussion about just how far we have come since those times, or have we? Many thanks to Jude for not only telling the historical facts and explaining the contributions of the women who either worked in the trade or sought reform, but for putting it into the context of the present and for providing the basis for discussion.

How lucky HSSA members present at the July and August meetings were to enjoy Sara and Jude's presentations.

A small group of members also took the opportunity to tour Kensington in August as a part of our series of outings to places of interest.

Dr Christine Garnaut is a longstanding HSSA member and chairs the editorial committee which oversees the production of the *Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia*. Christine attended the August meeting of the Society's Council and briefed us on the progress of the *Journal*, and I am delighted to advise members that our flagship publication will be available for collection at the November meeting, and I encourage you to do so as you will not only receive it sooner but you will also help reduce the cost of mailing.

The Council joined with me in thanking Dr Garnaut, the editor Dr Brian Dickey, and editorial committee members Brian Samuels, Ron Gibbs and David Hilliard for their ongoing commitment to producing this outstanding publication. Members will be interested to know that the *Journal* is well regarded by the Australian Research Council and has been assigned a category C ranking in the current Excellence in

## Visiting SA's History

**Sunday 18 October, 1pm.**

***Visit the pugholes and brickworks of the western suburbs.***

Our bus leaves Burnside Council Chambers at 1pm. With tour guide Greg Drew we will visit a number of sites including pug holes at Beverley and Thebarton. Afternoon tea is available at your own expense. The tour concludes at the Beverley Brickwork Museum and return to Burnside by 5pm.

Greg is also presenting our *Discovering SA's History* talk in November.

Cost \$15. Please book with Margaret Cliff ph 8362 9517 or ph 8278 8922 and organise payment when you book.

**Sunday 29 November 4pm - 6pm**

***Christmas Function at Kingston House***

This will be held at historic Kingston House, 5 Cameron Ave, Kingston Park. We will have our usual delicious refreshments and Christmas cheer, followed by items from the Adelaide Male Voice Choir. Cost \$20. For bookings and details contact Margaret Cliff ph 8362 9517

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Research for Australia (ERA) exercise which aims to assess the quality of research outputs in the tertiary sector.

I will be overseas for the October meeting and will leave the running of the Society in the capable hands of Dr Geoffrey Bishop. I am fortunate to be spending time in England and Turkey and two of the highlights will be visiting Gallipoli and attending a special concert at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the accession of Henry VIII at which the chapel's choir will combine with that of King's College Cambridge.

I look forward to seeing you at the November meeting and at the Christmas function.

**David Cornish**  
**President**

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# Discovering SA's History

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

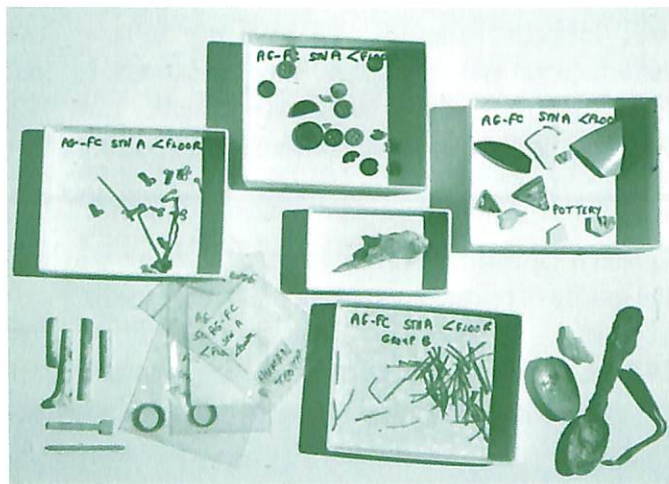
## October 2

Keryn Walshe

### *History from the Floor of the Adelaide Gaol*

Archaeologist Keryn Walshe is the Deputy Head of Aboriginal and Archaeological Collections at the SA Museum. In October she will speak to us about an archaeological investigation beneath the floor of the original female cell block of the Adelaide Gaol.

This has yielded an interesting array of objects. Some finds are clearly associated with the female prisoners and date from 1848-1988 but other finds are definitely not related to the Gaol. Analysis of the finds points to their association with earlier phases; indigenous pre contact, early settlement of Adelaide, and the construction of the Gaol. The finds and their context will be discussed



*Finds from under the floor of female's cell, Adelaide Gaol.  
(Keryn Walshe)*

## November 6

Greg Drew

### *Pugholes and Brickworks of the Western Suburbs*

Due to the absence of timber suitable for building purposes brick making commenced in SA soon after the establishment of the colony in 1836. Hand-moulded primitive bricks were first made using red alluvial clay from the banks of the River Torrens through the parklands. After the banning of this activity in 1840, brickmaking moved to the low-lying area west of Adelaide including Torrensville, Beverley and Brompton which became the major brickmaking region of South Australia. For more than 100 years the history of the Brompton, Torrensville and Beverley areas was the story of pugholes – digging them out and filling them in.

This area is underlain by red alluvial clay which is up to 100 metres thick and ideal for brickmaking. The clay was worked by hand from pits or pugholes to natural water level which averaged about eight metres in depth. Clay was shovelled into trucks and hauled up incline railways to the adjacent brickmaking plants. Brickmaking in the area began as a backyard industry and it was not until the early 1900s that the larger clay workings were developed. The industry was at its peak in the 1920s when about 30 individual brickworks contained four large Hoffmann kilns and about 100 smaller kilns, and employed 100s of workers.

By the 1960s, the traditional clay sources in the western suburbs were nearing exhaustion. This combined with the pressure from urban development and the preference for lighter coloured bricks, forced producers to develop new plants on clay deposits at Golden Grove. The last pughole closed in the late 1970s and most were subsequently filled with building and industrial waste and used for sporting activities or light industries. More recently, urban renewal projects have seen some contaminated sites excavated and refilled for housing. All that remains of a once significant brick manufacturing industry is the Hoffmann kiln in the Brickworks complex and four small kilns at Beverley. It is hoped that these kilns can be used to tell the story of the district's first manufacturing industry.

Greg will also be conducting a tour of the area on 18 October as a part of our *Visiting SA's History*.

## Report on the HSSA tour of Kensington- 12 August

Twelve of our members braved the damp weather to meet at the Kensington Hotel where we were joined by our guide Shirley Green. Starting at the hotel Shirley took us back to the days when it was a mud hut, built by Dr Henry Scott in 1840. This was then replaced by another building and called the Globe. Finally in 1883 the present building was renamed the Kensington Hotel. Shirley told us of robbers who were chased and caught at sword point by none other than Alexander Tolmer.

As we walked round the village Shirley was able to pick out buildings which had held thriving businesses; 2 butchers, a draper, a general store, and a farrier. What a busy place the intersection of High St and Bridge St must have been! In 1877 there were 9 shops, and by 1883 there were 18. By 1867 it was necessary for the council to appoint a special constable to organise a cab rank and this was a cobble stoned area beside Hughes' butcher shop at the north corner where the first street lamp was erected. This intersection was also known as suicide corner, 4 having taken place in the vicinity! One was the publican of the Old Rising Sun Hotel.

Further up Bridge St is the Rising Sun Tavern (not to be confused with the hotel) built in 1848 and kept by William Beck, an African American. He was a man of many talents- traveller, builder, publican, bandmaster, and carter. He began the first cart service for passengers to Adelaide charging 6d for people and 3d for parcels. After his death at 49 years the tavern was bought by Sir Edwin Smith. Further up High St we passed 2 chemist shops, a school and a doctor's residence before reaching the Congregational Chapel in Maesbury St.

Many Kensington pioneers went on to be pillars of our society, lawyers, doctors, and parliamentarians. We saw many more buildings and they all stand as a testament to our forefathers who pioneered the vibrant village of Kensington. What a valuable and interesting morning we had, thanks to Shirley Green, and to Margaret Cliff for organising the walk.

**Sylvia Fanning**



*Our guide Shirley Green with Margaret White, Peter and Barbara Brummitt at the Congregational Chapel and Pioneer Park Maesbury Street*



*Hughes Butchers Shop, where you could also catch a cab*



*Members outside the Rising Sun Inn.*

Over the first weekend in August 200 people gathered at Kadina for the 18th State History Conference. The History Trust of SA had arranged many lectures and tours and it was difficult to choose which session to attend and which tour to take. The sessions were held in various buildings around Kadina's central Victoria Square. It was a pleasant diversion walking between venues in beautiful sunshine.

The plenary sessions gave an over view of Yorke Peninsula in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries, emphasising the importance of the Cornish miners. Our President spoke briefly about HSSA, and drew attention to the fact that we had sponsored the morning tea.

After morning tea we learnt of the effect of the arrival of the miners on the Narungga people and the establishment of Bookyanna, the Point Pearce Aboriginal township. Government immigration schemes of this period and the development of towns on Yorke Peninsula were discussed. Maritime connections with the peninsula proved an interesting topic with one session focusing on the *City of Adelaide*, a ship built in 1864 to serve the colony of South Australia. In the afternoon delegates departed on coaches for tours around Moonta, the mines, Wallaroo, and Point Pearce. In the evening a dinner was held in the Wallaroo Town Hall with entertainment from "Australia Sings," an enthusiastic choir.

There were further fascinating sessions on Sunday including the life stories of Ivaritji and her relatives, (Kaurna people on Yorke Peninsula), and of women in the north eastern gold fields of SA. In conclusion we watched the film *Sacred Ground*, giving an indigenous perspective on the risks posed by development on the peninsula to indigenous heritage. This was followed by discussion with the Producer/Director Kim Mavromatis, central character Quenten Agius, and other traditional owners.

Margaret Young

### Correction

Keith Travers Borrow (not Kevin) has given his collected papers to Flinders University. Keith and his wife also gave a substantial amount of material including photographs relating to the founders of the colony, to the State Library of SA.

A Laube

### Can you help?

Expressions of interest are sought from anyone who could help with the distribution of HSSA's publication *SA Greats, the Men and Women of the North Tce Plaques*. If you would be prepared to supply book shops and newsagents in your area please see Geoffrey Bishop, ph 8390 3138, email [essence@newave.net.au](mailto:essence@newave.net.au)

### Seafarers' Memorial at Port Adelaide

The memorial, a sculpture by Karen Genoff, representing the wreck of the *Admella*, has been relocated on McLaren's Wharf at the end of Timpson St. The relocation was completed in perfect time to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the wreck

### Your help wanted

Mt Horrocks Historical Society is looking for photographs of weddings which took place in the district before 1970, for their spring time display. Please contact ph 8849 2410 or 8849 2317 if you can help.

Names of towns named after ghosts are being sought by Joyce Miles who is planning an article on such names. Email [editor@anps.org.au](mailto:editor@anps.org.au) if you can help. (Australian National Place Names Survey.)

## Deadline for newsletter articles and entries December 12, 2009

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