



From the President

Robert Torrens...Walter Watson Hughes...Robert Barr Smith. These are names permanently etched on the history of South Australia and who had many things in common, not the least of which is the fact that they all lived in the same house. Torrens House was built by Torrens and extended by Hughes and Barr Smith.

The Christmas function for Society members was held at Torrens House, in the grounds of Scotch College, and members were treated to a delightful afternoon. Catering was provided by members of the East Torrens Historical Society and served with grace and enthusiasm. Pam Oborn and David Sais acted as our guides around the building and took us up and down stairs, and allowed us to gain a glimpse into the life of those who lived in the home.

We are particularly grateful to Scotch College for making it possible to view the whole of the building and not just the famous Barr Smith theatre, which was built to allow the children to perform and live out their dreams of being actors and performers. Scotch is to be congratulated on their foresight in restoring so much of the building beyond the theatre. The ballroom has been beautifully restored.

Unlike his predecessor, the President did not bake and donate a Christmas cake. Nonetheless, those attending were able to participate in a Christmas raffle for gifts donated by members of the Society's Council.

The Christmas function represented a fitting end to the Society's program for 2011; we can now look forward with great anticipation to another fine program in 2012. Patricia Sumerling is to be commended for the work that she does in bringing program recommendations to the Council. It is always a good sign when you have to make choices. Elsewhere in this newsletter Patricia has some further comments to make about the guest lecturers for the year.

The Council's Grants Committee has also been pleased with the quality of applicants for grants and each successful applicant will be making very useful contributions to either maintaining or developing our understanding of our history.

I am writing this in the absence of our President, who is overseas. It gives me an opportunity to thank him for his fine dedicated leadership in the endeavours of the Society. Thank you, Geoffrey.

I look forward to seeing you all again during 2012.

Dr Adrian Brown, Acting President.



Society Members with Pam Oborn, tour guide, at Torrens House.



Members viewing a decorative mirror in the ballroom.



Members in readiness for the Christmas function.

Contributing SA's History

Book Sales

The Society and Wakefield Press conduct book sales at the Society's lecture meetings. If you have published a book (or have a friend who has) please speak with Margaret Young about having your book available on our book table.

The Society's highly successful publication *SA's Greats: the men and women of the North Terrace plaques*, edited by John Healey, is available at our meetings (\$11.95) or by post (\$15.00 including postage in South Australia). Please send your order and payment to HSSA, PO Box 519, Kent Town SA 5071.

Book Table

Do you have a book[s] to sell (new or second-hand)?

You can...through our book table. Decide on a price which will include a small commission for the society.

The Shed Prize

Help! The Shed is running out of suitable prizes.

To avoid using rusty screws, nails etc we are inviting you to donate a prize. Anything historical is preferred and you will be acknowledged as the donor—if you wish.

Please see Colin Deed at the meetings or phone (08) 8277 2953.

Notice Board and Table

Do you have something to advertise?
A meeting, display, walk, or whatever.

Please feel free to use the notice board.

The table is also there for you to use,
brochures, leaflets, booklets, etc.

You can also use it to give away some item no longer required, such as a book, maybe a poster, or something of interest.

Good Friday

As you know, Historical Society of SA meetings are held on the first Friday in each month.

Good Friday 2012 is on the first Friday in April, so our meeting will be held the following Friday, 13 April. See Program on Page 3.

Deadline for articles for the March issue of the newsletter is 17 February 2012



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Discovering SA's History

2 March

Dr Caroline Adams

Soldier Ladies: South Australian Nurses in the Boer War



Nurses in 1901

Caroline Adams' talk will focus on the contingent of nurses who were sent by South Australia to the Boer War. It will begin by looking at the patriotism and recruitment of the nurses. It will also consider how the nurses were viewed, both as patriotic middle-class ladies and 'soldiers' fighting disease.

The second part of the talk will focus on the nurses' work in South Africa, from their arrival and initial work in Wynburg, just outside of Cape Town and later at Bloemfontein, at the height of the typhoid epidemic. The South Australian contingent of nurses was unique in that it was sponsored by the colony and relied on the goodwill and patriotic zeal of the community for much of its support. The letters of the nurses, printed primarily in the 'Adelaide Observer', provide considerable detail to the colony (and historians!) about their work and activities.

Caroline graduated as a Registered Nurse at the Royal Adelaide Hospital before gaining an Associate Diploma in Social Work from SAIT. After working in aged care, she studied for a diploma in dance, and then taught in a variety of studio and workshop settings. Undertaking further study she received a BA in History (Griffith University) and Graduate Diploma in Humanities and Master of Letters from UNE, where her thesis centred on Australian nurses in WW1.

Her PhD (Monash University), entitled *So give three cheers for our sisters*, focused on Australian nurses in the Boer War. Her research interests include the history of medicine, nursing and public health and church history. She worked both in academia and on private commissions.

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Discovering SA's History

3 February: Dr Gillian Dooley

Matthew Flinders: to perfect the discovery of that extensive country

What happened on Matthew Flinders' voyage that it took him nine years to complete after he set sail in 1801?

2 March: Dr Caroline Adams

Soldier Ladies: South Australian Nurses in the Boer War



His Last Letter

13 April (the second Friday in April):

Peter Moore

South Australian Lawyers and the First World War

A third of all South Australian lawyers of military age saw active service overseas. What became of them?

4 May: Richard Heathcote

Marble Hill 1878-1955: life at the viceregal residence

This absorbing social history of this Gothic mansion also includes information about its garden.

1 June: Dr Bernard Whimpress

The Bridge: a boyhood history 1954 to 1966

An insight into what it was like growing up in Murray Bridge.

6 July: Dorothy Heinrich

Robert Clark Morgan: whaling sea captain and figure of early South Australian history

The epic maritime story of the master of the *Duke of York* which brought pioneer migrants to Kangaroo Island in 1836 before continuing on its adventurous but disastrous whaling expedition to the South Seas.

3 August: Lorraine McLoughlin

Barbara Robertson and the celebration of South Australian women artists

An insight into a painter's life between the 1940s and 2000.

7 September: Richard Venus

A valuable man: James Henry Southcott, of Southcott Pty Ltd

The life and times of a founder of a South Australian engineering company.

5 October: Liz Harfull

The Original Masterchefs: the history and traditions of country shows and show cooking in South Australia

2 November: Dr Philip Jones

George French Angas: a thin line between art and science

An analysis of the works of an early colonial artist.

Visiting SA's History

Sunday 27 May

visit to Keswick Barracks which includes a heritage walk and museum tour.

Wednesday 17 October:

visit Royal Adelaide Showgrounds Archives.

Christmas function to be advised.

Discovering SA's History

3 February

Dr Gillian Dooley

Matthew Flinders:

To perfect the discovery of that extensive country



Entrance to Port Lincoln

In a letter to Sir Joseph Banks in 1800, Matthew Flinders proposed to explore and chart the coast of Australia 'in a way that shall preclude the necessity of any one following after me to explore.' Inexperience and impetuosity combined with plain bad luck prevented him from achieving this aim. However, Flinders achieved a spectacular amount of meticulous and important work during his short active career. In this talk, I compare what Flinders intended to do when he left England in July 1801 with what he actually achieved during those nine years: what he was prevented from doing by his six and a half years' detention on Mauritius, as well as the compensations he managed to extract from his enforced idleness during that time.

Gillian Dooley is an Honorary Research Fellow in the Department of English as well as Special Collections Librarian at Flinders University. Her most recent book is J M Coetzee and the *Power of Narrative* and she and Anthony J Brown co-edited *Matthew Flinders' Private Journal 1803-1814* in 2005. She has published essays and presented conference papers in Australia and overseas on a range of subjects from Jane Austen to Doris Lessing. She is editor of the e-journal *Transnational Literature* and is a regular book reviewer for various Australian publications.