



No. 230 May 2015

From the President

From the Incoming President

This newsletter offers members a bonus, two President's reports for the price of one. As incoming President I am very pleased to share these pages with outgoing President Geoffrey Bishop. At the recent AGM I was privileged to propose a formal thank you to Geoffrey and outgoing Council members, Terry Saunderson, Margaret Ford and Margaret Lucas. Each has made a sterling contribution to the workings of the Society over a number of years, in an era when the future of volunteer-based organisations has been under question. I trust I may make as valuable a contribution in coming years. We are pleased to welcome Rosemary Abbott and Daniela Rose to the Council and look forward to their contribution.

As I write this report the 'About Time' history festival is in full swing. The festival is indeed a celebration of South Australia's history. It is also a wonderful tribute to the leadership of History SA, under Margaret Anderson, along with the hundreds of volunteers and paid officials behind the events and venues on show during the month. Our Society offered two modest contributions to the program, a tour of Marble Hill, in conjunction with the Marble Hill Heritage Group, and our May lecture by Dr Philip Jones, 'Behind Closed Doors': an art history from Yuendumu. Philip's address was an absolutely fantastic history, at the interface between history and social anthropology, between art and graffiti. Who would have thought ordinary

everyday items such as doors could become such important repositories of our history? It was a useful reminder of the debt we owe to small groups and individuals for having the foresight and persistence necessary to preserve our heritage.

The Society's modest contributions to the 'About Time' program reflect Council's desire to allow our members every opportunity to attend as many of the events and tours available as they can. As Margaret Anderson wrote in the History Festival program, there is 'a veritable cornucopia [of events] for the many thousands of history devotees in our community'. How to enjoy everything you may like to attend is the dilemma facing every passionate history devotee. Over the past few years two dear friends I know have honed their organisational strategy for maximising their attendance at events. They begin by organising joint meeting times in advance, from the day the program is published. A computer spreadsheet enables them to effectively sequence the events they wish to attend, as well as record key information about dates, times, addresses, contact details, bookings and importantly, the cost. As bookings are confirmed their personal program takes shape; it totals 25 events in 2015. As individuals who enjoy busy lives already, this level of planning has proven invaluable. I had the privilege of joining these two friends for two recent functions, namely the tour of Glenthorne Farm and

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Keith Conlon's tour of the war memorials of Adelaide. It was wonderful to see the interest and enthusiasm of the presenters and participants. It is this passion that I am attempting to inspire in the trainee teachers I lecture to part-time in the University of Adelaide Education faculty.

Another event I attended just this week caused me to pause and reflect again on another aspect of our past, the service of our veterans. It was the funeral of Bill Schmitt AM, aged 97, former Patron of the Ex-POW Association of Australia and long-term advocate for veterans and their families. The service was attended by hundreds who were touched by a man inspiringly generous in spirit, including towards the Japanese. As teacher representative, I had the privilege of getting to know Bill well on the Department of Veterans Affairs Commemorations Consultative Committee. Subsequently, Bill and his good friend Ron Zwar worked with me on the transfer of the Ex-POW war memorial to the grounds of Prince Alfred College, which has hosted the Association's Annual Service since 1998, a wonderful legacy that touches each new generation of young men. Whenever I met Bill over the years he helped place any worries and physical failings into perspective. As I discussed with radio host Peter Goers before the funeral, the service and example of veterans like Bill has a power to transform us all.

Whilst plans for the future of the Society naturally come under review with any change in leadership, new leaders must heed the lessons of the past. It is evident the Society does much that is worthy of praise and celebration and already caters well for the needs and expectations of its members. My goal is to ensure the Council continues to serve its mission in promoting and sharing the history of South Australia.

Yours in history,

Andrew Buxton, President

From the Outgoing President

Since our last newsletter Australia has marked the centenary of the Anzac Campaign during World War I. The remembrance saw some of the largest ever crowds attending Dawn Services on Anzac Day.

I attended the Anzac Day events held at Uraidla. The events, organised by *Imagine Uraidla* and Uraidla Primary School, ran over from the Friday night to Saturday morning. On Friday evening a community dinner was held, and a book written by the upper students of Uraidla Primary School about the local servicemen was launched. Some 44 servicemen from this district were killed in World War I, an extraordinary number given that the district's population at the time was about 800. The students took it in turns to read a short biographical sketch about 'their' soldier. It was a memorable experience for the young students and the audience.

Many of the students camped overnight at the local oval to be roused before daybreak the following morning (by a bugler) to attend the Dawn Service. This is the first Anzac service I recall being held at the War Memorial at Uraidla, the main local one being at Norton Summit. The Uraidla memorial is right on the main road and this has made it difficult to hold events near it. However, over the past few months the site has been redesigned, making a service at the memorial possible. Around 250 people attended the service which was led by Rev. Matt Curnow of Summertown Uniting Church. Matt is a former Australian Army padre and spoke of his time serving in England on Salisbury Plain where many World War I casualties are buried.

As an aside, the memorial was funded by the local community and was dedicated in 1922 by the Governor, Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Archibald Weigall. For the unveiling a makeshift stage was used, namely a horse-drawn trolley, and the steps the Governor

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used to mount the 'stage' were made from a stack of wooden vegetable cases.

The Society's **Annual General Meeting** was held on 1st May and saw the election of a number of new members and officeholders. The new line-up is:

President - Andrew Buxton

Vice-President - Dr Adrian Brown

Treasurer - Anne Bowman

Secretary - no nomination

Council Members - Dr Geoffrey Bishop; Patricia Sumerling; Colin Deed; Dr Daniela Rose; Anthea Buxton; Margaret Cliff; Rosemary Abbott.

I would like to acknowledge the valuable contribution made by retiring Council members Margaret Lucas, Margaret Ford-Feckner, and Terry Saunderson, our long-serving Secretary. The Society has been well served by its Council members and it has been a privilege to work with such a great group of people during my time as President.

I wish the new 'management' well and remind members that there are still vacancies if they would like to be part of the Society's management group - just speak to the President or one of the members!

Geoffrey Bishop, Immediate Past-President

The website of the Historical Society of South Australia is again up and running.

Consult it at www.hssa.org.au/



Marble Hill after the bushfire in 1955

Visiting SA history

A number of HSSA members attended the 'About Time' event run by Marble Hill Heritage Group on Sunday 3 May. The weather conditions for this time of year were exceptional with largely blue skies and sunshine (Marble Hill can be very cold, wet and windy in winter). The event took the form of talks, tours and afternoon tea. Geoffrey Bishop gave an overview of the history of the Marble Hill property from 1878 to 1967 when the management was taken on by the National Trust of South Australia, the main focus of the event. The NTSA era was presented by retired architect John Twopeny who was the Trust's volunteer advisor from 1981 to 1986. He described the work that was done in his time and discussed the ongoing dilemmas that the Trust faced, mostly revolving around insufficient funds to undertake the huge restoration project. Following the presentations two tours were offered, one to view the former stables which are being restored and the other to the main building. Work has commenced on the main building with the tower now fully covered by scaffolding.

Geoffrey Bishop

Discovering SA's History

Friday 5 June, 7.30 pm

Lesley McLean

Marriage Ties and Clergy Collars: Alison Gent and the Parsonettes, 1915 - 2015

A hundred years of Anglican women's unique role in church and society

Alison Gent was a protestor for the ordination of women in the Anglican Church in Adelaide. While she professed a radical feminism, she also held devoutly to her marriage vows and the vocation of the clergy wife in the church. This view of clergy marriage was shared by many of her peers. In July 2015 the Parsonettes celebrates its centenary. Having been formed as a common interest group, its philosophy of mutual experience shared in an atmosphere of tolerance and care has survived and continues to attract both wives and daughters of clergy. An introduction to Alison's life and marriage (and feminism) will be followed by a history of the Parsonettes, Alison's involvement, and reflections of some women on their experience of life in the home that went with the parson's job, the rectory.

The Rev. Dr Lesley McLean is a retired Anglican priest and widowed clergy wife. She was born and grew up in Adelaide and became a friend of Alison Gent in 1971. As an undergraduate grandmother and clergy wife Lesley trained for the

ministry at Trinity Theological School in Melbourne and graduated Bachelor of Theology. Following a MA from Monash, she combined an abiding interest in women's issues and South Australian history with a thesis at Flinders University, *No Coward Soul: a biography of Alison Gent, radical feminist and protestor for the ordination of women.*



Alison and John Gent married at St Mary Magdalene's, Adelaide, 1 February 1947

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.

Friday 3 July 7.30 pm

John Radcliffe and Friends

Development by volunteers of a web-based historical resource on South Australian agriculture

South Australia's early development as a free settlement was built on agriculture, and for many years, it was the granary of Australia. Australia's first agricultural college was established at Roseworthy and a state Department of Agriculture followed soon after. From the germ of an unfulfilled idea to publish a book about agriculture as part of the 1986 Jubilee 150 has evolved a reference website on the history of the state's agriculture. It recognises the contribution that individuals, governments, and departmental staff have made. For over ten years, a small group of retired departmental staff has met on the Waite campus each Monday morning to develop the resource. Dr John Radcliffe AM (a former Director-General of Agriculture), who chaired the project Steering Committee, will describe the process and its outcomes. Mr Arthur Tideman, (a former Chief Agronomist and Director of Plant Industry), and who has led the Monday group will discuss the process from the participants' viewpoint and the personal benefits to them. Dr Don Plowman, the recently retired Executive Director, Agriculture, in Primary Industries and Regions SA, will describe the

benefits to the department in hosting the resource as it seeks to broaden the appeal of South Australian food products on world markets. Before the meeting, you may like to look at www.pir.sa.gov.au/aghistorv/



Bagging off a header, Turretfield, c 1920
HistorySA



Calf rearing group at Birdwood, 1966

'If you would understand anything, observe its beginning and its development'. - Aristotle

Wanted - an architect!



Part of the rear façade of Château Tanunda showing the Cape Dutch gables which are a feature of all the buildings on the property.

Château Tanunda, the Barossa's most impressive winery building, celebrates its 125th anniversary this year. The winery was built for G.F. Cleland & Sons Ltd, Adelaide-based winemakers and merchants, in 1890. There is much that is known about the origins of the winery and its construction by the newly formed The Adelaide Wine Company. We know that the builder was Johannes Christoff (John) Basedow, a prominent Tanunda builder and grape-grower, and we even know where the stone is from and who made the bricks. However, the architect remains unknown!

At the time, it was general practice that the architect would advertise for a builder but in this instance, this was done by G.F. Cleland & Co., the clients, and most annoyingly, none of the contemporary newspaper articles mention who had designed the winery.

Tenders were called on 1 September 1890 and the winery was more or less finished in time for the vintage of 1891. To achieve this amazing feat John Basedow had up to 40 stonemasons working on the job. The building is impressive in scale; the 240 feet long (in the original measurements) front of the two-storied building faces south. The building is 115 feet wide and 50 feet high,

the distillery is 40 feet by 12 feet, and the bond stores 100 feet by 24 feet.

Whoever designed the winery knew how a working winery should be laid out; George Cleland and his uncle, Sir Samuel Davenport, could have easily dealt with this aspect of the design work. A striking feature of all of the buildings is the use of Cape Dutch gables. This feature was repeated in the 1920s when Seppelts extended the spirit bond. (The winery was purchased from The Adelaide Wine Company in 1916 by B. Seppelt & Sons).

So, can you help to solve this mystery? Do you have family (or other) knowledge about who designed this winery? It is not something you would tend to put under a bushel.

Please contact Geoffrey Bishop on 8390 3138 or gcbishop@westnet.com.au if you know or have any useful leads.

Exciting wine news

Our 40th anniversary wine, Chichester Gardens 2012 Marion Vineyard Grenache Shiraz has just been given some high recognition. A press release from the winemakers Patritti Wines announced:

'International wine icon James Halliday released his top cellaring selections this week, and Patritti's very own 2012 Marion Grenache Shiraz had the honour of being included. We are proud to be the caretakers of the historic Marion Vineyard, and so pleased to have the opportunity to share such a unique wine with you.'

We still have some of our 40th anniversary wines and fruit juices available for purchase. Speak to Terry Saunderson to order some (8354 2736 - business hours).

What are you reading?

Hell Bent. Australia's leap into the Great War by Douglas Newton (Scribe) is, as Henry Reynolds states, 'an instant classic of Australian historical literature. Rigorously researched and beautifully written, it makes an implicit historical case for the reform of war powers in this country, where the Executive can still send the nation's youth to traumatic war without all but the most cursory consultation of Parliament'. *David Faber*

The Lost King of France: Revolution, Revenge and the Search for Louis XVII by Deborah Cadbury (Fourth Estate). The search for what happened to the son of Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette; the sad story of an orphaned eight-year-old prince and a compelling detective story, eventually resolved by using modern DNA testing, to determine his fate. *Geoffrey Bishop*

The Ellis Laws by Bob Ellis (Penguin Specials). This book might not qualify for the HistorySA list, although there's history in it and it's one of the best ways to spend \$10 and enjoy an exhilarating hour. Ellis might be a ratbag but he's the right sort of ratbag. This is as warm and wise a guide to living as I've come across. *Bernard Whimpress*

Rome by Robert Hughes (Weidenfeld & Nicolson). The author frequently runs away with himself, and there are errors of fact that would make a schoolchild blush, but this remains a lively and stimulating book about the history and art of one of the world's most remarkable cities. *Robert Martin*

Tom Price: from Stonecutter to Premier by Stephanie McCarthy (Wakefield Press). This recently published biography follows the rise (and occasional falls) of migrant Tom Price as he becomes involved in the United Trades and Labor Council which spawns the United Labor Party in 1891. Supporting women's suffrage and the Eight

Hours Day movement, 'it was simply a happy accident which tumbled him into the serious political arena'. He was MP within ten years of his arrival in SA, and first Labor Premier in 1905, and a wealth of information has been drawn upon, such as earlier biographies, family papers, and the treasures of the National Library of Australia newspapers in *Trove*, to produce this valuable political biography. *Patricia Sumerling*

Readers are invited to share information on books they have been reading. The entries should be short, giving title, author, publisher and a brief comment on why you like the book. We are restricting this to books on history, but from wherever, not just South Australia or Australia.

'Things just happen, one after another. They don't care who knows. But *history*... ah, history is different. History has to be observed. Otherwise it's not history. It's just... well, things happening one after another.' - Terry Pratchett

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

Contributing to SA's History

NOTICE BOARD and TABLE

The Notice Board and Table need 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

THE SHED PRIZE

Your donated book(s) have been so good it has enabled The Shed Prize to be 2 - 3 books per raffle which in turn gives the ticket holder a better chance of scoring a prize.

Looking forward to more books in 2015. If you need help to carry or collect, please see Colin Deed at meetings or phone 8277 2953.

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