

No. 259 September 2020

From the President

The Council of the Historical Society of South Australia is very pleased to announce that general meetings are reinstated, commencing at 7.30pm on Friday 2 October.

The HSSA's Covid-Safe Plan allows us a maximum capacity of 93 people. Given that the current pandemic requires restrictions on the conduct of meetings (and these restrictions could change at short notice) our Council members and Covid Marshall will assist members with the following procedures:

- 1. Members (and guests) can form two lines on arrival to avoid long queues.**
- 2. At the door members and visitors sign their names and phone numbers.**
- 3. All members and visitors will be asked three generic questions, i.e.**
 - 1. Have you been interstate or overseas recently?**
 - 2. Do you have these symptoms, e.g. cough, fever, dry throat, loss of sense of smell? (If so stay home.)**
 - 3. Have you recently been in contact with someone who has been tested for the Covid virus?**
- 4. Use two hand sanitisers at the door, one at the auditorium's doors, and in toilets.**
- 5. No nametags - or supper - these are omitted to minimise handling.**
- 6. Social distancing must be maintained all night.**

From the President

7. Members don't remain in the foyer but move into the auditorium to be seated, in an arrangement as directed, i.e. social distancing.

8. Avoid shaking hands and hugging (tempting after a long absence).

9. Cough into elbows

President's Letter

In the latest newsletters during lockdown, members were encouraged to gather memorabilia or stories by exploring their homes or while taking walks noting history and heritage around them. Please note that fellowship time is currently minimal. Covid-19 regulations encourage social distancing and discourage sharing platters and finger food, so supper is currently not provided after our guest speaker. So please either communicate with your HSSA Council members after choosing your spaced seat in the auditorium or email stories to the editor of the HSSA newsletter or our Website. Present will be our traditions of the raffle, with tickets purchased while you are seated, and the Wakefield Press table displaying its latest range of South Australian stories.

Beautiful spring weather is upon us encouraging using Eventbrite and other websites to search for numerous outdoor historical walks. The Elms Carriageway, a fixture of the south-east Adelaide Parklands since the 1800s (see article in our May newsletter), now has a trail stretching from there to the Adelaide Himeji Gardens, a large, secluded, beautifully manicured Japanese pocket in the parkland, and beyond. Free parking is close by off Greenhill Road and South Terrace respectively. You can view or print the map on 'Explore Adelaide'.

While the History Trust of South Australia (HTSA) is still assessing how the May History Festival program might be conducted in 2021, it is inviting facilitators to roll over their items to that time. The HTSA's monthly 'Speakers' lecture program held in the Military Hall at the Torrens Parade Ground continues as an online program.

At HSSA's Friday evening meeting of 2 October we will hold our **Annual General Meeting**, which will be kept short and occur before hearing our guest speaker. The winner of the HSSA's **Keain Medal** for 2020 will be announced.

From the President

We look forward to hearing our guest speakers in October. Helen Hennessy and Patricia Booth talk on 'The E H Coombe Project; Journalist, Barossa Valley MP and anti-conscription champion'. On 6 November Dr. Susan Marsden will talk on 'Exploring the histories of Mr. Hill's History Painting, "The proclamation of South Australia at Holdfast Bay, 1836"'.

We have explored enthusiastically excursion and trip opportunities for 2021. We are excited to learn that traditional venues including Urrbrae House and Carrick Hill are finally reopening to booking tours. We will announce a tour to one of Adelaide's historic and beautiful secrets now also opening to booking tours. It includes a curated tour, seating and morning tea.

If you have any queries, comments and suggestions please share them with the HSSA Council members, who will have nametags. We look forward to welcoming you all back and to making your evening enjoyable, informative and safe.

*The President, HSSA,
Pamela Rajkowski OAM*

The January 2020 newsletter flagged that the AGM would include a vote on a motion to raise the Society's annual subscription fees. This measure has been postponed till next year, in consideration that services to the membership this year have been unavoidably reduced.

Make history in a time of pandemic in 2020

The Marsden Szwarcbord Foundation project *Make history at home*, is a free 'How to do your own history' series presented by historians Susan Marsden and Sandra Kearney. Through the Covid-19 lockdown we've posted videos, photos and advice, so you can use the time at home to arrange your records and photos, and share your own histories.

Watch *Make history at home* in 5 sessions on YouTube (Marsden Szwarcbord Foundation), with photos and history links on Facebook (@MSzFoundation) and Instagram at [#mszfMakeHistoryAtHome](https://www.instagram.com/mszfMakeHistoryAtHome). You're invited to add this hashtag to your stories, or links to history sites, and share them on Facebook. To learn more about *Make history at home* or the Foundation, or make a tax deductible donation, contact smarsden@mszfhistory.org.au.

Friday 2 October 7.30pm

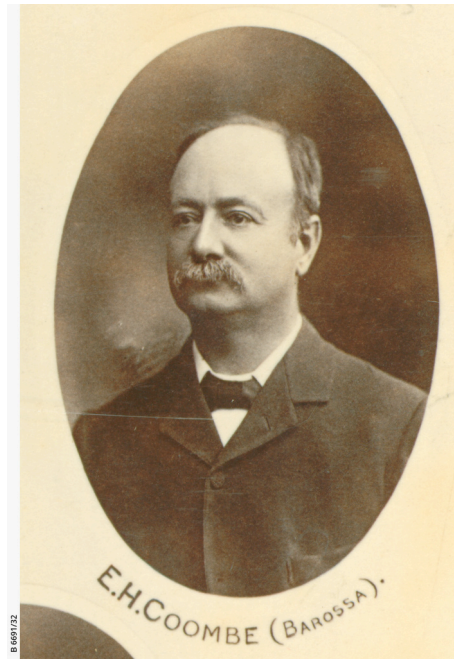
Helen Hennessy and Patricia Booth

**The E.H. Coombe Project:
Journalist, MP for the Barossa
and Anti-conscription
champion**

Ephraim Henry Coombe is a significant person in the history of Gawler and the State of South Australia. He used his positions of influence to champion many social causes. These included temperance, votes for women and the defence of those who were persecuted during World War One because of their German heritage. He opposed conscription and the closure of Lutheran schools.

He was prosecuted under the War Precautions Act and his untimely death at the age of 58 has been attributed to the stress of this difficult period.

All lecture meetings commence at 7.30 pm on the first Friday of the month at the Burnside City Uniting Church, corner of Portrush Road and Fisher Street, Tasmore.



Sadly, there was little that commemorated his life and achievements. This was particularly evident in Gawler, where he was born and spent 56 of his 58 years.

Since 2016 the E.H. Coombe project has gathered information about Ephraim, researched the gaps and now tells his story. The project is a collaboration between Patricia Booth, great-grand-daughter of E.H. Coombe and Helen Hennessy, local historian and former Manager of the Gawler Public Library. Both women share a passion for history and an admiration of this gentleman.

Helen Hennessy was awarded the South Australian Regional Historian Award 2019 by the History Council of South Australia.

Friday 6 November 7.30pm

Dr Susan Marsden

**Mr Hill's History Painting:
exploring the histories in
Charles Hill's painting 'The
Proclamation of South
Australia at Holdfast Bay 1836'**

1836 culminated in the arrival by ship of the first official settlers and the Governor's first proclamation. This illustrated talk will explore the histories implicit in Charles Hill's celebrated painting of that event, titled, 'The Proclamation of South Australia 1836' (Art Gallery of SA). Hill's painting of 1857 was itself a historical reconstruction of the setting, participants and observers (many named in a key) at the Proclamation of government and of the rights of the Aborigines at Holdfast Bay on 28 December 1836, marking formal British settlement of the new province of South Australia.

The painting is unusual in such nineteenth century images in depicting this as a family event with women and children, including amongst the Aboriginal observers. The painting will provide a starting point, narrative line and overarching structure for a book Susan has been writing for several years (*Mr Hill's History Painting*)



that will provide a fresh look at the best-known event in South Australia's history. This project will connect the picture, people, proclamation and place depicted in the painting in developing a compelling story about the founding of a free British province on the far side of the world.

Susan is a former President of the History Council of SA and an appointed member of the State Records Council and the Register Committee of the SA Heritage Council. Past employment includes seven years as SA's State Historian, Visiting Fellow in the Urban Research Program at the ANU, and National Conservation Manager at the Australian Council of National Trusts.

Susan has authored and co-authored more than 120 books, articles, internet publications and reports. Recent work includes commissioned books, heritage studies, a website and oral history interviews, including those recorded as an ongoing interviewer for the National Library of Australia.

COLIN ROBERT DEED

14 April 1941- 15 July 2020

The Historical Society of South Australia is bereft by the death of Colin Deed, who succumbed a few months after being diagnosed with tumours in the brain.

Colin worked in the printing industry, and it was through his connections that the Society has for a long time maintained a fruitful connection with Solito Printers for the production of newsletters and the annual journals.

Colin supervised the dealings with the printers, and the enveloping and posting of the newsletters and journals. Here he was partly taking over from his beloved partner, the late Avis Huckel, who engaged in such work for the Society for many years, as well as being secretary and treasurer. As noted below, Colin did much else for the Society.

It was Avis who first got him interested in the work of the Society after he, to begin with, would drive her to the Society's committee meetings and sit outside as they proceeded.

He had other enthusiasms besides history: tennis, fishing, the Port Noarlunga Lifesaving Club, the Edwardstown Football Club, and the Crows.

At Colin's funeral on 23 July, Rev. Dr Adrian Brown, who led the service, paid tribute to Colin as 'caring, committed, humble, and willing to serve'.

Nothing better demonstrated Colin's qualities as a human being than his selfless devotion and infinite patience as he cared for Avis as she sank into dementia.



The Society extends its sympathy to Colin's daughters Tanya, Belinda and Natasha, and their families.

At Colin's funeral, David Cornish, former President of the Historical Society of South Australia, delivered this eulogy on behalf of the Society:

Colin Deed was in every sense of the term a 'Good Man'.

The name Deed is appropriate to Colin, and I don't say this flippantly, as he was always doing the good deeds which made him a Good Man.

But he never sought the limelight or recognition. Appreciation of Colin came easily to those who knew how he just quietly got on with things, whether it be for other people, an organisation, or both as was the case with the Historical Society of South Australia.

As president of the Society for the best part of a decade I was the beneficiary of

Contributing to SA's History

Colin's organisation, skills and friendship. The membership benefited from Colin as he knew all the regulars and his organisational skills ensured they enjoyed their membership. As an organisation the Society was the stronger for his participation in its management over several decades.

Everyone knew that Colin, to use a phrase he might have employed, 'worked like a black ant' for the Society. They knew that he ensured the room was set up, the AV worked (quite an achievement!), the raffle was organised and his notice board of up-and-coming events was on display. In the later years of Avis's life he made sure she participated in meetings and set her up where she could enjoy the company of others.

What the Society's membership didn't always know was of Colin's tireless work behind the scenes. He never missed a committee meeting, was always on top of printing and postage, coach bookings for field trips, and undertook reconnaissance missions before the tours to ensure they were suitable for the largely older people who so enjoyed them.

I knew I could call upon Colin for advice and assistance and more often than not he'd say 'I'm out your way and will swing past in 20'. Sure enough he'd turn up, wander into my office, and say 'How's your day going?' He always had time but worried I didn't and would soon say 'I won't take up anymore of your time' when I was feeling I was taking up his.

Whether it be at a meeting, on a tour or in my office, Colin always had a joke for me. Always ripe, rarely repeatable but often funny for all the wrong reasons, he

delighted in telling me in a hushed tone but just loud enough to prompt a scolding from Avis.

I joined the Historical Society of South Australia thirty years ago and was soon roped onto the committee. It's a little blurry now but I'm pretty sure Colin was active at that time. Whilst remaining a member I moved away from Adelaide and I lived at North Beach [Wallaroo] and I'd see Avis and Colin as they were just down the road [in their holiday house].

I resumed my interest in the Society in 2001, returned to the committee and became president, and eventually retired from the role. Throughout these years Colin's contribution to the Society continued unabated and was recognised with honorary life membership. We didn't tell Colin this was happening and his surprise was genuine and his pride palpable.

In concluding my tribute to Colin and his contribution to the Historical Society of South Australia I say that Colin Deed was 'a good man who did good things'. These words are on the grave of Sir Thomas Playford, and whilst Colin might be embarrassed by the comparison with the late Premier, I also think he'd accept it with the humility which was such a strong trait of his.

Thanks to Adrian Brown, Tanya Colligon (Colin's daughter) and David Cornish for their contributions to the above tribute.

Sincere thanks to those who have made donations to the Historical Society of South Australia in memory of Colin Deed.

The name William Williams was very common in the colony, there were two dozen men of that name arriving in SA before 1850. However, thanks to a snippet in an 1853 newspaper, we can learn more about one particular gentleman of that name. At the time William was facing bankruptcy:

Many an old colonist is indebted to him [Mr William Williams] for the assistance he rendered them in the early stages of their colonial career and this is a compliment which many of them will now, we hope, return. He has figured before us successively as a general storekeeper, an auctioneer, a licensed victualler and more recently, as a general brewer, and now on emerging from his 'difficulties' [insolvency], he seeks assistance and support.¹

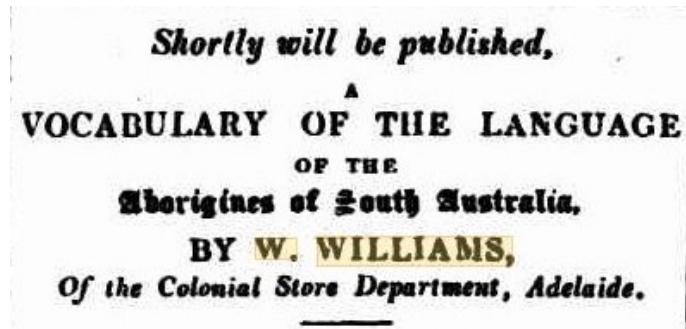
Through various newspaper references it is possible to piece together what promised to be an interesting story of his life in SA. His first position was:

Deputy Colonial Storekeeper: The storehouse, post office and residence, known as the Colonial Store were temporary huts built on the banks of the Torrens opposite the Trinity Church on North Terrace. It would seem that all manner of pioneering equipment, rations, hardware, and clothing were issued from the store to government parties such as builders, surveyors, police and the Protector of Aborigines.

The job of colonial storekeeper and his deputy must have been quite varied. For example, it is reported that in 1839 William Williams accompanied Mr Inman, Superintendent of Police, and a Mr Edwards to apprehend a native suspected of a murder.²

In May 1839 he produced 'A Vocabulary of the Language of the Aborigines of South Australia', something which would be greatly appreciated by many, however there is no information on how he became so knowledgeable. For those who are curious, the book can be found at

<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-85177678/view?partId=nla.obj-85180846#page/n24/mode/1up>



The Store was intended to be a temporary facility until other businesses were established to take over so, in May 1843, the Government made some reductions in their staffing of the Colonial Store Department and William 'had been dispensed with' and given a public reference:

In noticing this fact, it is only justice to Mr Williams to state that he had been in the service of the Colonial Government nearly seven years, during which time he held situations in the Emigration, and Store Departments and we believe he has acted in every instance to the satisfaction of his employers. Mr Williams, it will be remembered, is the author of the

first vocabulary of the native languages for which he received the thanks of the Home Authorities through Colonel Gawler.³

Auctioneer: During this period of employment as storekeeper, mention is made in October 1838 of William Williams commencing business as an 'Auctioneer and Agent for the sale of landed property, cattle, timber etc'. He erected an 'extensive sale room, with a large stock yard in front, fitted up for the reception of cattle and situated on sections 74 and 75 Hindley Street, between JB & S Hack's and Captain John Walker's Stores'.⁴

Could William Williams have operated as auctioneer during his lunch break because it was advertised that he was 'on site daily between 12 and 2'.⁵ A report in the 1844 papers showed that there were only three auctioneers at that time – JB Neales, WG Lambert and William Williams – 'with Williams taking the least amount for the reported month and Neales receiving the most by far'.⁶

Common Brewer: William and his family were living in Walkerville.⁷ By 1843 a brewery and malthouse was established on the corner of Walkerville Terrace and Warwick Street. A watermill drew water up from the Torrens until a well was sunk. A reporter in 1851 stated that Williams was the first person to drink a 'draught of Torrens water'.⁸



William Williams photo circa 1855 (SLSA B5839)

William generously donated the block of land for the building of the Church of England on Church Terrace - St Andrews Church which opened for worship in 1847. After the church's opening ceremony, a banquet was held at Mr Williams' who was 'a kind and genial host'.⁹

Licensed Victualler: Somehow, whilst assisting the Colonial Storekeeper, William was able to establish himself as an innkeeper. From March 1840 to about 1843 – he was licensee of the Victoria Hotel (later known as Princes Victoria Hotel, 94 Hindley Street) and from 1846 to January 1853 he had the City Bridge Hotel (later Century Hotel at 160 Hindley Street).

Apparently, he was the second licensed victualler in South Australia (not the first as mentioned below) and a founding member of the Licensed Victuallers' Society:¹⁰

Mr Williams returned thanks for the brewers. He was the first licensed victualler in South Australia. He and his friend, the Chairman, were poor once, but were now rich, and he had not a bad debt on his books. This was more than any merchant could say. He felt his health breaking, and he should not be long among them, but he hoped all would pull together, and then all must succeed. The worthy gentleman sat down amid loud cheers.

Things must have gone terribly wrong soon after because by the end of 1851 he was before the Insolvency Court.

Earlier in 1851, 'William Williams of City Bridge Hotel' hosted the 25th anniversary dinner of the old colonists of SA. A pavilion was erected to house 600 people. Perhaps this event is what brought him down.



The dinner was held in a canvas-covered area between the rear of City Bridge Hotel and Holy Trinity Church in an area 120ft x 80ft in commemoration of the first sale of town land in March 27, 1837.

ST Gill was challenged to record some 600 male colonists who came to the dinner.¹¹ His picture shows how mammoth the event must have been to organize! A whole bullock was roasted

over a spit. The Adelaide Amateur Band played music while two large emus, a kangaroo and a wallaby were 'allowed to roam amongst the highly spirited crowd enjoying over 20 toasts throughout the evening as those present celebrated the years of achievement since that first land sale'. The interior was decorated with foliage and lit by a fanciful and rich candelabra.¹²

Insolvency: William Williams came up for examination in the Insolvency Court but not being fully prepared (no balance-sheet), he was appointed a Trade Assignee to examine his debts. The following shows how much he owed:

Robert Cottrell, £43 2s; Samuel Ellington Boord, £157 1s. 6d; William Paxton, £113 10s; James Thompson (Clare), £35 6s. 3d; John Tinline, £382 12s. 6d on certain bills of exchange; and the executors of the late John Stephens lodged a claim for £2 4s.¹³

William's brother-in-law, Henry Catchlove¹⁴ licensed victualler of the Black Bull Inn in Hindley-street, came to his aid. Williams' financial situation was sorted, with an offer of 10 shillings in the pound made by Messrs Catchlove, Ottoway, Simms & Ladd and accepted by the creditors of the insolvent.

Meanwhile, William's family home in Warwick Street Walkerville was advertised for sale in 1854. (His house was a Manning kit home.)



(It was later given a masonry outer 'skin' by John Cherry and named *Clayton* – it survives today at 46 Warwick Street).



Photos above (a)

courtesy Walkerville Council c1950 and (b) Googlemaps

FOR SALE, in Walkerville, a convenient seven-roomed house with outbuildings, sheds and a good well of water. The house is situated near the Torrens. There is an acre of garden with every description of fruit trees in full bearing and has now a very promising appearance. There is an acre paddock adjoining. Late the property of Mr William Williams, Brewer. Immediate possession can be given.¹⁵

His Decease: Following his death in 1858, leaving a wife and seven children, a meeting was arranged to organise aid for Williams' family.

THE LATE Mr. WILLIAM WILLIAMS, of Walkerville.— At a Meeting of Old Colonists held at the Victoria Hotel, Hindley-street, it was resolved that a Committee, consisting of the under-mentioned gentlemen, should be appointed for the purpose of raising Subscriptions in aid of the Widow and Family of the late Mr. William Williams formerly of Walkerville, brewer, who, through his decease, are left in destitute circumstances - that Mr. Thomas Ottoway, Victoria Hotel, Hindley-street, [to] act as Treasurer; and that Mr. Nicholas James, jun, be requested to accept the office of Honorary Secretary. The following gentlemen form the Committee:-
 Mr. Frederick Fisher, Gilbert-place, Adelaide;
 Captain John Finnis, Adelaide;
 Mr. A. H. Gouger, Star Hotel, Adelaide;
 Mr. William Johnstone, British Hotel, North Adelaide;
 Mr. William Williams, North Adelaide [son of the deceased].¹⁶

Genealogy notes:

William Williams arrived in South Australia in 1836 aboard *AFRICAINNE*.¹⁷ He married Jane Catchlove in July 1837.¹⁸ The children from the marriage included William Huey (1838-), Jane (1840-1893), Mary Laura (1841-), Richardson Huey (1843-1886), Mary Laura (1845 -) and Frederich (1850-).

Marriage 1859...WILLIAMS-GERMEIN.- at Christchurch, Kapunda, Richardson Huey, second son of the late William Williams, Esq., of Walkerville, and nephew of the late Colonel Huey, of Her Majesty's Second Battalion of the First Royals, to Selina, fourth daughter of Mr. John Germein, Lefevre's Peninsula, Port Adelaide.¹⁹

Marriage 1877... MOSELY-WILLIAMS.— at St. Luke's Church, Adelaide, Thomas Mosely, Coondambo, Lake Gardiner, second son of Mr. Henry Mosely, Glenelg, to Mary Laura, third daughter of the late William Williams, of Walkerville, and sister of William Huey Williams, M.D., Resident House Physician, Royal Infirmary, Liverpool, England, niece to the late Colonel Richardson Williams Huey.²⁰

Death 1885 WILLIAMS.— at her daughter's residence, Parkside, of heart disease, Mrs. Jane Williams, relict of the late William Williams, brewer, Walkerville, aged 73 years. An old and respected colonist of forty-nine years.²¹

Death 1893 WILLIAMS.— At her residence, Carrington-street east, after a painful illness of nine month's duration, in the 44th year of her age, Miss Jane Williams, eldest daughter of the late William Williams, of Walkerville, brewer, and Jane Catchlove his wife now also deceased.²²

William Williams, you would have to agree, made every effort to establish himself and his family in good stead with the early colonists and in his own way gave back to the community through his vocabulary book of Aboriginal language, the donation of land for establishing a church in Walkerville village, and hosting the magnificent celebratory dinner behind his hotel.

¹ *Adelaide Times* 23 August 1853 p2 INSOLVENCY

² William's detailed report of the capture is in *SA Gazette and Colonial Register* 11 May 1839 p2

³ *South Australian* 2 May 1843 p2

⁴ *South Australian* 10 April 1839 p2

⁵ *South Australian* 10 April 1839 p2

⁶ *Government Gazette* 23 Mar 1844 p2

⁷ In February 1843, William Williams of Walkerville was victim of the theft of over £12.

⁸ *South Australian Register* 22 February 1841 p3

⁹ *John Walker's Village* by Marjorie Scales – chapter 3 page 30

¹⁰ *Adelaide Observer* 15 March 1850 p2

¹¹ The image of the dinner was from the website -

<http://antiquarianprintgallery.mybigcommerce.com/products/Old-Colonist-Festival-Dinner.html>

¹² *Adelaide Times* 28 March 1851 p3

¹³ *South Australian Register* 27 December 1851 p3

¹⁴ *South Australian Register* 14 August 1852 p2

¹⁵ *South Australian Register* 18 October 1854

¹⁶ *Register* 25 May 1858

¹⁷ [https://bound-for-south-](https://bound-for-south-australia.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/ShipLists%20Alpha%20by%20Year/1836.htm)

[australia.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/ShipLists%20Alpha%20by%20Year/1836.htm](https://bound-for-south-australia.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/ShipLists%20Alpha%20by%20Year/1836.htm)

¹⁸ *South Australian Gazette & Colonial Register* 12 August 1837 p4

¹⁹ *South Australian Register* 18 November 1859 p2

²⁰ *South Australian Register* 30 October 1877 p4

²¹ *South Australian Register* 21 April 1885

²² *South Australian Register* 28 January 1893

Hotel Richmond, 128 Rundle Street, Adelaide

by Patricia Sumerling



Known as the Plough and Harrow in 1882 SLSA B4179

The Hotel Richmond, Adelaide's premier boutique hotel in the heart of the city, considered to be one of Australia's top 15 small hotels, began as a humble single-storey pub. With it now trading as the sixth-oldest hotel in the city, William Williams [*Editor*: Not the same man as in Lyn O'Grady's article in this Newsletter!] opened the pub on New Year's Eve 1838 as the Cornwall Inn. Between 1844 and 1927 it was known as the Plough and Harrow Hotel, and it was rebuilt in 1872 for £750 to a design by English and Rees when owned by the Glover family. Built in front of the earlier pub, it was described as having an elegant facade, with counter and bar fittings of a very superior character and design.

In the building boom years of the 1920s, the *Advertiser* in May 1926, announced 'another old city landmark, known as the Plough and Harrow Hotel, in Rundle-street, is shortly to be demolished, to make way for the erection of a six-storey hotel, with very modern conveniences. An arcade on the ground floor is to be a feature'. When completed, it was recognised as 'one of the finest residential hotels in the Commonwealth'.

The architects were Bruce & Harral. As John Quinton Bruce and William Haigh Harral, they were in partnership between 1920-30 and also designed the Freemasons Grand Lodge on North Terrace. Harral also designed major renovations at this time to the Renmark Hotel.

The modern interwar style of the reinforced concrete block form of the hotel is still recognizable today. During its construction the name was to have been changed to the Hotel Arcadia but instead it became the Hotel Richmond in March 1927. It was so named after the English birthplace of former owners, the Glover family. Several facelifts followed over the decades. The 1989 makeover which cost \$750,000, included the establishment of the Wintergarden Café, the Metro and Grill, and the new Tavern Carvery and Alehouse which was opened by the popular Lord Mayor of the day, Steve Condous, in July of that



Hotel Richmond in 1929 SLSA B5149

year. Tavern manager Peggy Rutherford said ‘we have geared ourselves towards the Rundle Mall customer, from the weary shopper and tourist to business people, with luncheons and dinners available six days a week’.

In 2005 the hotel underwent a glittering makeover, described as spectacular by restaurant critic John McGrath, who also wrote of the distinctive lights which are the Richmond’s signature: ‘If I attempted anything like this at home it would be Lobethal at Christmas all over again.’ He added that ‘the food was great and the service smooth and friendly’.

When the hotel came up for sale in 2019 the hotel agent handling it described the Hotel Richmond as ‘a rare combination of classic colonial charm in a great location with the benefit of multiple income streams’.

[This article is a foretaste of my next publication *Adelaide’s Hotels: A Social History*, which is taken from a larger project, *The History of South Australia’s Hotels*.]

References - *SA Register*, 8 January 1873, p.6, A new substantial building; *Advertiser*, 26 May 1926, p.10, A new hotel for Adelaide; *Sport*, 2 December 1927 p16, Mr Watty Piper’s Hotel Richmond; *LVG*, April 1939, p29-38, Birth and growth of a modern hotel with 7 images; *Advertiser*, 8 July 1989, p. 20, Richmond Hotel; *The Adelaide Review*, March 2005, First makes for a glittering feast- hotel review; J. McLellan, *Adelaide’s Early Inns and Taverns*, p. 9, 1941.

THE HISTORY TRUST OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA: AN IDEA BEFORE ITS TIME?

A talk by Brian Samuels at the 15th State History Conference on 28 May 2006

[*Note: When he gave this talk Brian was Principal Heritage Officer with the Heritage Branch of the Department for Environment and Heritage, from which he retired in 2011. He believes the issues raised here are as relevant today as when he delivered the address 14 years ago.*]

My career in South Australian history has extended over 35 years in both paid and voluntary capacities. I was involved in founding the Historical Society of South Australia in 1974, was Honorary Historian to the Port Adelaide Historical Society for 20 years, spent 14 years with the History Trust and have been in my present position with the Heritage Branch of the Department for Environment and Heritage for almost 11 years. Given the nature of my topic, I must stress that my talk today expresses my own opinions and should not be taken to represent the views of my current employer, the South Australian government.

The study of the past has many functions. One is to help us to understand how the present came to be and gain insights into how best to move into the future, and that is the focus of my talk today. I want to reflect on our community's engagement with its history by exploring two propositions: that the History Trust was formed too late; and that it was, and may still be, an idea before its time.

The History Trust of South Australia Act gave the Trust a very broad brief to research, display, collect and promote in the field of South Australian history. By any measure, much had happened before the Trust was established in 1981, five years short of the State's sesquicentenary. At a government level, the South Australian Institute had been created in 1856, establishing a government-funded library and museum that have evolved into today's State Library and SA Museum. The Copyright Act of 1878 subsequently required a copy of all books first published in the colony to be lodged with the Institute. The National Gallery (now Art Gallery) of SA had followed in 1881 and a Technological Museum was established 8 years later by the SA School of Mines and Industries in the eastern annexe of the Jubilee Exhibition Building, the site of the University of Adelaide's underground car park.

Moving into the 20th century, the Library had been supplemented in 1919 by the Archives Department of the Public Library, Museum and Art Gallery, the successor to the SA Institute. The Archives opened to the public in 1920 in what is now the Radford Auditorium of the Art Gallery and was the first public archives in Australia. Then around 1951 the Library created a 'Z' Collection, later renamed the South Australian Collection and more recently known as the Mortlock Library of South Australiana after it absorbed the non-government records of the Public Record Office of SA (known as State Records since 1990) in 1985. Finally, the Libraries Board of SA took two notable initiatives in 1962, commencing the journal *South Australiana* and establishing a program of publishing facsimiles of rare Australian and South Australian books of historical interest.

Voluntary organisations had been equally busy. The Gawler Institute had opened the Colony's first local museum around 1859 and the Mt Gambier and Port Adelaide Institutes had opened theirs in the 1860s and 1872 respectively. A SA Branch of the Geographical Society of Australasia had been formed in 1885 and taken a significant interest in the Colony's history. In 1927 it had formed an Historical Memorials Committee and twenty years later an Historical Division. Meanwhile the Pioneers Association of SA had been founded in 1935, the SA Methodist (now Uniting Church) Historical Society in 1950, a SA Division of the

Australian Railway Historical Society in 1952 and the National Trust of SA in 1955. The Trust's first Branch was formed at Renmark the following year and opened a museum - the first of many to be established by Trust Branches - in 1959. An Australian Electric Transport Museum had been founded two years earlier and the first trams were shifted to St Kilda in 1958, but the museum did not open to the public until many years later (1973). By 1960 there were about 20 museums and historical societies in the State.

Now many, perhaps most of us here, know what happened next. The 1960s saw the beginning of an explosion of interest in SA history such that by 1980, the year before the History Trust was created, there were about 150 museums and historical organisations in the State. These included major museums begun by voluntary organisations or private individuals, such as the Mile End Railway Museum (1963), the Birdwood Mill Museum (1965) and Pioneer Village (1972); State-level societies like the SA Genealogy & Heraldry Society (1973), the Historical Society of SA (1974) and the SA Branch of the Oral History Association of Australia (1979); and ambitious undertakings like the Pichi Richi Railway Preservation Society (1973).

The 1970s had also seen some acquisitions of notable buildings by the State Government: the ANZ Bank (originally the Bank of SA) in King William Street, Adelaide in 1971 (soon renamed Edmund Wright House) when it was under threat of demolition and in 1976 Cummins, the Morphett family home at Novar Gardens, built in the 1840s.

However, when one looks more closely at this crowded scene there are some sobering aspects. For a long period of its history the SA Archives was very thinly staffed. The South Australian Historical Society formed in 1926 had petered out in 1931. An Agricultural Museum at the Wayville Showgrounds, which evolved from a display organised for the 1936 Royal Show by the Early Agricultural Implements Committee of the Department of Agriculture, had been dispersed, as was the case with the Technology Museum of the SA Institute of Technology (now part of the University of South Australia) in 1963. The SA Museum was very much focussed on natural and indigenous history and the Art Gallery's 'Historical Collections' were always a small part of its responsibilities, although both organisations had given some overdue attention to the State's European history with the opening of an Historical Museum by the Art Gallery in 1972 and the appointment of a Museums Extension Officer at the SA Museum in 1976 and a Curator of Historical Collections at the Art Gallery in the same year.

While collecting the paper-based records of the State's history was receiving a reasonable level of attention by Government institutions, the collecting of artefacts and mounting of museum displays clearly was not.

In the 1970s two of the major private museums mentioned earlier – the Birdwood Mill Museum and Pioneer Village at Hackham – had run into difficulties and were purchased by the State Government in 1976 and 1978 respectively. As well as acquiring those museums to prevent their collections being dispersed and purchasing two notable buildings, the Dunstan Labor Government also took two significant museum-related initiatives with long-term consequences. In 1978 it established a Constitutional Museum Trust to develop a museum of political history in the Old Legislative Council Building and on 27 February 1979 announced an inquiry by Dr Robert Edwards to address long-standing problems with the SA Museum's accommodation and resourcing. In March 1980 the terms of reference for the inquiry were expanded to include the needs of the State Library and the Art Gallery to the year 2000.

The Labor Government was defeated at the 1979 election and it was the Tonkin Liberal Government which received the final report. The Edwards Report *Museum Policy and*

Development in South Australia Final Report was not released until August 1981, but the recommendations were known to Government and Minister of Arts Murray Hill's concerns about the management of the Birdwood Mill led to some recommendations being acted upon before the Report was released.

Edwards had judged that the SA Museum could not take on new responsibilities for the State's post-settlement history while undergoing redevelopment and had recommended that a separate body be created to do so. The History Trust's first annual report records that in December 1980 the Minister informed the Constitutional Museum Trust that it would be expanded and take on a broader role, becoming the History Trust of SA. That occurred with the proclamation of the History Trust of South Australia Act on 26 March 1981. On 1 July 1981 the Trust also gained responsibility for managing the Birdwood Mill Museum and in December the Museums Extension Officer and Curator of Historical Collections positions were transferred to the Trust from their respective institutions.

I hope that I have shown that the Trust was entering an already crowded field, even though there was still much to do. It is interesting to consider what it might have achieved if formed 20 years earlier. Could the Technology and Agricultural Museums have been saved? Could the railway and tramway collections have been co-located? Could a large shared storage facility have been provided for local museums? Asking 'what if' questions is a useful exercise. What if Baudin had got here first? Would we now be more confident about our own culture?

Now, returning to what did happen rather than what might have, instead of attempting to chronicle the History Trust's achievements in detail, I want to discuss just some of them – along with some other history-related initiatives – in the context of explaining how they happened, which will serve to offer us some lessons for the future.

Some lessons from this review

- Without the threat of demolition Edmund Wright House would not have been purchased by the State Government.
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- Without the threat of closure or sale the State Government is unlikely to have purchased the Birdwood Mill and Pioneer Village museums or Cummins.
- If there hadn't been decades of neglect of the SA Museum's buildings and collections there would have been no Edwards Report and hence no recommendation to establish a History Trust of SA and an 'Ethnic Museum', which opened in 1986 as the Migration and Settlement Museum – a title shortened in 1988 to Migration Museum.
- If there had been no History Trust there is unlikely to have been a SA Maritime Museum, a Museums Accreditation and Grants Program, a South Australian (originally Community) History Fund, a relocated Mile End Railway Museum at Port Adelaide (now trading as the National Railway Museum) or regular State History Conferences.
- To be more specific about some of these initiatives, without the Commonwealth's contribution to the Jubilee 150 funding the SA Maritime Museum is highly unlikely to have proceeded and without Australian Bicentennial Authority funding it is equally

unlikely that the Mile End Railway Museum would have been relocated and provided with significantly better accommodation at Port Adelaide.

- Without an astute reallocation of funds by Minister of Arts Murray Hill from elsewhere in his portfolio – he was also Minister for Local Government – the Museums Accreditation and Grants Program wouldn't have begun in 1982.
- And to leap ahead to the recent past, without Minister Assisting the Premier in the Arts John Hill's promotion of the concepts, SA History Week would not have commenced in 2004 and nor would have SA Open Heritage in 2006.

So what does this review suggest about the formulation of history policy in SA?

- crises are an important means of gaining attention
- reading the political wind – for example, advocating an 'ethnic museum' at a time when multiculturalism was in favour – can be helpful in gaining support
- significant anniversaries provide funding opportunities that in 'normal' times rarely seem to exist
- the right person in the right place can initiate important new programs
- it is difficult to maintain a planning strategy with impacts across several agencies. The vision of the Edwards Report, which I have not discussed today but is well worth revisiting, was progressively diluted for a whole variety of practical and political reasons.

Where to now?

I'll discuss this question under two headings: 'some opportunities' and 'some issues to ponder'.

Some opportunities

Anniversaries - We're already seeing significant sesquicentenaries being celebrated with style, including the Goolwa – Port Elliot railway in 2004 and the Port Adelaide – Adelaide line a few weeks ago. Coming soon are the Gawler Line (2007) and its extension to Kapunda (2010). Sadly the sesquicentenary of the opening of the first government telegraph line in the Colony from Adelaide to the Port (1856), intimately associated with the Port Railway, appears to have passed without notice.

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- The SA Museum is this year celebrating the foundation of its collections under the auspices of the SA Institute in 1856 and the Botanic Garden has started celebrating in the context of its establishment in 1855 and the 150th anniversary of its opening to the public in 1857.
 - The sesquicentenary of responsible government will occur in 2006-2007 and of the *Advertiser* newspaper in 2008, although I believe that planning for the former began rather late and for the latter has yet to begin. Given that a comprehensive history of the State's newspapers has yet to be written, is it too much to hope that Advertiser Newspapers Pty Ltd could at least partially address that gap?
 - In that context planning for the 175th anniversary of formal European settlement in 2011 needs to begin soon. (The Jubilee 150 Board was established 6 years prior to the event.)

Volunteers

- Volunteers contribute an enormous amount to the recording and preservation of the State's history and heritage. Is there a case for 'rewarding' them with more government support? To take just one example, should the National Railway Museum at Port Adelaide have more than two paid staff, which is all it can fund from the commercial operations of the Museum. Its 65 volunteers currently contribute 40 000 hours per annum.

Collaboration

- Collaboration and partnership have been buzz words in recent years, and much can be gained from local museums and historical societies developing close ties with their local councils, the local history collections in public libraries and where possible local schools, as some already have. However, we need to reach out beyond the obvious. Holding joint meetings with other groups is one simple way of building bridges and dispelling misconceptions.

A History Plan

- Despite the fate of the Edwards Report, which as I have said makes very interesting reading 25 years on, would it be desirable for the history community, perhaps through the History Council of SA, to draft a five year plan to lead into the 175th celebrations?

Recording our own histories - It's common for historical groups to be so busy recording the history of others that they neglect their own. Who knows the stories that bring your museum's objects to life? What have been the major achievements of your society?

Some issues to ponder

- Since its relocation from Wayville the Investigator Science & Technology Centre appears to be languishing at Regency Park. Given the current focus on defence and 'high tech' industries, why is this so?
- Neither history nor heritage currently have a place in the SA Strategic Plan. What does this indicate about the mind-set of some of the decision-makers in this State and can it be remedied?
- Managing intellectual property is often said to be an important consideration for modern management. If that is true, what has been the impact of disbanding government department libraries and encouraging many long-serving public servants to take early retirement through voluntary separation packages?
- There was a Sydney History Group and there are a Brisbane History Group (founded 1981), a Centre for Western Australian History (founded 1985) and a Centre for Tasmanian Historical Studies. Are any South Australian tertiary institutions able to fill the gap here?
- Given the economic importance of tourism and the environmental challenges facing the State, why haven't a general history of European impact on the environment and a history of tourism been commissioned to inform current policy making? Indeed, given the economic challenges facing the State, wouldn't an economic history be an equally wise investment?

If the past is any guide, there is a fair chance that the history/heritage movement will continue to rely enormously on volunteers, be clever about securing grants and exploit significant anniversaries as they arise. The challenges lie in getting action on some of the bigger issues that require some longer-term thinking and strategies. Issues such as the following:

- Does the State need a well-located museum / interpretive centre / restaurant at the end of the universe – call it what you will – that provides an overview of and introduction to the State's history for both visitors and locals alike.
- Is there a need for a large Government-owned storage facility to avoid significant items leaving the State or being destroyed and to provide for the possibility of future museum displays that are currently beyond the capacity of the State to mount?

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- Is there a way of taking funding levels up a notch, for example, by emulating the NSW Government's initiative of using the proceeds of the sale of airspace on a CBD site to establish a Heritage Fund of which only the interest was used for grants.

It is in this context that the History Trust can be seen as an idea before its time. Having created it, and having commissioned the Edwards Report which laid out a broad sweep of roles for it, it is as if Governments of both political persuasions haven't quite known what to do with it.

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WOMEN OF WALKERVILLE FOUNDATION – OCTOBER TALKS

Historian Lyn O'Grady on 'Willyama', The Silver King and Countess

Wednesday 28 October 6 pm Walkerville Town Hall

Lyn O'Grady discusses 'Willyama', the Medindie home of Charles Rasp and his wife Agnes, and some of the mysteries about their lives, with an illustrated presentation. If walls could talk!

\$5 per person in support of Catherine House.

Bookings: www.trybooking.com/BKPOW or 8342 7100 during business hours.

ADELAIDE'S FIRST BRIDGE CLUB

by Lyn O'Grady



Found in the newspapers of 1932 was a mention that a **Miss Kitty Longbottom** was to establish a Contract Bridge Club in her home at **2 Herbert Street, Medindie** (pictured above – Googlemaps).

Kitty placed several 'artistically furnished rooms at the disposal of members and made them available three days a week, afternoon and evening. Who would have thought that anyone would have a problem with that!

At last - Adelaide to Have One at Medindie!

Medindie Bridge Club will shortly be opened by Miss Kitty Longbottom. Adelaide will thus lose the unenviable distinction of being the only Australian capital city without a bridge club.

Miss Longbottom said today that the demand to learn Contract Bridge had become so great that she felt it could be adequately catered for only by the opening of a club, where beginners could learn the rudiments of the new game, and where those having more than an elementary knowledge could meet others in the same stage and learn the finer and more complex points connected with the game. (The News 11 February 1932)

Kitty based her idea of a bridge club on those she had seen in London or Europe; 'it was not to be a centre where the game was taught but a place where members can entertain their friends and book private rooms for four or eight players. There was to be 'play on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday of each week, where cards, scorers, tables, and tea or supper will be provided'.

However, not everyone approved the idea and you can imagine all the 'tut-tutting' going on at certain afternoon teas around Adelaide, and in Medindie.

Bridge Players Declare Game Wrecks No Homes



Miss Longbottom

Bridge parties do far more good than harm. In a newspaper letter, a correspondent signing herself "mother" said that many of our women were going bridge mad. The game was ruining home life and creating an army of social climbers, she said. Families of bridge players were not properly fed, and bridge parties involved expenditure that most of the women could ill afford. Prominent Adelaide bridge players were both annoyed and amused when consulted. Miss K Longbottom is a well-known Adelaide player who laughed the statement to scorn.

"Bridge is a pleasant mental relaxation for women," she said. "To say that it is anything but a game is a gross over-statement."

Miss Longbottom pointed out that a bridge party, played calmly and orderly, was a help rather than a harm, since it helped so many women to forget the strain of the day's worries. As for the game encouraging social climbing —

"Utter rot!" said Miss Longbottom firmly. 'It has just the opposite effect. Personally I would not care if I played the game with Mrs Jones, the washwoman, or Lady Vere de Vere— in fact, I would prefer Mrs Jones if she were the better player. Bridge, rather than being an inducement for social climbing, tends more to sweep away the barriers of class. That is what my club is aiming for this year— to mix the players so that all classes and creeds meet.' (The Mail 20 February 1932)

[Editor's Note: My bridge playing friend Emeritus Professor Robert Bignall adds that:

'Contract bridge was invented in 1925 when Harold Vanderbilt modified the scoring and rules of the older game of auction bridge, which in turn derives from the trick-taking card game of whist. It developed into something of a craze, first in the US, and then in much of the rest of the world in the 1930s.

*'The Advertiser in May 1932 sponsored what may have been the first Contract Bridge "championship" held in Australia. The venue was the Masonic Hall on North Terrace. The winners received a prize of ten pounds. Some commentary on the event was even broadcast on the radio, which may have been a world first for such a tournament. Of the 320 contestants, just 62 were women. An account appears in a book called *The History of Australian Bridge 1930-1990*, published in 1993 by Cathy Chua, who is an Adelaide University honours graduate in History and Politics.']*

See the Society's website for back issues of the Society's annual Journal.

Contributions to this Newsletter are always welcome. The deadline for articles for the next edition is Sunday 8 November.

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