



HISTORY·SA

Newsletter of the Historical Society of South Australia Incorporated

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2011

From the President

On Sunday 5 June, 24 members spent a most enjoyable and informative day at Mannum. It was the first time some members had seen the current high water levels in the River Murray, a heartening sight. The wetlands to the north of the town have been inundated for the first time in years and the River Red Gums are regenerating in large numbers.

The group spent a good part of the visit at the Marine Museum, viewing the displays and inspecting the PS Marion. The museum is undergoing a major revamp and the professionally designed displays are excellent. As with most local museums, the Marine Museum is operated by volunteers and they do a great job of making visitors feel welcome. In addition to seeing the 'old' Mannum, our hosts for the visit, Margaret and Dave Dowley, exposed us to some current concerns facing the town, including large residential subdivisions and the decline in tourism to the town due to misinformation from the media regarding the state of the river.

Our thanks are due to members Gaye and Adrian Brown for organising the visit and to the Dowleys for acting as our guides on the day.

Discovering SA's History, our lecture series, will once again present two very different topics in August and September. In August, Reverend Dr Bill Edwards will relate the story of the Moravian Church at Bethel, and in September our guest speaker will be Honourable Reg Hamilton who will discuss 'the strange origins of one of the earliest modern democracies'.

A morning visit to the John McDouall Stuart Collection, housed at the Adelaide Masonic Centre, North Terrace, will take place on Wednesday 10 August. As mentioned previously, the visit is especially apt as next year marks the 150th anniversary of the epic crossing of the Australian continent from south to north and return. The expedition departed from Adelaide on 5 December 1861. Bookings are required for this visit.

Apart from his interest in the history of sparkling wine manufacture in Australia, our speaker in April, James Smith, researches the history of jazz in Australia. Over

recent years, he has interviewed many jazz musicians, many of whom were performing during the heady days of the 1950s when a host of great American jazz musicians visited Australia. Well, the Library of Congress has just released an on-line a playlist like you have never heard before. 10,000 recordings, dating from 1901 to 1925, have been made available on the website National Jutebox (loc.gov/jutebox/). Recordings range from classical to popular to jazz; some artists are well-known, and others are little known.

Recording of another kind is taking place at the State Library of South Australia. Beth Robertson, Manager, Preservation, SLSA, has provided an update on the status of digitising South Australian newspapers. The National Library of Australia has provided funding to digitise four South Australian newspapers—South Australian Register, Advertiser, Burra Record and Sunday Mail—comprising about 890,000 pages. The complete run of these titles up to 1954 should be online and word-searchable in TROVE by the end of this year.

Online content costs around \$2 per page to digitise. SLSA holds about 11 million pages of SA newspapers, so, in simple terms, the cost of getting them all online will be well over \$10m. SLSA relies on donations and grants for preservation microfilming and digitising newspapers. Current funding from the State Government supports the preservation microfilming of the current 50 titles being processed but only extends to a few microfilmed reels of other historical newspapers each year. The SLSA is always keen to make contact with individuals and organisations willing to support newspaper preservation and digitisation. As many members would know, newspapers are a valuable source of information regarding our past.

The Council members and I look forward to seeing you (and friends) at the forthcoming lecture meetings.

Geoffrey Bishop
President

Discovering SA's History

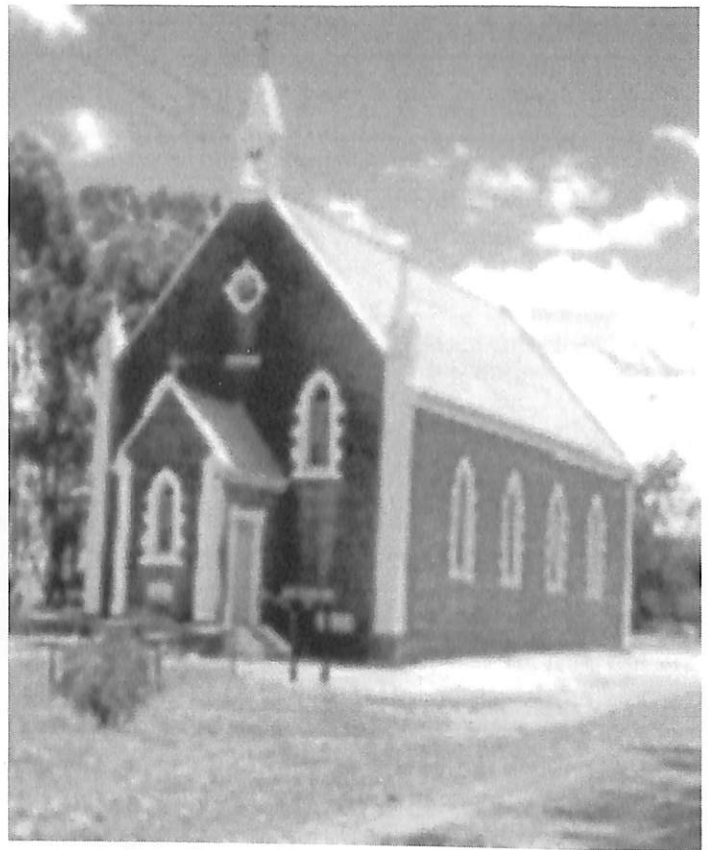
5 August

Reverend Dr Bill Edwards

A grave situation: the Moravian Church at Bethel

William H (Bill) Edwards is a retired Minister of the Uniting Church in Australia. He served as Superintendent of Ernabella Mission in the Pitjantjatjara region in the north-west of South Australia (1958-72), Superintendent of Mowanjum Mission in the north-west of Western Australia (1972-73) and Minister of the Pitjantjatjara Parish (1976-80). He lectured in Indigenous Studies at the SACAE and the University of South Australia (1981-1996). In retirement he is an Adjunct Senior Lecturer in the David Unaipon College of Indigenous Education and Research at the University of South Australia and completed a thesis entitled *Moravian Aboriginal Missions in Australia* for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History at Flinders University. On 26 January 2009 he was awarded membership of the Order of Australia for service to the Indigenous community as an interpreter and through the recording of the languages and culture of the Anangu people of central Australia, to education, and to the Uniting Church in Australia.

The Bethel Lutheran Church is approximately 80 kilometres north of Adelaide, near Kapunda in South Australia. From 1856 to 1907, it was a congregation of the Moravian Church, a denomination which had its roots in religious movements in what is now the Czech Republic in the fifteenth century, and in Saxony in the eighteenth century. In this lecture, the history of this Moravian congregation is examined against the wider background of Moravian Church history and traditions. After completing his doctoral thesis, Dr Edwards visited the Bethel church and was fascinated by the way in which the cemetery reflected one of the traditions of the Moravians and the transition of the church from being Moravian to Lutheran. Therefore, in this lecture we visit four cemeteries, at Herrnhut in Saxony, Bethlehem in Pennsylvania, Ebenezer in Victoria and at Bethel in South Australia, to examine how the layouts of these cemeteries and their gravestones shed light on these histories and traditions.



Bethel Lutheran Church



Bethel Lutheran Cemetery

Contributing SA's History

Lime and Limeburning

by Garry Mighall

In the nineteenth century, limeburning was carried out throughout South Australia. It became a core industry in some districts, including Prospect, which is located on the edge of a plateau of limestone (calcium carbonate) and dolomite (a compound of calcium and magnesium carbonates). The difference in the elevations of Prospect and Churchill roads is about 25 metres. Local limestone was quarried. Some was used as building stone, some was decomposed to form quicklime which was used in concrete for footings, in pise construction (a mixture of clay, lime and anything else lying around), in masonry mortar and in mortar for solid plastering. It was also used as whitewash.

A stack comprising alternate layers of limestone (calcium carbonate) and wood (or charcoal) was erected in a pit or kiln and then the fuel was ignited. Carboniferous charcoal (partly-burned timber) was more efficient because its moisture and gases had been expelled. Ignited fuel had to be capable of reaching the temperature required to decompose the limestone into calcium oxide (quicklime) by expelling carbon dioxide. Limeburners were in danger of being overcome by carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide, and blundering into the fires.

The residue was pulverised. When used in mortar and concrete, the powder was slaked by adding water and stirring thoroughly. A violent chemical reaction occurred, during which a large amount of heat was emitted. Slaked lime was used with sand to form mortar for brick (and stone) laying and for solid plastering, and with sand and small stones or gravel when mixing lime concrete. In the times when Portland cement (anhydrous cement: primarily calcium silicate) was not available, lime was the adhesive used between the grains of sand and gravel or stones in concrete, and the grains of sand in mortar. Gradually, lime mortar and concrete re-absorbed carbon dioxide and reverted to calcium carbonate when exposed to air.

Although pre-slaked lime was available from the kilns from about 1900, quicklime was still used by tradesmen into the 1950s. My father, a plasterer/builder who often renovated nineteenth century houses in the inner suburbs, claimed that quicklime mortar bonded better with materials in existing structures, and could be reworked. Building materials were severely restricted during and after World War 2, and little was wasted; laying a cement path was illegal.

Other benefits of using quicklime were that it was cheaper and more readily available than pre-slaked

lime because it took less time to produce. However, the latter would have been more practical when transporting large amounts over long distances and for use in larger-scale building projects.

On site, quicklime was hydrated in receptacles, such as discarded bath tubs, but not often completely slaked. It was still reacting while it was being mixed and used. Mixing still-active lime mortar and concrete was dangerous and done by hand on pallets until mechanical mixers became readily available, into the twentieth century.

Quicklime reacted severely when in contact with moisture in workers' eyes and on their hands. Active lime is capable of causing serious damage to eyes and lungs; blindness was an occupational hazard of limeburning. In early Prospect, James Harrington barrowed lime to North Adelaide and kiln owners employed boys for a similar purpose. To prevent quicklime blowing into the eyes of the person wheeling the barrow, the lime's surface would have been pre-slaked or covered, perhaps with a wet chaff bag. When I laboured for my father, we removed lime from our hands with a mixture of dripping and sugar before washing them.

The difference between lime mortar and anhydrous cement mortar is that the former does not set before the water content has evaporated, whereas the latter does; therefore, anhydrous cement can be used in underwater construction. Advantages of using lime mortar rather than anhydrous cement mortar, are that lime mortar is not stronger than the bricks and stone, and it allows moisture to evaporate evenly from the whole surface of the structure. Anhydrous cement can trap moisture which then evaporates through the weakest points, and which can be detrimental to the durability of the structure.

Since lime was an essential ingredient in building and tanning leather, quicklime production in Prospect complemented brickmaking in neighbouring suburbs, and tanning in Bowden.

Initially, hides were covered with quicklime for a long period to eliminate naturally occurring moisture, and thereby prevented subsequent deterioration; they were then cleaned with an acidic solution to rid them of lime. The traditional English method was to clean lime-coated hides with a soup made from dog manure, which contained a high level of excreted enzymes.

Limelight, another use for lime, was produced by means of a Drummond Burner. Chemical reactions occurred when oxygen, hydrogen and quicklime combined, during which a brilliant white light resulted and was projected onto the stage.

Visiting SA's History: the Mannum Visit on 5 June



Members of the Society in a carpark near Mannum's main street



Members being welcomed at Mannum Museum



Margaret Cliff viewing a display at the Museum

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Membership renewals for 2011

Membership fees for 2011 are continuing to come in (slowly). If you have forgotten to renew, please complete a renewal form and send it to the Treasurer or make payment at a lecture meeting. To date, over 50 members have not renewed and this is of great concern to the Society.

Bound for South Australia 1836

HistorySA launched its blog Bound for South Australia on 22 February (the date in 1836 that the first ships set sail for South Australia).

Entries to the blog are updated weekly so that readers can follow the voyage.

This and more is available at the website:
<http://boundforsouthaustralia.net.au>

All meetings commence at 7.30 pm on the first Friday in the month at Burnside Community Centre, corner of Portrush Road and Greenhill Road, Tusmore.

Discovering SA's History

2 September

Honourable Reg Hamilton

*Colony: the strange origins
of one of the earliest modern
democracies*

The Honourable Reg Hamilton is a Deputy President of Fair Work Australia. Before that role he worked for the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, appearing in the National Wage Cases and other test cases in the Australian Industrial Relations Commission during the 1990s.

He has a BA/LLB from the Australian National University, Canberra, and is admitted to practice as a barrister and solicitor of the High Court of Australia. He has written two books: *Colony, the strange origins of one of the earliest modern democracies*, published by Wakefield Press in 2010, and *Waltzing Matilda and the Sunshine Harvester Factory*, published by Fair Work Australia in 2011.

In the 1850s South Australia became one of the earliest modern democracies, with votes for all men, the secret ballot, and religious freedom, a new development for the world. This radical new democracy was developed from the curious institutions of England in only twenty years. How did South Australia become so modern so early? Reg Hamilton answers this question with an amusing history of provincial England and South Australia in the period 1780 to the 1860s.

COLONY

Strange Origins of One of the
Earliest Modern Democracies



Reg Hamilton



*Below: the Hamilton family at the launch of Colony
in October 2010; the author is holding the book.*



History Conferences

State History Conference:

In perspective: rethinking South Australia's history

The 20th State History Conference to be held on 5 to 7 August 2011 at the National Wine Centre, Hackney Road, Adelaide, is fast approaching. A diverse range of proposals for papers was submitted and it promises to be a very interesting conference.

The Historical Society of South Australia is sponsoring a session at the conference:

Who are we? South Australian identity.

Papers in this session will be presented by Dr Peter Bell, Glenda Couch-Keen and a panel from the Migration Museum (Christine Finnimore, Catherine Manning and Elspeth Grant).

Further details and enquiries:

Email: statehistoryconference@history.sa.gov.au
or visit HistorySA's website for the programme and booking details.

Postal address: State History Conference, GPO
Box 1836, Adelaide SA 5001

Telephone: Mandy Paul (08) 8203 9808 or
Karen Blackwood (08) 8203 9807

The Australian Mining History Association's Annual Conference:

Australia's Earliest Mining Exploration

14 to 17 September 2011 at Hahndorf.

Early metalliferous mining in South Australia in the period 1841 to 1851 will be included. Keynote speakers will be Professors Geoffrey Blainey and Philip Payton.

For details:

www.mininghistory.asn.au/conference
or telephone Greg Drew on 8278 6732

National History Teachers Conference:

History with a difference

3 to 5 October 2011 at Loreto College, Marryatville

Keynote speakers include Professor Alan Reid, Dr Anna Clark, Professor Stuart Macintyre and Honourable John Dawkins AO.

For details including registrations:

www.htasa.org.au

Deadline for articles for the September issue of the newsletter is 19 August 2011



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