

No. 227 September 2014

## From the President

I recently viewed the exhibition *Remember Me: The Lost Diggers of Vignacourt* at the State Library of South Australia. If you have not seen the exhibition, you should, it is well worthwhile.

The exhibition has come out of an amazing find in a French farmhouse of nearly 4000 glass plate negatives that include pictures of hundreds of Australian World War I servicemen. The plates also include soldiers from Britain, India, France, America and Canada. In 1916, the Australian soldiers were pulled back from the bloody battlefield for a rest in the village of Vignacourt, 15 km NW of Amiens. There they posed for the photographers Louis and Antoinette Thuillier. Many of the images, taken over the period November 1916 to December 1918, were destined to be sent home to their families here in Australia.

The Thuilliers were enterprising farmers who thought to earn some extra income by offering to take photographs of soldiers who were on leave in their village. They were self-taught photographers and took most

of the pictures in their farm courtyard. Their young son, Robert, appears in quite a lot of the photographs standing next to the soldiers. At the end of the war, the Thuilliers stored the glass negatives in the attic of their barn. They were rediscovered almost a century later. Australian journalist Ross Coulthart, winner of five Walkley journalism awards including the Gold Walkley, hunted them down and an outcome was the acquisition of the collection. Media magnate and war historian Kerry Stokes presented 840 of the plates to the Australian War Memorial.

The story of their discovery is a bit more complex than the Seven Network would have us believe. The wooden boxes containing the photographic plates were found back in 1988 by the Thuilliers' nephew, Robert Crognier. He recognised the significance of his find and informed art photographer and antiques dealer Laurent Mirouze. Mirouze tried to interest British and Australian authorities in the material but with little result. He later published some of the images. It was in 2008 that a

# From the President

film crew from the Seven Network, filming other material relating to WWI, heard of the Thuillier Collection and hunted down the plates.

The exhibition and Coulthart's book, *The Lost Diggers*, tell the story of many of the Diggers depicted in the images. The chance survival of the images has resulted in the publication of some remarkable and moving stories.

*The Lost Diggers* is published by HarperCollins (the price varies but is about \$45).

## Society matters

Our annual grants scheme opens for applications in October. The application form is available from our Secretary, Terry Saunderson.

Unfortunately, the HSSA website is currently unavailable and the forms will not be available from that source.

We hope to have the website 'up and running' very soon. The site had become difficult to manage and it was decided some months ago to build a new one. Richard Venus and Adrian Brown are currently working on this task. As some of the information on the site was so out-of-date, it was decided to take it down rather than carrying misleading information.

Details of upcoming lecture meetings are given in this edition so do put them in your diary. We are yet to confirm details of the end-of-year function on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> November but hope to be able to announce that at the October meeting.

*Geoffrey Bishop*



Interested in buying this pen? See the details on page 11.

# Visiting SA's History

DON'T MISS OUT - PLACES STILL AVAILABLE!

## KONDOPARINGA HOMESTEAD

Sunday 28th September 2014

Bus leaves Burnside 9:00am -- Returns approx. 4:30pm

- \* A 25 roomed mansion once owned by the Rymill Family
- \* Nestled amongst Australian flora and fauna on the banks of the Finnis River
- \* Largest display of side-saddles in the Southern Hemisphere along with antique furniture, clothing, tapestries and collections
- \* Guided tours with commentary on the house and contents
- \* Two course hot cooked lunch with choice of 4 mains and 3 sweets
- \* Lecture with discussion on Rymill Family
- \* Mystery stop for morning tea
- \* Comfortable Woodside Coach

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### Visit to St Dominic's Priory College, North Adelaide

On Wednesday 13 August, 34 members and friends met with Sr Jillian Havey, Principal of St Dominic's Priory College, and Sr Rosemary Campbell, the school archivist, for a tour of the chapel and the adjacent museum. Sr Jillian Havey explained how her community of Dominican sisters had come from Stone, Staffordshire in England, in 1883 to establish a hospital in Adelaide at the request of the local Catholic congregation. They discovered that the rules of their order precluded them from nursing men so they contemplated whether to return to England. Instead they established an 'advanced school', using the formidable educational backgrounds of the group. The hospital was taken over by another order and became Calvary Hospital.

In 1893 when the building was completed many prominent Adelaide patrons presented various fittings as gifts. A beautiful silver sanctuary lamp, for example, was intricately made from family silver, melted down and remade to provide a generous donation.

The museum houses books that used to form part of the first lending library in North Adelaide. Beautiful illuminations completed by the sisters were also on display. Some vestments and robes were over a hundred years old, all worked in fine silks by the sisters. Finally we were shown a new memorial wall of numerous plaques, one for each sister who has lived and died within the community. A good day was had by all.

*Margaret Ford-Feckner*

Friday 3 October 7.30pm

Peter Howell

**Ward McNally: The life and times of a journalist and author haunted by his criminal past**

Ward McNally (1915-91), to use the name he assumed after stowing away on a ship to Sydney in 1950, had at the age of ten run away from the couple who had adopted him in infancy, to 'live rough' on the streets and wharves of Auckland. As his law-breaking became increasingly serious, he spent much of the next twenty-five years in reformatories or prisons, surviving there by becoming skilled in bare-knuckle fighting. But he eventually learnt to write, had some stories and articles published while serving five years with hard labour in Auckland's Mt Eden Gaol, and resolved to turn away from crime. In Australia he became a journalist, newspaper-editor, biographer and an outspoken advocate for Indigenous people. Yet he had a very long struggle to escape his past. As late as the 1970s, when he had been law-abiding for more than twenty-years, some

**WARD McNALLY  
MAN FROM ZERO**

**a man's battle to rehabilitate himself. His pride, his determination not to be rubbed in the mud of his criminal past, a strong belief in his rights as an individual, have caused him to react strongly, to hit back blindly and sometimes unwisely. His determination not to end up like other ...**

politicians, under the protection of parliamentary privilege, cruelly denounced him as a 'notorious criminal'. After service as a press officer for the Liberals in SA, and then for Senator Cavanagh, a South Australian minister in the Whitlam Government, Commonwealth Literary Fund grants helped McNally to become a success as the author of 16 books, several of them best-sellers.

Associate Professor Peter Howell is a former head of history at Flinders University, where he taught from 1968 to 2000. He was a foundation councillor and the second president of the HSSA, and since 1996 has been the South Australian Section Editor of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*.

# Discovering SA's History

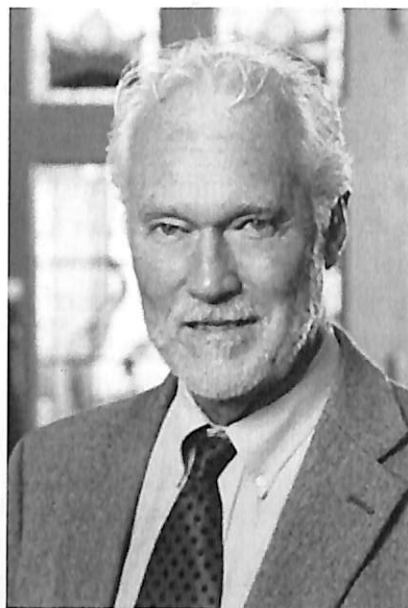
Friday 7 November 7.30pm

Norman Etherington

South Australia from the perspective of British Empire history

In this talk Professor Norman Etherington reflects on how an imperial perspective on South Australian history differs from that of the local or Australian historian. This slant has been a distinctive feature of historical studies at the University of Adelaide since the days of GC Henderson, WK Hancock, Archie Grenfell Price and Gerry Portus. In the current century it links up to transnational and global historical perspectives. The question posed here is can South Australian historians think globally and write locally?

Norman Etherington AM is Emeritus Professor of History at the University of Western Australia and President of the National Trust of South Australia. Since earning his BA and PhD degrees at Yale he has spent his life teaching and researching aspects of the British Empire. He is best known for works on the ideology of imperialism, the history of Christian missions and the history of Southern Africa.



His recent books include *The Great Treks: the Transformation of Southern Africa, 1815-1854*; *Missions and Empire*; and *Mapping Colonial Conquest: Australia and Southern Africa*.

While he has spent his working life based in Australia, Professor Etherington has published mostly on the wider history of the British Empire.

**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, Tusmore.**

Following her enjoyable talk on Sallie Heysen at the September meeting, Allison Reynolds has sent us a recipe:

## Lady Heysen's Boiled Fruit Cake

This Australian cake originated in the 1930s when economy was paramount. It uses less dried fruit than the traditional British rich fruit cake. The quick and easy method of melting butter with the sugar, water and dried fruit, rather than creaming the butter and sugar first, made light work of cake making in the days before home food mixers were invented. Sallie's original recipe used only 1 egg, but two generations later this Heysen family teatime treat is as popular as ever and made all the richer for using 2 eggs.

- Line a 20cm / 8 inch cake tin with baking paper.
- Pre-heat oven Gas 3 / 300F / 160C use conventional oven (not fan forced)

**1 cup / 250ml / 9 fl oz water**

**1 cup / 200g / 7oz / caster sugar**

**1 cup / 150g / 5oz each (approximately) of currants, sultanas, raisins**

**125 g / 4 ½ oz / butter**

**1 level teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda**

- Put first five ingredients into saucepan and boil for five minutes. Leave to cool.

**2 eggs**

- When the mixture is cold mix in 2 well beaten eggs

**1 cup / 140g / 5 oz plain flour**

**1 cup / 140g / 5 oz SR flour**

**1 heaped teaspoon of mixed spice**

- Sieve together the flours and spice and fold into the mixture. Spoon into the prepared tin, press the mixture well down to eliminate air pockets and to ensure the mixture is evenly distributed. Make a slight dip in the middle of the mixture as the cake filling will rise. Gently bump the tin on the bench to settle the filling.
- Bake in preheated oven for 1 hour (if top is browning too fast place a round of baking paper over the top in which a small hole in the middle has been cut). Turn the oven down to 150C and bake for a further 15 - 30 minutes (a skewer inserted should come out clean).
- Leave cake to cool in the tin and then store in an airtight tin.

# Contributing to SA's History

## THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC.

### Historical Society of South Australia Grants Scheme

#### Apply for a grant in 2014

The Historical Society of South Australia Inc. distributes annual grants to:

- historians researching, publishing or promoting South Australian history;
- tertiary and post-graduate students for research in libraries and/or archives and travelling expenses for research purposes;
- local history museums, societies and libraries for the purchase, preservation and restoration of artefacts and books; for mounting displays; for hosting regional conferences and the like; and
- school teachers for innovative teaching of history - not necessarily restricted to South Australian history - at primary, middle and senior school levels.

Individual grants will range in value up to \$1000.

**Applications should be addressed to: The Convenor HSSA Annual Grants Scheme, P.O. Box 519, Kent Town SA 5071 or emailed to [secretary@hssa.org.au](mailto:secretary@hssa.org.au)**

The closing date for applications is **Monday 3rd November 2014**. Late applications will not be considered. Successful applicants will be informed by **Friday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2014**.

Application forms and guidelines are available from the Society's Secretary – telephone 8354 2736 (business hours) or email: [secretary@hssa.org.au](mailto:secretary@hssa.org.au)

For further information please contact the Grants' Convenor by email: [secretary@hssa.org.au](mailto:secretary@hssa.org.au)

**Book Review - *Pasts Present: History at Australia's Third University*, edited by Wilfred Prest, Wakefield Press, Kent Town, SA, 2014, 312pp., \$39.95 (paperback)**

If you ever studied history at the University of Adelaide in the last 50 years, you might be surprised that an 'insider story which possesses an unusual degree of detail and, at times, some bracing candour' has been written about the University of Adelaide History Department since the year dot in a series of articles by nearly two dozen contributors. It is not a complete history but an anthology by past and present academics and students who have written about various aspects of teaching and studying history through various periods. Emeritus Professor Eric Richards claims in the foreword that it 'is uncommonly readable, engaging and stimulating ... [and includes] a classic analysis of shifting notions of democracy, collegiality and autonomy in the modern university and especially of the changing role of professors'. Further, 'a vehicle for a sophisticated and often quite funny account of how a modern Australian university has responded to recurrent turmoil.'

With it understandably complex to put together, the editor, with able assistance, has successfully mastered a structure in which the overall history of the department has been recalled through different perspectives and depths of analysis.

The foreword by Eric Richards from Flinders University, who has had a long working connection with the University of Adelaide's History Department, beautifully encapsulates what has been achieved to produce this book.

When Dr John Bannon launched the book recently in the wonderful reading room of the Barr Smith Library, he wondered why anyone would want to read a university department history, but then when he read the book he was delightfully engaged, as indeed I was.

I enjoyed reading each contributor's article - and indeed I contributed a brief article myself! - some of which were a warts-and-all expose. Each so different and yet capturing the essence of what made this very 'special' university department a memorable experience. I was there on and off between 1978-1983 when the courses on offer were, as stated in the book, like a 'supermarket' of goodies.

The anthology includes tales of academics long forgotten but who left their mark in one way or another. Retired staff wrote insights of their experiences that included run-ins with the university administration, budget cuts and policy changes. Left disappointed and sometimes angry, former staff wrote of courses that ran for years, and the way history was taught. Further delving deeply into this aspect, is an insightful article by Bob Dare on the use and abuse of 'power'.

Lynn Martin contributes a fascinating article about the rise and fall of the highly acclaimed Research Centre for the History of Food and Drink from 1996, which was 'easily the highlight' of his life, with all ending in tears in 2009 several years after Lynn's retirement. Equally interesting is Kerry Round's involvement with Applied Historical Studies, between 1995-2000. With it offering a worthwhile degree, she states it 'was stymied by an administration that from the beginning was obstructive and unhelpful'.

It is useful to note that after you have read and enjoyed the articles, you

realise there are some very noticeable omissions, but as noted it is an anthology rather than a complete history. This aside, for those who enjoyed their time studying history at the University of Adelaide, and indeed those who just like history, they may like to avail themselves of this absorbing book, recently published by Wakefield Press.

*Patricia Sumerling*

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## NEW MEMBERS

The Historical Society of SA welcomes the following new members during 2014:

Ann Black

Andrew Buxton

Barbara Cameron-Smith

Daniela Cosmini-Rose

Nigel Daw

Tammy Edwardson

Alan Fulwood

Alessandro & Pamela Gardini

Melanie Graham

Julie Holbrook Tolley

Bridget Jolly

Margaret Kirby

Trevor Klein

Marie Maddocks

Congratulations to Dr Brian Dickey, a long-time member of this Society, for his South Australian Lifelong History Achievement Award, given by the History Council of South Australia!

Wakefield Press, our generous sponsors, have moved their premises to 16 Rose Street, Mile End. The new telephone number is 8352 4455.

Keith Maynard

Russell Penney

Margaret Preiss

Diane Radomski

Eric Richards

Neil Rossiter

Garion Saville

Jeffrey Thompson

Wendy Walker

## NEEDING A LIFT:

A Society member who lives in Payneham, and who no longer drives at night, would be grateful if someone could drive her to and from the monthly meetings. Please contact the Secretary Terry Saunderson on 8354 2736 (business hours).

# Contributing to SA's History



Susan Marsden (right), speaker at the August meeting, with friend.



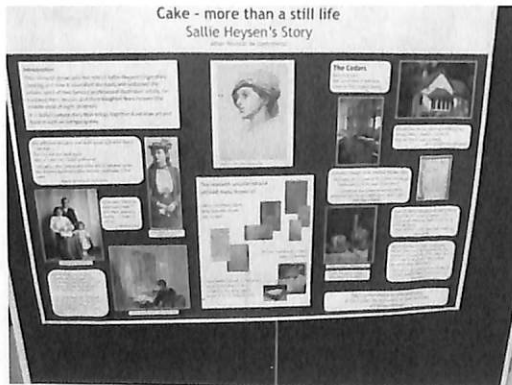
Visit to St Dominic's Priory College, 13 August.



Allison Reynolds, speaker at the September meeting, with Garry Mighall.



Sr Jillian Havey, Principal, and Margaret Ford-Feckner at St Dominic's Priory College.



Display board accompanying Allison Reynolds' address.

# Contributing to SA's History

## POSTSCRIPT TO THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT



The French also earned money by selling hand-made postcards to the soldiers. This one asking 'Are we downhearted - No!' was sent on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1916 by Oswald Caldicott to his family at Forest Range.

*Geoffrey Bishop*

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## ANNIVERSARY PENS

See the photograph on page 2.

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'Julia' Model, metal push-button retractable ballpoint pen.

**ONLY \$3.50 EACH**

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Available at Friday night meetings in October and November.

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# Contributing to SA's History

## NOTICE BOARD and TABLE

The Notice Board and Table needs your help in supply. Whether it is advertising for other clubs or societies, notices, brochures, booklets etc, all would be greatly appreciated.

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

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**Historical Society of South Australia Inc. PO Box 519 Kent Town SA 5071**

Email: [secretary@hssa.org.au](mailto:secretary@hssa.org.au)

Website: [www.hssa.org.au](http://www.hssa.org.au)

President: Dr Geoffrey Bishop

Vice-President: Mr Andrew Buxton

Secretary: Mr Terry Saunderson:  
8354 2736 (business hours)

Treasurer: Ms Anne Bowman:  
8362 7772

Bookings: Ms Margaret Cliff:  
8362 9517

## THE SHED PRIZE

Spring cleaning is a great time to take stock of your library.

Any book(s) you do not need anymore would be welcome for The Shed Prize. 2-3 books per raffle gives members a good chance of scoring a prize and it is a real pleasure to see the delight in the winners.

If you need help to carry into meetings or collect, please see Colin Deed at meetings or phone 8277 2953

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