

HISTORY SA

Newsletter of The Historical Society of South Australia Incorporated

No. 262 March 2021

From the President

Since 1974, for about 47 years, the Historical Society of South Australia has maintained a continuous and committed service to South Australia's history, and keeps a vital membership. Some things don't change but over decades and centuries the movement of humans brings change. 'Change' is the theme of South Australia's History Festival in 2021.

The 2021 HSSA speakers program reflects changes over place and time on the South Australian landscape. It acknowledges the presence and occupation over many thousands of years by Indigenous people. Colonists integrated Aboriginal words to be used as place names. Political change now advises a change in terminology and addressing these people as the 'First Nations'.

Imperialism spread colonialization which brought changes. In South Australia from 1836 colonists came with diverse skills, careers and experiences and made an imprint on South Australia's landscape. Farmers, teamsters, shepherds, vegetable growers, vigneron, builders, landowners, religious leaders and preachers, political leaders and lawmakers created communities around worship, education, food production, mining, labour, business and industry.

From these evolving communities emerged great personalities who showed leadership in how to overcome challenges emerging from change. Some promoted broad philosophies, believing these would make lives better for those living through change. Some advocated educational reform, equal rights for women, and better relationships between workers and the corporate class. Settlers developed architectural diversity in mansions and churches which still stand today as our legacy and heritage. These philosophies and outstanding leaders are addressed in the HSSA 2021 program. Members can see the beauty of their changes in South Australia by visiting Carrick Hill at Springfield and All Souls Anglican Church in St Peters.

While the international Covid-19 pandemic is a challenging new historical era that you are part of, our history is still preserved, documented and celebrated. The South Australian History Festival of May returns in 2021, and has dealt with the challenge of infection transmitted by high population densities, by making events in the program available both online as well as face-to-face. Many events throughout South Australia can be enjoyed, local histories experienced and celebrated by accessing

them online when attending the event is not possible.

Change can also threaten valued South Australian heritage sites. Due to transport route restructuring at Fullarton, the state heritage listed lodge or gatehouse in the Peter Waite precinct, built in 1890 (and 20 trees over 100 years old) is threatened with demolition in 2021. Petitions to halt its demolition can be signed online. Formal registrations of concern are coordinated by the National Trust of SA and the University of Adelaide, with the SA Heritage Council voicing concern.

Keain Medal nominations

Members who roam bookshops or The Wakefield Press catalogue will discover non-fiction books with a South Australian historical content. Ordering online and home deliveries minimise social contact and leaving home. Nomination forms for your chosen book for a Keain Medal award in 2021 are available in the January Newsletter or from our Secretary Bridget Jolly. Postal and email contact details are on the back page of the Newsletter and 2021 Program brochure.

THE HSSA Council very much looks forward to meeting members and visitors during the year.

***Pamela Rajkowski OAM
President,
Historical Society of South
Australia.***

A gentle reminder that **annual subscriptions were due in January**. If you have not paid, please do so with the form included with the January mailing.

The Historical Society of South Australia is saddened to learn of the death on 5 March of **Associate Professor Peter Howell**. A distinguished academic historian, with a long career at Flinders University, Peter was a founding member of the Historical Society, and a member of the Society's Council during a number of years, including a term as President. The May edition of this newsletter will carry an obituary and tributes.

What are you reading?

Richard Davis, *A Star On Her Door, The life and career of June Bronhill*, Wakefield Press, 2021

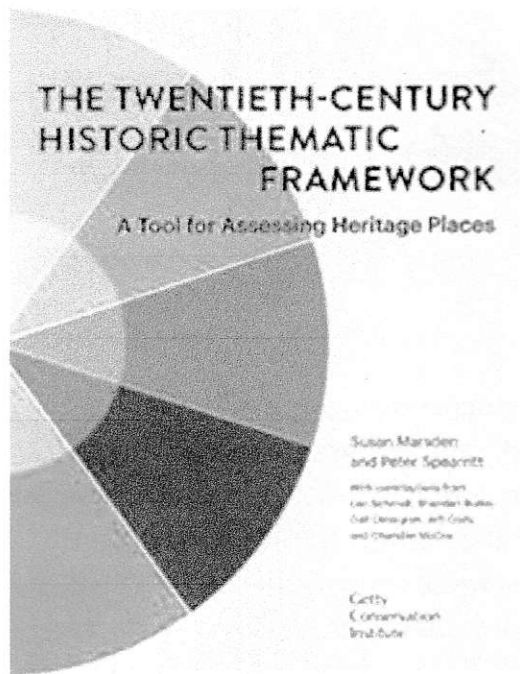
June Bronhill - the former June Gough of Broken Hill - had a personality as attractive as her singing voice, and this is an attractive and very readable short biography. June was as down-to-earth as she was professional, and the story is enlivened by humorous anecdotes. In the last pages, poignancy arrives as June's life slips into sufferings that she did not deserve.

Robert Martin

Wakefield Press, our generous sponsors, have their premises at 16 Rose Street, Mile End. Their telephone number is 8352 4455.

Contributing to South Australia's History

DR SUSAN MARSDEN, a member of the Historical Society of South Australia, has co-authored with Peter Spearritt a book of international significance:



'The Twentieth-Century Historic Thematic Framework: A Tool for Assessing Heritage Places promotes broad thinking about the historical processes that have contributed to the twentieth-century built environment worldwide. It identifies and analyzes the principal social, technological, political, and economic drivers that have shaped the buildings, cities, industries, and landscapes of the twentieth century, emphasizing global forces, trends, and phenomena that have shaped the built environment.

Themes

The Framework uses ten succinct themes to organize and define history, helping to identify heritage sites and place them in context:

1. Rapid Urbanization and the Growth of Large Cities
2. Accelerated Scientific and Technological Development
3. Mechanized and Industrialized Agriculture
4. World Trade and Global Corporations
5. Transportation Systems and Mass Communication
6. Internationalization, New Nation-States, and Human Rights
7. Conserving the Natural Environment, Buildings, and Landscapes
8. Popular Culture and Tourism
9. Religious, Educational, and Cultural Institutions
10. War and its Aftermath

Beginning with an overview of the themes, subthemes, and places that exemplify them, readers can quickly navigate to any one theme that is of particular importance to their area of research. Each section concludes with a photo gallery showing a diverse range of buildings, sites, structures, and landscapes that illustrate the issues discussed.

Although globally structured, this framework can be used locally to survey and assess places within the context of the twentieth century and to conduct comparative analyses of places. It can be utilized and adapted by anyone involved in heritage conservation around the world ...

Commissioned by the Getty Conservation Institute working in collaboration with the ICOMOS Twentieth-Century Heritage International Scientific Committee, this publication is an outcome of the Conservation Institute's Conserving Modern Architecture Initiative.'

Friday 9 April 7.30 pm

Roger Irvine

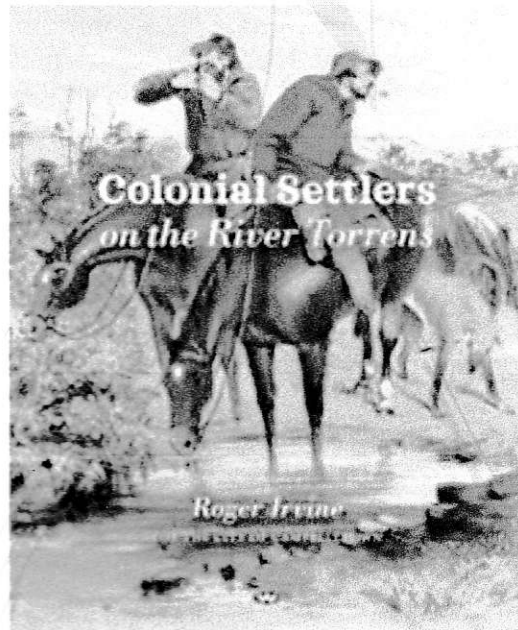
**Colonial Settlers of the River
Torrens: a different approach to
local history**

NOTE THIS IS THE SECOND FRIDAY IN
APRIL

Roger will explain the origins, content and structure of his book *Colonial Settlers on the River Torrens*, published by Wakefield Press. He will discuss the displacement of the Kurna people by the colonists, and the pattern of European settlement on the upper reaches of the Torrens. He will outline the lives and achievements of some of the most prominent early settlers. These included Charles Campbell and Jonah Hobbs in the modern suburb of Campbelltown, Arthur Hardy and Joseph Ind in Paradise, and William Pinkerton in Athelstone.

Roger will also discuss the horticultural heritage of this district and its contribution to the economic development of the new colony. In addition, he will talk about the approach he adopted to this local history project and its possible wider relevance.

Roger has had a lengthy career in Asian Studies, receiving bachelor's and master's degrees from the Australian National University, and



a doctorate from the University of Adelaide where he is a Visiting Research Fellow specialising in China's international relations. His research interest in South Australian history is more recent, developing from his involvement in a bid for State Heritage listing for an imposing historic mansion within his neighbourhood in Campbelltown.

This address will be preceded by a brief Annual General Meeting.

Contributing to South Australia's History

Friday 7 May 7.30 pm

Rob George

A letter from The Alice: the passing of Frank Rees George

Frank Rees George was a government geologist who took part in a number of explorations in the west and north of the state. In the summer of 1905 Frank was in an exploring party in the Petermann Ranges when they were attacked by Aborigines and the leader of the group was speared through the eye. Frank took over leadership and managed to get them all back to Alice Springs, but after a day or so collapsed and died. The team's camel driver, George Edginton, wrote a letter to Frank's mother describing the events leading up to Frank's illness and his final hours.

Rob George, a great-nephew of Frank Rees George, is a screenwriter and playwright whose works often have historical themes: 'Wire Through The Heart' was an ABC documentary about the building of the Overland Telegraph, 'Lovers and Haters - The Turbulent Times Of Don Dunstan' was produced for the 2008 Adelaide Festival and he has written plays about Percy Grainger, the Nazi Party in the Barossa Valley



Frank Rees George

and Errol Flynn. A musical about the Australian actor/manager Oscar Asche, 'In The Dome Room (at 2 o'clock)', was staged by State Opera SA in 2017. Rob wrote the telemovie, 'Captain Johnno', which won an International Emmy Award and he wrote and produced the TV mini-series 'The River Kings' and the feature film 'Selkie'.

This meeting is a contribution to the History Trust of South Australia's History Month.

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

Contributing to South Australia's History

Hotel Franklin, 92 Franklin Street, Adelaide

by Patricia Sumerling



The hotel was formerly known as the Bristol Tavern. Alongside is the city's first trade union hall managed by the United Trades and Labor Council. SLSA 1894 B30207.

As far as city hotels go, this is not one of the oldest hotels in the city, it being the 161st licence to be granted out of 211. However, with only 47 hotels left trading, the Hotel Franklin is now the 38th oldest.

This hotel was first known as the Bristol Tavern when it was first licensed in 1855 by George Hulbert. Coming from Somerset where Bristol is located, it was most likely named for this reason. He and his family were associated with this hotel until 1877 and then again between 1903 and 1908. For two years before he established the Bristol Tavern, he managed the Devon Arms (Earl of Aberdeen) in Pulteney Street. When Hulbert applied for a licence to open a new hotel, it was recorded at the Annual Licensing Bench of Magistrates hearing for 11 March, 1855, that a numerously signed memorial supported the application and it was stated that 'the population of the neighbourhood was fast increasing, and that a licensed house was much required.'

The hotel, which was much extended in 1883, was demolished and rebuilt in 1911. Prior to its rebuilding the hotel had a very important historical connection with the hall alongside, for when the hotel was extended in 1883, the hall was built for the United Trades and Labor Council (UTLC), holding its inaugural meeting on the premises on 31 January 1884, where fortnightly meetings were held until a Trades Hall was built in Grote Street in 1896. By 1890 the UTLC was affiliated to 22 unions.



Contributing to South Australia's History

When the UTLC moved on to its own hall, the vacant building became part of the hotel and was known as the Bristol Music Hall. A very popular type of musical entertainment, which began in pubs in England, after one concert in May 1909, *Quiz* reported that 'never in the annals of music hall history has such a program been presented ... New artists made their appearance, and scored signal successes. The large attendance proved conclusively that other theatres have had no effect in diminishing the attendance at this popular resort'.

Plans for rebuilding the hotel were passed by council in 1909. Designed by Garlick, Siple & Wooldridge Architects, the hotel now to be called the Bristol Hotel, that was completed in 1911, also included a billiard hall. The verandah/balcony was added in 1912. During the Second World War, in 1940, the hotel was renamed the Hotel Franklin.

[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 – J Moss, *Sound of Trumpets*, 1985; Marsden, Stark & Sumerling, *Heritage of the City: An Illustrated Guide*, p. 58; *SA Register*, 24 April 1909, p. 2, Tender notice for rebuilding hotel, 8 February 1912, Balcony added; *Observer*, 17 March 1855, p.7, Licensing Bench of Magistrates hearing for G Hulbert.

Book Launch, Thursday 22 April, 2021,
Mortlock Gallery, State Library of
South Australia, 4:30 pm.

***On Hermit Hill: Benjamin Herschel
Babbage and the Lake Torrens Myth*, by
Rod Tucker, Australian Scholarly
Publishing**

Speakers will include Colin Harris of the
Royal Geographical Society of
South Australia and the author, Rod
Tucker. Refreshments provided.

Advance registration will be required for
attendance. Watch the Historical Society
of South Australia website for details.

'Benjamin Herschel Babbage's
contribution to European settlers'
understanding of northern South Australia
was considerable. His reputation as an
explorer was marred by controversy, but
his observation in 1858 that there was a
gap in Edward John Eyre's mythical
horseshoe-shaped Lake Torrens was a
crucial step in the opening of northern
South Australia to European settlement.
And it paved the way for John McDouall
Stuart's crossing of the continent. Rod
Tucker describes in detail Babbage's
expedition and his dismissal as expedition
leader. He provides a new perspective on
Babbage's achievements and includes
original maps, modern charts, sketches by
Herschel Babbage, his son, Charley, and
his expedition botanist, David Herrgott,
and two unpublished watercolour
landscapes by George Nason.'

Contributing to South Australia's History

BOOK REVIEW



Janet Whitham, *Margaret Davey: An Amazing Woman*, Wakefield Press, 2020

This is the story of an inspiring South Australian, described by the author as 'creative, independent and community minded.' Her life story bears this out.

Margaret was the daughter of Dr L.L. Davey and Doris nee Peacock. Educated in Adelaide, she started a science degree at the University of Adelaide but ill-health caused her to relinquish her studies. Nevertheless, she went on to become a demonstrator in botany at the University. She became associated with the National Council of Women and the Young Women's Christian Association and retained involvement for the rest of her life. Margaret Davey CBE died in 2010 aged 95.

The book tells Margaret's story through the author's interviews with Margaret, her own written reminiscences and the recollections of people who knew and/or worked with her. It is a fascinating story of a person who gave much to our community.

Availability: Erindale Paper Shop, Erindale Shopping Centre, Kensington Road, Erindale. \$20 (\$10 per book is donated to support the work of Heartkids).

Geoffrey Bishop

Contributions to this Newsletter are always welcome. The deadline for articles for the next edition is Sunday 2 May.

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Patron: His Excellency Hieu Van Le, Governor of South Australia

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