



No. 273

January 2023



One of the heritage-listed buildings at the Thebarton Police Barracks

FROM THE EDITOR:

Changes to HSSA Journal

The Society's Journal has been published annually since 1975 and the 50th edition in 2022 was the last in its current form. In 2023 a special 'best of' edition will be produced and a new format is planned for 2024 (which is the Society's 50th year).

The appeal for a new editor has not been successful. With a diminished pool of academics with the necessary skills to successfully edit an academic journal and the lack of career incentive to take on such a task, one is unlikely to materialize in the timeframe.

In the interests of finding a way to continue to have a publication that records South Australian history, many options are under consideration. The journal has had different forms over the years and it is time to reinvent it from an academic, largely-peer-reviewed journal to one of broader appeal. This would allow an editor a wider pool of possibilities and not just from an academic background.

HSSA Subscriptions fell due 1 January 2023.

We need your continuing support to help us to bring to you the latest research on SA's history and keep you in touch with the community of historians and interested individuals. Check the enclosed programme for fees and the 2023 programme.

March 31 is the DEADLINE for

HSSA Grant Scheme applications, and

HSSA Keain Medal for best history book nominations.

(visit HSSA website for forms and information)

FEBRUARY MEETING: 3 February at 7.30pm
Burnside City Uniting Church, 384 Portrush Rd Tasmore

**THE WOMEN WHO CHANGED COUNTRY AUSTRALIA
(the CWA)
LIZ HARFULL**

In 1922 a group of determined women from both the city and the country joined forces to change the lives of families living in the bush. One hundred years on, the iconic Country Women's Association is famous for making scones, stitching handicrafts and raising money for worthy causes, but there is so much more to this national treasure.

In this presentation, Liz Harfull introduces the surprisingly radical women from diverse backgrounds who came together in this important moment in Australia's social history; and the appalling circumstances that motivated them.

About the speaker: Award-winning Adelaide Hills author Liz Harfull is passionate about telling the stories and unearthing the histories of the extraordinary everyday people who make up our communities, especially in rural and regional Australia.

Liz grew up on a farm near Mount Gambier where she began her professional life as a journalist at the local newspaper. Her debut book about South Australian country shows and show cooking (*The Blue Ribbon Cookbook*) became a surprise hit when it was released fifteen years ago, even taking her to Paris after winning a prize in the World Gourmand Cookbook Awards. Since then, Liz has written ten books, including two national bestsellers and three about Robe, where she volunteers as a community historian. Her most recent release (*The Women Who Changed Country Australia*) celebrates the centenary history of the CWA in NSW, where the movement was founded.

MARCH MEETING: 3 March at 7.30pm
Burnside City Uniting Church, 384 Portrush Rd Tasmore

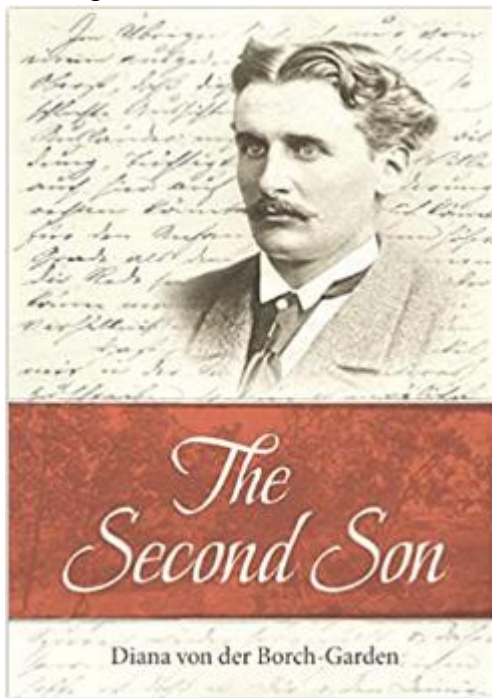
THE SECOND SON: Leopold von der Borch DIANA VON DER BORCH-GARDEN

Our mother shared her knowledge of our family history with us. When she was in hospital, quite unwell, she asked us to see if my sister and I could find a photo of Leopold's grandmother, Princess Therese Bentheim-Tecklenburg-Rheda (BTR). The photo, which had been in the family album, was lost.

So, my sister and I went in search of Therese. We contacted family, here and overseas, and archives in Germany. Finally, we found the original painting, in the attic of the present-day Prince of BTR who was renovating his home.

We also discovered 500 pages of letters, written in Gothic German, and written by Leopold and his brother, Alhard. We found someone at a local library who was able to translate the letters for us. A year later, after many pots of tea and citrus tarts, we discovered so much about Leopold's life in Australia.

Leopold, an aristocrat, came over to Australia in 1868, before the Suez Canal was completed, and which added weeks more on to his trip. He arrived in Port Adelaide,



when barrels floated in the river with containers of linseed oil, lit to show the way. The same year when the lighthouse was erected.

With £5 in his pocket, and before a small allowance from home was sent to him, he went to work in the copper mines in Kapunda where people worked hard, including children, and lives were lost. Where people ate Cornish pasties and tossed the ends of the pasties into the mines believing by doing so, the Knockers (spirits) would warn them of any collapses in the mines.

Leopold became a Police Trooper in 1870, and in 1873 sailed to Palmerston (Darwin) taking 3 weeks to arrive. At that time, white settlement was only 4 years old. The Todd telegraph line had been put down and gold had been discovered. A land of crocodiles, Yellow Fever and quicksand took lives. Where the walk to the well was a mile over rocky ground.

He got yellow fever and returned to Adelaide where he became the first official Police Photographer, a detective and interpreter on murder cases.

He married and had 13 children. He lived in Gumeracha, Chain of Ponds and Kensington.

About the speaker: Diana has worked in the disability area since her 20's. She has written for children's television, workshopped a couple of episodes of *A Country Practice*, contributed to a book on people living with disabilities. She is currently working as an Art Therapist, Counsellor and an Assessor looking at the level of support people with disabilities need. She is interested in art, photography, especially the sea, and travelling, spending time with family and visiting family in Germany.

HSSA PROGRAMME 2023

14 April – Carol Grbich

ACCIDENTAL HEIRESS: *Journey of a Glencoe squatter's daughter*

The seven year old heiress to her father's fortune (approx \$25m in today's money) would have been very surprised had anyone suggested that she might one day be using that wealth in another country for the comfort and care of over 50,000 Australian servicemen wounded in World War 1.

5 May – Paul Rosenzweig

IN OUR NEIGHBOURS' SOIL OUR ANZACS SLEEP: Honouring Australia's dead buried in Singapore and Malaysia

Two post-WW2 Malayan wars, the Malayan Emergency and the Indonesian Confrontation with Malaysia, resulted in 50 Australians remaining at rest overseas, but not in a war cemetery. Repatriation has not been extended to these Australians. The SA and NT Branch of the National Malaya & Borneo Veterans Assoc Aust Inc (NMBVAA) has recorded 71 Australians fallen, including two South Australians, on a plaque in the Heroes Memorial Park in Kuching, Sarawak.

2 June – Janet and Sue Scarfe

THE CAMPBELLS OF ANLABY: *Working and Social Life in the Mid North*

Anlaby is mainland Australia's longest continuous working merino stud, dating from 1839 and owned by the wealthy Dutton family until 1978. Three generations of Campbells lived and worked on the station from 1860 to 1940 through droughts,

fires, World War I, the Great Depression, the emergence of new occupations and social change.

7 July – Jenny Tilby Stock

THE BRIEF PARLIAMENTARY CAREER OF MISS KAY BROWNBILL: SA's First Female Member of the House of Representatives

Well-known journalist, playwright and media personality and an independent single woman, Kay Brownbill broke new ground in several professional fields. She was only the third woman to be elected to the House of Representatives, sitting alone among 123 men for three years.

4 August – Mac Benoy

SIR CHARLES TODD: *Fifty Years of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) Leadership*

A major contributor to Australia's scientific and technological foundations, in his 49 years of public service, Charles Todd made major contributions to colonial astronomy, meteorology, telegraphy, electrical engineering, spatial systems and the postal system. He was an intellectual giant and a pioneer corporate leader.

1 September – Ros Gooden

FLINDERS STREET BAPTISTS: *Facilities for a new Community*

Adelaide had a reputation of being the city of churches, a haven of Dissenters. But it was not until 1861, with the arrival of Silas Mead, that the property in the South of Adelaide on Flinders Street was acquired and developed for the Baptists. 26 members built a sanctuary to seat 700. They went on to acquire further adjoining land for hall, classrooms, parking, residences, most of which now is heritage listed. This lecture

will look at how this property developed and its meaning for Baptist settlers.

6 October – Julie Collins

DESIGNING THE SLEEP-OUT IN TWENTIETH CENTURY SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Sleep-outs were common in homes during the first half of the twentieth century, varied in design from enclosed verandahs to purpose-designed rooms for sleeping in the fresh air. The public health rationale for the adoption of sleep-outs was widely accepted as 'open-air treatment' for tuberculosis.

3 November – David Faber

SIR JOSIAH SYMON: *Anti-Socialist Senator for South Australia*

As barrister and politician, he was an irascible, workaholic proponent of Scots conservatism in the Antipodes. A stiff-necked man of Tory principle, he wore out his welcome with his own constituency in defence of Free Trade dogma. This address will develop his profile and that of SA Antisocialism and Conscriptionism.

THE ART OF CHARITY IN THE PROMISED LAND, **Stephen Valambros Graham's prize-winning Essay** was published in HSSA Journal 2021 but for those who haven't read it yet – go to the following website:

<https://www.wakefieldpress.com.au/blog/2022/08/history-council-of-sa-wakefield-press-essay-prize> - the judges say that 'this essay is an intriguing re-examination of well-known images that challenges our traditional understandings of them, and our State's past'.

BENEVOLENCE RETURNS FROM ACROSS THE SEAS

Michael Williams & Yuexiu Shen



1989-0113 Chinese Proclamation

In 1889 a beautifully-made plaque was sent to Adelaide from China, when the latter was under the rule of its second last Qing dynasty emperor.

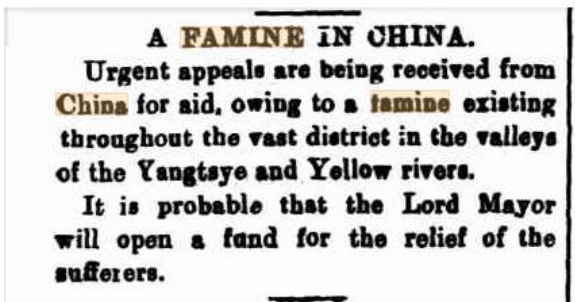
The sandalwood tablet is 57.2 cm in height and 170.2 cm in length, deeply gilded with Chinese characters in heavy black lacquer. In the centre, it says ‘瀛海歸仁’ which translates to *benevolence returns from across the seas*.

Behind the plaque lies a story of a group of people in Adelaide who showed sympathy and kindness in turbulent times in 1889 in the Jiangsu and Anhui provinces in China.¹ Preceding this event was another famine in 1878 when some 13 million Chinese perished resulting in a mission-based relief movement appealing for funds around the world; places such as London,

¹ THE FAMINE IN CHINA - The Express and Telegraph Thursday 18 April 1889 Page 2, and South Australian Chronicle, Sat 20 April 1889 page 22

Adelaide and Melbourne responded. This first effort was not done in cooperation with the Qing government, however subsequent efforts were. Around this time, the Qing government was threatened by domestic rebellions and western invasions and was incompetent in saving its subjects from starvation.

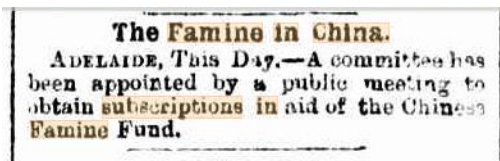
The Kadina and Wallaroo Times (SA : 1888 - 1954) / Sat 12 Jan 1889 /



Thus, when the rivers flooded again in 1889, a public meeting at the Adelaide Town Hall was presided over by the new Governor of South Australia, His Excellency the Earl of Kintore. Through church groups, councils and several prominent citizens including Yett Soo War Way Lee² who had arrived in Australia in 1874 and by 1889 was a wealthy Adelaide merchant married to Annie (nee McDonald), a local woman of Scottish descent, and with an established family, a committee was formed – the Chinese Famine Fund – to appeal for subscriptions.³

Perhaps the inclusion of a Chinese speaker at the meeting

The Australian Star (Sydney, NSW : 1887 - 1909) / Fri 26 Apr 1889 /



inspired this special recognition or perhaps it was the recent visit by the Chinese Commissioners, whatever the reason the Adelaide committee was

² <http://hauntedadelaide.blogspot.com/2015/03/celebrating-south-australians-yett-soo.html> more about the man

³ THE FAMINE IN CHINA – MEETING IN THE TOWN HALL The Express and Telegraph, Thu 25 April 1889 page 2

a rare instance of direct contact with the government of China at that time.



Chinese businessman Yett Soo War Way Lee attending a reception at Government House – courtesy of the State Library of SA SLSA B 54024

The sum of £1,010, 15 shillings and sixpence was soon raised and forwarded to China through the British Consul at Shanghai.

The efforts were rewarded with this plaque by the Qing Guangxu (光绪) Emperor⁴ as a token of his gratefulness and friendship to the Adelaide Council. The tablet is covered in gesso and gilded in gold leaf embossed with fauna and flora.

From upper left to lower left, left to right, it reads ‘光绪十五年六月 穀旦立 爱地来筹劝苏皖赈捐董事 雅鉴’ and translates to *Set on a good day in the sixth month of the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Guangxu, for the perusal of the Adelaide Committee of Raising Relief Funds for the Jiangsu and Anhui Provinces.*

⁴ 1871-1908

On the right-hand side, it indicates the actual person who gifted this plaque – Zeng Guoquan (or Tseng Kuo-Ch’uan 曾国荃⁵), the Qing Dynasty Minister of Commerce in the coastal provinces of Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Fujian and Guangdong. The thinner lines state the rest of his titles ‘太子太保兵部尚书兼督察院右都御史总督江南江西等处 地方提督军务粮饷操江统辖南河管理两淮盐政一等威毅伯’ -- *the Grand Tutor to the crown prince, the Secretary of the Army, the Right Minister of the Inspectorate, the Governor of Jiangnan and Jiangxi, etc., the Local Admiral, the Manager of Military Grain of the south of Changjiang River region, the Administrator of Salt of the region of north and south of Huai River and the First Class Earl Wei Yi.*

The block on the upper centre of the plaque, which appears to be a Manchu seal at first glance, turns out to be a painted copy of the seal, perhaps made by a non-Manchu reader as there are mistakes in the rendering.

It is worth mentioning that in 1889 there was also a fundraising committee in the United States to help relieve the burden of the Jiangsu and Anhui populace, and Zeng Guoquan also sent a plaque to America on behalf of the Qing emperor to express his gratitude.⁶

Zeng Guoquan was the ninth brother of a prominent Chinese statesman Zeng Guofan⁷ (曾国藩). During the 1850s and 1860s, Zeng Guoquan served in the Xiang Army as an

⁵ 1824-1890

⁶ Junwei Cao, ‘近代中国利用侨资的一些情况’, *财经研究*, vol.139, no. 6, 1993, p.47.

⁷ 1811-1872

important assistant to his brother to counter the Taiping rebels⁸. When conquering the capital of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, Nanjing, Zeng Guoquan was notorious for his massacres of the city populace as well as the robbery of a large amount of treasure in the city. In 1867, he was appointed to attack the Nian Rebellion⁹ with Li Hongzhang¹⁰ (李鴻), which ended with failure and forced retirement. However, Zeng returned to politics in 1875 and enjoyed a soaring career until he died in 1890.

The plaque was kept by Adelaide Council after its arrival, however, it remains unknown how the plaque ended up in an antique shop. Fortunately, it was purchased by the Art Gallery of South Australia in 1978 and transferred to the History Trust of South Australia in 1986. It has been well-kept in the Migration Museum since the transfer and remains at the museum. While some may question the decision to transfer this valuable object to a museum focused on migration, others believe the plaque has reached a proper destination as the institution values the historic significance of the object and records the important relationship between the Chinese diaspora and their home country.

Despite the mysterious history, the plaque memorialises the benevolence of a group that consisted of representatives of the Chinese diaspora and Australian people, as well as the gratefulness of an emperor who was unable to protect his country and subjects.

⁸ A massive rebellion and civil war between the Manchu-led Qing Dynasty and the Han, Hakka-led Taiping Heavenly Kingdom in China.

⁹ An armed uprising took place in northern China from 1851 to 1868.

¹⁰ 1823-1901, a Chinese politician, general and diplomat of the late Qing dynasty.

CAN YOU HELP?

EMPORIUM, RETAIL OUTLET, DEPARTMENT STORE?
When skyscrapers first rose in the US, women refused to shop 'in the clouds'.

In late November 2022 the HSSA received a request for assistance from Robert Crawford, Professor of Advertising, School of Media and Communication, RMIT University, Melbourne. He and his colleagues are working on an ARC-supported project that *seeks to undertake a history of department stores in Australia from 1945 through to the present. We are looking for all sorts of memories and experiences – from shoppers and staff alike – and aim to place them on the historical record.*

No story too small, no experience too big! And, of course, we are especially keen on collecting SA stories (John Martin's, Miller's, Moore's (pictured above SLSA PRG280/1/19/5) and even smaller ones too!)



Ensure that South Australia is not neglected!

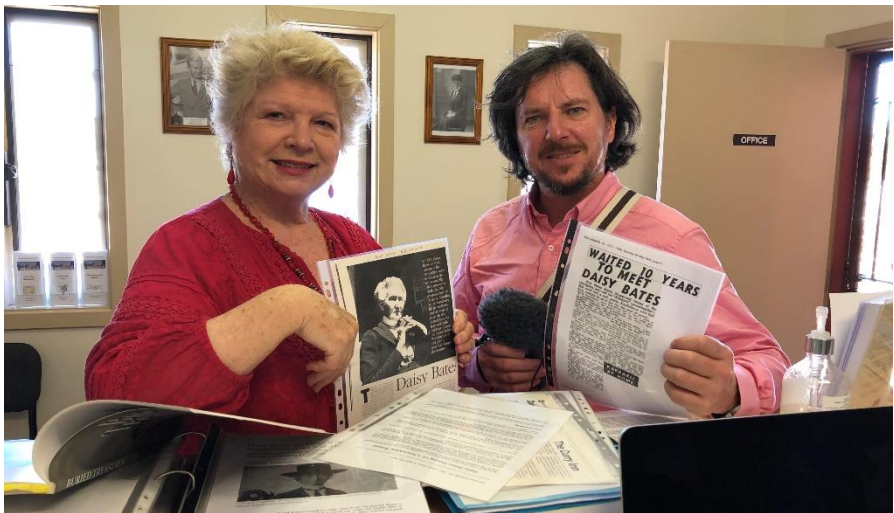
Details of the project and how you can contribute are at the website <https://www.departmentstorehistory.org.au> and Robert is happy to be contacted with your questions or concerns – (Robert.Crawford@rmit.edu.au).

NOEL MURPHY, MARY LEE & DAISY BATES

Through Facebook, we received the following request

Hello, my name is Noel Murphy of Monaghan, Ireland and I am researching the story of Mary Lee, who came from Ireland to Adelaide in 1879 and became a leading voice for women's rights. Denise George will do an interview with me on Mary Lee. I am also doing some work on Daisy Bates, another Irish/Australian historical figure and I don't yet have someone available to speak about her story (wouldn't have to be too detailed as I will be adding-in lots of narrations but just to give some local accent and views to her story). Thank you very much and I would be in Adelaide on the 5th and 6th January and moving on then towards Melbourne. Thank You Again. Noel Murphy

Pamela Rajkowski offered to share her knowledge of Daisy Bates with Noel. She had come across some interesting documents on Daisy whilst researching her cameleer stories. The following photo is of their meeting and Noel interviewed her and someone from North Road Cemetery for his Irish radio podcast.



Historical Society of South Australia Inc.

PO Box 519, Kent Town SA 5071

MEETINGS ARE HELD FIRST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH at 7:30pm
Burnside City Uniting Church, 384 Portrush Rd Tasmore

Patron: The Governor of South Australia,
Her Excellency the Hon. Frances Adamson AC

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CONTRIBUTIONS (no more than 1000 words) & **COMMENTS** are
welcome by 28 Feb 2023. Email lyn.ogrady@gmail.com

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