

From the President

History doesn't very often appear in debates in the House of Assembly but it did during May, rather appropriately as it coincided with *About Time*. The matter under discussion concerned the first colonist to set foot on South Australian soil back in 1836.

House of Assembly member Vickie Chapman (Bragg) moved - 'That this House acknowledges and recognises Elizabeth Beare as the first of the colonists who arrived on the *Duke of York* on 27th July 1836 to set foot on South Australian soil.'

Elizabeth Beare was just two years of age when the event took place and it is recorded on her memorial at West Terrace Cemetery (Elizabeth died as the result of an accident at the age of 12 years). The accuracy of the story has been debated for some time. Two contemporary diaries mention the landing but neither refers to little Elizabeth, held by Robert Russell, second mate on the *Duke of York*, and having her little feet placed on the sand. In fact, one diarist, Samuel Stephens, claimed to be the first person 'who ever set foot on the shore as a settler in the Colony of South A.'

Other witnesses, Elizabeth's brother, William, and the sailor, Robert Russell, both later recalled the event stating that Elizabeth was rowed ashore by crew members and was placed on the shore. Another sailor, Israel Mazey, concurred

with the sequence of events stating that he was the person who handed Elizabeth to Russell who then placed her on the shore. Mazey did not support Samuel Stephens' claim.

The landing occurred at Reeves Point, near present-day Kingscote. A plaque in the Pioneer Cemetery near the site states that Elizabeth Beare was the first person to land. Ms Chapman conjectures whether the landing of young Elizabeth was a deliberate act on behalf of Captain Robert Morgan to avoid rivalry between ambitious men (an obvious reference to Stephens) who would have liked to be the 'first' in what would become an historical event in the life of the new colony. This is surely an interesting observation.

History SA has questioned the later anecdotal evidence (some dates from 1886) surrounding the story and the matter of the first landing claims remains unresolved. The claims lie with Beare, Stephens and the sailor Russell. Ms Frances Bedford (Florey) stated in the House of Assembly that 'On behalf of the government I am advised the subject of this motion is one of those events that is disputed in history. Unfortunately, the records of the past are not always as clear or complete as we would like ...'

The motion was amended with the following sentence being added to the original motion, 'However, this House also recognises that this matter has not

From the President

been settled by historians and that it is not appropriate for Parliament to pre-empt proper historical process.' The amended motion was passed on party lines (so much for any conscience vote). I am not aware of any further advice to Ms Chapman from History SA but perhaps our July speaker, Dorothy Heinrich, may have thrown some light on the matter before you read this article.



Neville Harris and Barb Hayes with guest speaker Dorothy Heinrich at the Society's July meeting.

Regarding our programme, I am pleased to report that our outing to the Keswick Barracks on 27th May was well attended by members and visitors. Our thanks to Council members Margaret Young and Margaret Cliff for organising this event.

At our June meeting sports historian and writer Dr Bernard Whimpress gave a lively address on his memories of life in Murray Bridge in the period his family lived there, 1954 to 1966. Although his family were not Bridge people, as it was termed, he has strong memories of his childhood in the town and his recollections brought back familiar memories to others in the audience who had lived there or had family connections with the town.

Our August meeting will be addressed by Lorraine McLoughlin, on Barbara Robertson and the celebration of South Australian women artists from the 1940s onwards. September's lecture will be an address by Richard Venus investigating the life and business of James Henry Southcott. Further away, but a date for your diary, is our visit to the Royal Adelaide Showgrounds Archives. Please note that this event takes place on Wednesday 17th October (weekend access is not possible). Details are provided elsewhere in this newsletter. I commend these events to all members and friends.

Geoffrey Bishop

An historical moment:

'To be ignorant of what happened before you were born is to be ever a child.

'For what is the value of human life unless it is interwoven with past events by the records of history?'

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43BC)
Roman orator and statesman

Quoted in *A Child Went Forth* by
Alison Dolling (2006)

From the President

HSSA GRANTS 2011 - PROGRESS REPORTS

A total of 10 projects were supported by the HSSA Grants scheme in 2011. A number of projects have now been completed and others are progressing well.



Chris Collins published his book *From Forest Range to Flanders: The World War I Servicemen of Forest Range and Lenswood* last year. He received a HSSA Grant in 2011 to assist with his next World War I project. He reports, 'The forthcoming book on World War I soldiers from the Adelaide Hills towns of Verdun, Balhannah, Oakbank, Woodside, Charleston and Lobethal, is progressing satisfactorily. The men and women I am researching - around 270 of them - are memorialised on the honour rolls and memorials in each of these towns. The assistance that has been offered by descendants of the soldiers being researched has been gratifying. I have completed the first drafts covering the soldiers of Verdun, Charleston and will have the Balhannah draft done by the end of July. My aim is to have all drafts completed by October 2013 and have the book printed and on sale by December of that year. As with my first book, all proceeds from sales of the book will go to a nominated charity.'

Kristen McEvoy reports that Western United (SYP) Sports Club based at Warooka, Yorke Peninsula, has recently published its history of Western United Football Club. The publication is available in print and CD formats. Western United formed in 1926 when the Sunbury and Warooka football clubs joined forces and continued until a further amalgamation occurred in 1993. The book contains many reminiscences: for example: 'There were nine shearers in the side and as we got into the finals they would knock off half an hour early on the Friday night for practice, then an hour early and so on. On the day before the grand final, none of them went to work at all!'

Dr Tony Rogers' book *Weather and the Science of Settlement* was launched last September and copies are available for purchase (\$30) at HSSA meetings. All income derived from sales goes to the Royal Society for the Blind. If members have not read his book, I encourage them to buy a copy - it contains some most interesting material and Tony's observations regarding the early decades of the colony of South Australia.

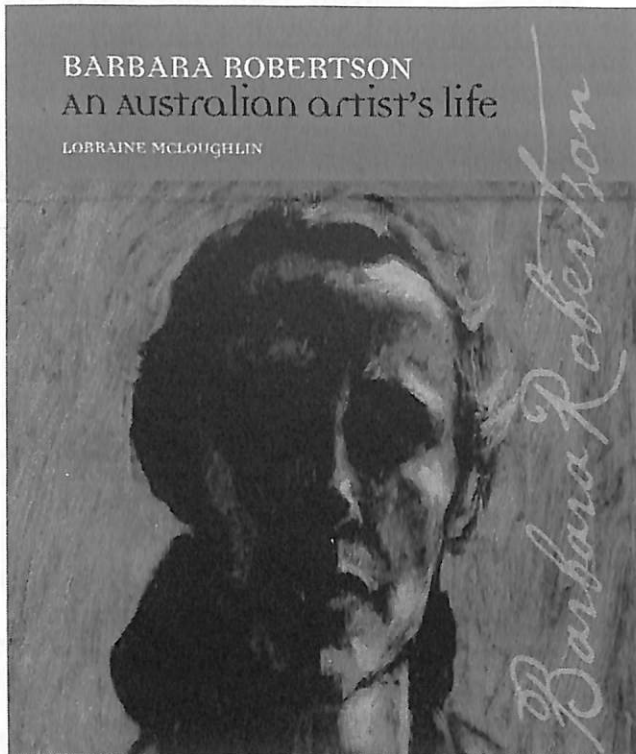
Finally in this roundup of some of the projects, Merrily Hallsworth is nearing the completion of writing the story of her ancestor, the prominent winemaker Edmond Mazure. The French-born winemaker worked in Australia from 1884, most notably at Auldana Vineyards at Magill where he introduced a new wine style to his adopted country, namely Sparking Burgundy. In addition to Mazure's own story, Merrily has written about the colourful careers of his sons, Adolphe Henri and Edouard Emile. The book will be published sometime next year.

Geoffrey Bishop

Discovering SA's History

BARBARA ROBERTSON AND THE CELEBRATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIAN WOMEN ARTISTS

Lorraine McLoughlin
7:30pm Friday 3 August



Biographer Lorraine McLoughlin will talk about her well reviewed book, *Barbara Robertson: An Australian artist's life*. Lorraine presents Barbara's story in the social context of South Australia, illustrating her childhood in the 1920s and 30s with slides of photographs by her father, Eric Robertson, who exhibited internationally. There is also coverage of art training years and the influences of Ivor Hele, Mary Harris and other teachers at the South Australian School of Arts and Craft and Adelaide Teachers College, followed by study at the National Gallery School in Melbourne in 1948-49.

As well, Lorraine treats the artistic context in which Barbara painted, exhibiting with the Contemporary Arts Society, Royal South Australian Society of Arts, and interstate and in London with the Adelaide Group (including Jacqui Hick and Jeffrey Smart) and having works hung twice in the Archibald and Sulman. After teaching at Adelaide Girls High School for 25 years there was a resurgence of her art after retirement in the 1970s. Examples of Robertson works surprise audiences everywhere Lorraine talks.

Formerly an English teacher in SA, NSW, and Singapore, Lorraine worked for a South Australian government minister in the 80s, then in marketing, and education, museum and employment administration. She grew up in the South East and now lives, writes and works in the Yankalilla community.



Barbara Robertson:
'St Francis with the animals'

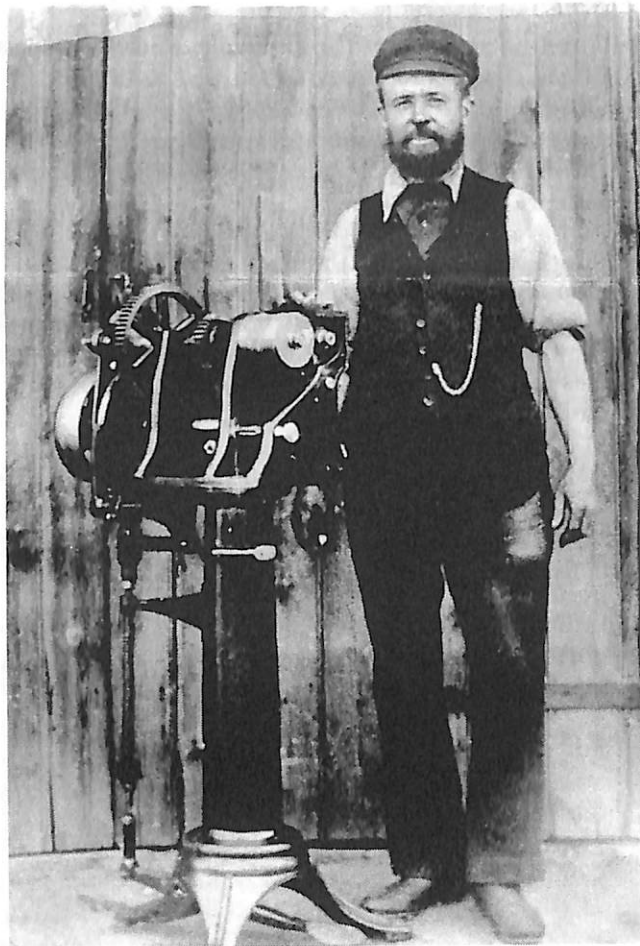
All lecture meetings commence at 7.30 pm on the first Friday of the month at the Burnside Community Centre, corner of Portrush Road and Greenhill Road, Tasmore.

Discovering SA's History

A VALUABLE MAN: JAMES HENRY SOUTHCOTT AND SOUTHCOTT PTY LTD

Richard Venus

7:30pm Friday 7 September



James Henry Southcott, aged about 40, with one of his leather-working machines (photo: Southcott collection)

The stitching of the saddlery for the Australian Light Horse and the perforating of the Commonwealth of Australia's first stamps were done with machines made in Gilles Street, Adelaide, by James Henry Southcott. James was also a pioneer of automobile manufacture and the inventor of a water filter that was sold across Australia in tens of thousands.

He founded his enterprise 125 years ago and it's still in business today, a family-

owned company spanning five generations - quite an achievement for a slight lad who couldn't hold down a normal job because of the lingering effects of Scarlet Fever which he contracted as a two-year-old on the Victorian goldfields. Despite this, he turned a natural talent for the repair of machinery into a thriving engineering enterprise.

Richard Venus has been researching the story of Southcott Pty Ltd for more than 25 years and has been able to assemble quite a detailed picture of the enterprise and its founder. Running through its early days is a connecting thread of Methodism which finally brought the Southcotts to Adelaide where young James was considered by J. Colton & Co to be 'a valuable man'.

MLLE SERPOLETTE REVISITED - A CORRECTION

Richard Venus' article in *History SA* September 2011 contained an error of placement of the photograph caption which made part of the text unintelligible. The text (from paragraph 7) should have read:

'There is no report of a race meeting or demonstration in Victoria: her next appearance was in New South Wales at the Sydney Cricket Ground where she gave a successful demonstration before a large crowd on 25 June. She made two appearances: once in her modest divided skirt and the second time, obviously having decided the Sydney crowd was more worldly, in her bloomers and high-legged boots.'

The *caption* for the photograph was 'Serpolette in her heyday - the fearsome unguarded chain on her racing cycle makes her costume of bloomers and high laced boots a sensible precaution rather than a fashion statement'.

For readers interested to read more about the 'French Lady Cycliste', much of Richard's research, and other material, is now posted on the Internet; see for instance, <http://earlymotor.com/serpolette/html/>

Visiting SA's History

ROYAL ADELAIDE SHOWGROUNDS ARCHIVES

Wednesday 17th October

Meet at 1.30pm.

Entrance is at the Leader Street Gate where there is a carpark. There is a short walk into the showgrounds to the Archives building, which is behind the grandstands - you can actually see it from the entrance.

Marilyn Ward, Archivist, will be our host for the afternoon tour which will take approximately 90 minutes.

Don't spend the rest of your life wondering what you have missed!

Register with Margaret Cliff, phone 8362 9517, or in person at coming 'Discovering SA's History' evenings.

Cost: \$ 5.00 per person.

MAY'S VISIT TO KESWICK BARRACKS

A very informative and enjoyable Sunday afternoon on 27th May saw 39 members Visiting SA's History at the Keswick Barracks.

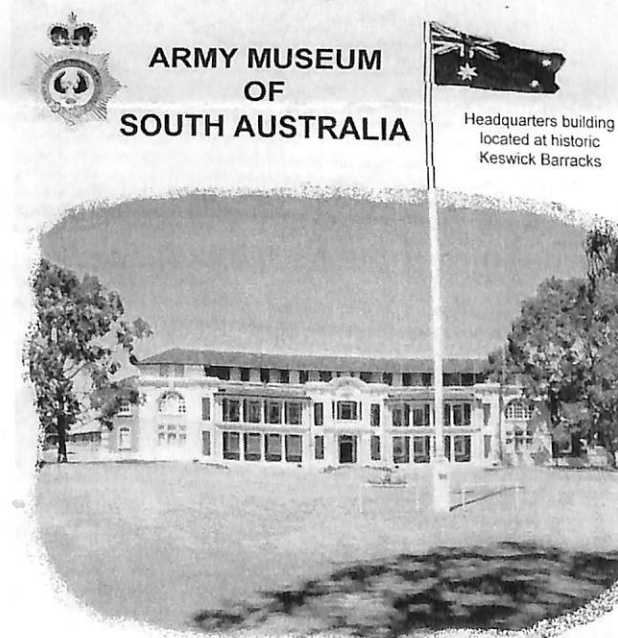
The Society visited the Barracks Museum about 10 years ago and this visit showed a number of additions and improvements carried out by the Barracks' enthusiastic and proud members, plus this time we had the benefit of a guided heritage tour walk.

South Australia was the only state that did not have a military headquarters for their district during the first decade of the twentieth century. However, building on the newly acquired Keswick Barracks site was commenced in 1912 and completed by 1913.

As you approach from the city have you ever wondered what the flag station actually means, what the three storied headquarters building has been used for, not to forget the many other buildings on site, and the Parade Ground? To find answers to these questions and more, you must put the Barracks on your Sunday afternoon must dos. Open Sundays 12noon-4pm.

For more information phone the museum manager Barry Willoughby 0438 195 847 or visit the web site www.amosa.org.au

Colin Deed



Contributing to SA's History

VIOLET FARM PHOTOGRAPHS WANTED

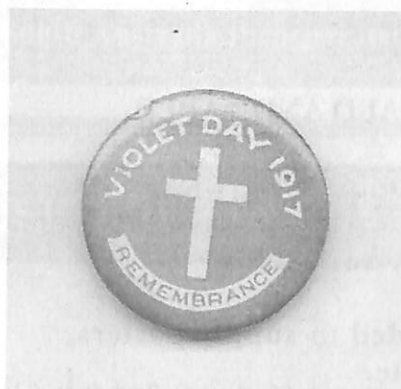
Did you or your family visit the famous Walker's King Violet Farm near Magill in the 1930s or 40s? If so, we would like to hear from you.

The East Torrens Historical Society is seeking information and images of the Magill violet farms for a memorial sign planned for the site of the Walker family's property near Magill. The project is supported by a grant from the Historical Society of South Australia and the Third Creek residents' group.

Violet farms were very popular in the first 40 or so years of the 20th century and none more so than those located at Magill and Woodforde in the Adelaide foothills and along Third Creek near Magill and Norton Summit.

Violets became an extremely popular flower following the introduction of Violet Day in remembrance of those killed in the Great War, as World War I was then called. Violets were to be 'worn in honour of the fallen brave'. The first Violet Day was held in Adelaide on 2 July 1915 when Adelaide paused to remember the fallen of Gallipoli. The second Violet Day was held on Friday 25 August 1916 and had the endorsement of the Returned Soldiers' Association.

William Walker pioneered violet growing at Third Creek; his first patch of violets was on his property near Norton Summit, the former Rock Tavern. He and his family subsequently grew violets on a property at Woodforde and another near Magill. This latter planting became an extremely popular tourist destination.



We are looking to borrow photographs of people visiting the violet farm and Violet Day badges and any personal recollections members may have of a visit.

Please contact Geoffrey Bishop on 8390 3138 or gcbishop@westnet.com.au

The Violet Farm attracted great crowds at weekends. Here is a photograph from c. 1928:



CORRECTION - the website address for 'Reconciliation Business Achievement: The Missing Link' given in our last edition should have read <http://henrysmithswebsite.yolasite.com/>

The site can also be accessed by searching for 'Wender and Duerholt'.

Contributing to SA's History

NOTICE BOARD AND TABLE

Have you noticed how a lot of our members and friends gravitate to our notice board and table?

Help is needed to supply posters, brochures etc.

If you see something and think it may interest others, bring it along for the board or table.

All help is greatly appreciated, with country items especially welcome.

Need help? See Colin Deed at meetings or phone 8277 2953.

THE SHED PRIZE

Have you got a book you no longer need? Why not donate it to the society for a shed prize.

New, second-hand, ex-library - they are all appreciated.

Besides books, you may have other paraphernalia, like one member who donated gifts and tokens received at seminars, etc. All of these books and odds and ends give joy and surprise to the person receiving the Mystery Shed Prize.

Our thanks to donors who in turn have benefited other members and add that little bit extra to our Discovering SA's History meetings.

Please see Colin Deed at meetings or phone 8277 2953.

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