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January 2010

HISTORY SA

The Newsletter of the Historical Society of South Australia Inc.

From the President

Welcome to 2010 and I trust you had a Happy Christmas, time to relax, and have read the 2009 *Journal* from cover to cover!

The final event for the 2009 HSSA year was the Christmas Party at Kingston House, where we were made to feel very welcome by the volunteers who run the house. Guests enjoyed the atmosphere, the entertainment provided by the Adelaide Male Voice Choir (founded in the 1880s), and the excitement of who would win the President's Christmas Cake! Rained threatened and then down it came! Sincere thanks to Council members who worked hard to make this event a success.

I am delighted to enclose with this edition of *History SA* the Society's program for 2010. Once again Council has put considerable time and energy into preparing a program which we hope will appeal to our membership and its broad range of interests, and we believe there are plenty of opportunities for your participation. I thank Denis Harper for his outstanding work in pulling the program together.

In 2009 the Society's membership showed outstanding appreciation of what was offered and for the third year in succession the average attendance at our Discovering SA's History lecture series was over one hundred. Few organizations can boast such support and I receive looks of amazement when I mention the strength of our Society to those who are not familiar with it.

In studying the 2010 program it is important for you to be aware that there will be two Friday night meetings in March. This has been brought about by our regular April meeting falling on Good Friday and the venue being unavailable the following Friday. Whilst March is a busy month with many activities in competition I hope you are able to support both meetings.

The second March meeting will be my final meeting as President, a position I have held since 2001. Technically my last meeting will be the AGM in May, but as I have a record of brief meetings and an 'on with the show' approach I will hand over to my successor and retreat to the stalls!

It has been a privilege to lead the Historical Society of South Australia. During this time I have been ably supported by

committed volunteers, enjoyed the friendship of many members, and proudly promoted the organisation whenever I could. When I look back over the nine years many things have occurred, and I would like to mention several of these:

- *History SA* was reformatted to actively promote and encourage participation in Society activities
- The *Journal* was awarded an Edmund Wright Award in recognition of more than thirty years of recording South Australian History
- *SA's Greats – the men and women of the North Terrace Plaques* was launched, and is now in its third edition
- The Society moved to the accessible and comfortable Burnside Community Centre
- Our Christmas Party became a highlight of the Society's calendar.

These occurrences have done much to benefit the success of the Society and encourage participation in it. They have only been possible by the tireless work of those who have given much to support the Society and me as its President.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my nine years as President of the Historical Society of South Australia.

David Cornish

President

Visiting SA's History

Sunday 18 April

'The Grange' - the historic home of Charles Sturt

The Grange, colonial home of Captain Charles Sturt, Jetty Street, Grange. Visit 1.15 pm for 1.30 pm start of guided tour. Cost \$8 each for tour and afternoon tea. Bookings required - contact Margaret Cliff ph 8362 9517 or at February meeting.

The Grange was built in 1840 at the northern end of the Reedbeds. The Sturt family lived there until 1853 when they returned to England. Mrs Charlotte Sturt sold the 390 acre property in 1877. It was purchased by the Henley and Grange Council in 1956. It is now operated by volunteers for The Charles Sturt Memorial Museum Trust Inc. Numerous items relating to the Sturt family are displayed in the house.

Discovering SA's History

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

5 February

Elsbeth Grant

Before the Barwell Boys: Youth migration to South Australia

Elsbeth is the great grand daughter of Lewis Grant, who migrated to SA in 1914 to participate in the State Government's farm apprenticeship scheme. Elsbeth researched the scheme for her Honours History thesis at the University of Adelaide and continues to pursue the topic. She was a summer research scholar at the Australian War Memorial in 2008. Recently she has been appointed Manager of the Migration Museum.

Elsbeth will talk to us about youth migration to SA. Reports about the Barwell Boys in the media have aroused interest in the South Australian youth migration scheme of the 1920s. But a number of British boys also emigrated to SA before World War One to become farm apprentices. In fact SA was a pioneer of youth migration to Australia alongside the better known Fairbridge Farm School and Dreadnought Trust programs. We will hear how the boys sent to rural SA during 1913-1914 fared on their farms during World War One and beyond.



History Trust of South Australia GN 1102

5 March

Ian Schomburgk

The role of New Technology in early South Australia

Ian graduated from the SA School of Mines before undertaking post graduate studies at University College London. He was the chemical engineer on the development and design of the Mary Kathleen Uranium Mine process plant and his subsequent career involved the development of new technology in the processing and environmental fields. A major interest has been researching the development and application of new technology in early SA. He will explain to us the role of this technology.

Two popular misconceptions are that there was no industry in South Australia before Governor Hindmarsh arrived on the *Buffalo* in 1836 and that the new province of South Australia was largely an agricultural society. Our innovative dry land farming techniques did lead the world and it is well known that within a short time mining/smelting became important. Both of these industries depended on a very large and innovative metal working industry. This in turn provided a platform on which other industries were able to grow during the next 20 years but there were also three well established significant industries operating before 1836.

In our second 20 years three communications based industries became significant; Randell's paddle steamer and the Murray Darling basin, Todd's international telegraph, and both general and technical education. Since over 50% of our population worked directly or indirectly in these new industries one can contend that between 1845 and 1875 South Australia may have been the first highly integrated high-tech society.

A whole series of interdependent industries emerged, based on imported technologies with significant local innovations. In Europe the older technologies in established industries were being replaced slowly. In SA developments were enhanced by the appointment of outstanding people to head the Government departments providing significant infrastructure.

Report on the HSSA tour of Brickworks- 18 October

We set off from Burnside in the bus for the western suburbs. As we travelled Greg Drew outlined the history of the Brompton, Torrensville and Beverley brickmaking districts.

Brickmaking was an important industry in the colony from the first days of European settlement. Brickyards developed along the Torrens where there was clay, water, and the timber needed for fuel. However holes and mounds along the unlit river bank proved dangerous and by 1838 brickmakers were moved further west by government edict. Gradually the small clay quarries or pug holes extended over 30% of the Brompton area. Families working the pug holes lived nearby and we were able to see a number of surviving cottages.

We passed the former Rowley Park Speedway remembered by many. This was on the site of a large pug hole. At Josiah Mitton Reserve we observed the Burley Griffin Incinerator erected in a pug hole at the end of the Depression when many brickworks closed. The burnt waste gradually filled the pug hole. The incinerator ceased operation in 1950.

We passed the site of the pug hole purchased by John Hallett in 1886. His company grew and in 1910 J Hallett and Son Ltd acquired the Federal Brickyard at Torrensville. This is the site of the current Brickworks Market and one of the few remaining Hoffman Kilns. Mrs Thelma Sandercock, who has a stall at the market, showed us over the kiln. On the lower level we saw small arches which have now been bricked up. These were exhaust flues. Vents in the roof and walls were where coal, and later oil, was fed in to bake the bricks. At the height of production 140 local residents were employed at this site.

After we had been provided with tea and biscuits by our bus driver we continued on to James Brickworks at Beverley. Through the fence we could see five down draft kilns which produced specialty bricks and which form the basis of a planned museum.

Thank you to Greg Drew, Colin, and Margaret for arranging such an informative trip.

Denis Harper



Greg Drew explaining the Reverberatory Furnace to members at Josiah Mitton Reserve, Brompton



Thelma Sandercock and members at the Brickworks, Thebarton



The Kilns at the James Brickworks, Beverley

HSSA Christmas Function 29 November 2009



Above, HSSA members enjoy the performance of the Adelaide Male Voice Choir at the Christmas Party

Right, the Adelaide Male Voice Choir in the delightful courtyard of Kingston House



On an inclement Sunday afternoon members assembled at historic Kingston House at Seacliff for our Christmas function. The homestead was designed for the Kingston family by architect and SA parliamentarian Sir George Strickland Kingston, in the mid 19th century.

Fortunately for our guests, the rain held off and we were able to enjoy afternoon tea in the grounds. Guests were plied with food, and tea, coffee and wine were freely available. During the afternoon we were entertained by several items from the Adelaide Male Voice Choir, the pianist contending with wind gusts dispersing his music. We learnt that the choir was originally founded in 1884 as the Adelaide Glee Club. Members' feet could be seen tapping during the rendition of Irving Berlin's "Alexander's Ragtime Band" and some lips could be seen mouthing the words of the traditional melody "Drink to me Only with Thine Eyes." The favourite carol "Silent Night" rounded off the singing. Next the raffle was drawn and the winner of the President's Christmas cake announced and other prizes dispersed. Afternoon tea, singing, and chatting were almost complete when the heavens opened again and people scurried to their cars.

Thanks to all the organisers for their efforts in arranging an enjoyable afternoon to mark the end of our year's events.

Deadline for newsletter articles and entries February 12, 2010

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4 *HISTORY SA*, the Newsletter of the Historical Society of South Australia, January 2010