

MEMBERSHIP SUBS WERE DUE IN JANUARY – have you renewed? – We value your support.

SUPPER VOLUNTEER NEEDED

As mentioned last newsletter, the HSSA Council would like to reinstate suppers. Please consider if you and a friend could volunteer. This would involve bringing tea, coffee, milk and sugar, collecting gold coin donation and clearing up and washing up afterwards. Please contact the Secretary, Bridget Jolly 7200 5455 brimar@esc.net.au. **Alternatively**, members could bring their own mug and serve themselves for a gold coin – before or after the meeting.

FIELD TRIPS & EXCURSIONS

UNLEY MUSEUM – 11 am Wed July 19 - FREE.

This is an award winning museum. If you haven't been, it's worth a visit. They have changing exhibitions on top of permanent displays. (then to Unley shopping centre for a cuppa or lunch). **Meet at 80 Edmund Ave at 11am.**

Phone/email Lyn O'Grady to book your place. Need transport? Let me know; and if anyone would like an extra passenger, also let me know.

MID YEAR LUNCH - SUSSEX HOTEL Walkerville – Wed 9 AUGUST at 12pm. Limited numbers. Book now to reserve your place with our Treasurer at a meeting, or by direct debit to HSSA BSB and email arbowman@adam.com.au the names of those attending. **Cost \$25 ea, (includes a meal from the menu up to value of \$25, anything over at your expense).** More information? Ring Lyn O'Grady. **Bookings close Aug 6.**

KEAIN MEDAL PRESENTATION

As you are no doubt aware, a Keain Medal is presented to the best nominated book on South Australian history published in the previous year. A decision couldn't be made between two books, so there were two awards presented at our June meeting:

- **THREE RING CIRCUS:** the dramatic, mysterious and tragic life of Mabel Worley, a Destitute Asylum girl – by Corinne Hall. Corinne was interstate so Dr Di Barton received it on her behalf.
- **THE DEFIANT ANTI-CONSCRIPTIONIST,** Ephraim Coombe, by Helen Hennessey and Patricia Booth.



Patricia Booth, Helen Hennessey, Dr Di Barton, Geoffrey Bishop

HSSA SPECIAL GRANTS SCHEME RECIPIENTS

We are pleased to be able to assist with the following projects:
Seymour College Photograph project to preserve and document about
2300 photographs – \$1000

Dr Catherine Speck-& Jude Adams to curate an exhibition on Adelaide's
Progressive Art Movement to be held in 2024 : \$976,

AUGUST MEETING: FRIDAY 4 at 7.30pm
Burnside City Uniting Church, 384 Portrush Rd Tasmore

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

Sir Charles Todd was a major contributor to Australia's scientific and technological foundations. In his 49 years of public service (1856-1905), he 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.



Todd most likely holds the record of Australia's longest serving senior public servant. His career is a metaphor for the development of science, technology and government administration that underpinned the federation of Australia's colonies.

About the Speaker: Mac Beney is a retired university lecturer and I.T. professional in industry and the State public service. For the past 18 years he's been running a volunteer citizen science project at the Weather Bureau, rescuing South Australia's climate history going back to September 1836. The starting point for this work was the 12,000 pages of the weather journals kept by Sir Charles Todd. A query from one of Todd's descendants led to a parallel citizen history project, investigating the full extent of Todd's work in STEM, most of it never before documented.

MEETING: FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 1 at 7.30pm
Burnside City Uniting Church, 384 Portrush Rd Tusmore

FLINDERS STREET BAPTISTS,
Facilities for a New Community - Ros Gooden

Adelaide had a reputation of being the city of churches, a haven of Dissenters, and Baptists (along with German Lutherans) were in the sights of George Fife Angas in his seeking of suitable settlers to develop the colony. 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. A membership of 26 members (10 men and 16 women) 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.

Letter to the Editor, from John Love

Thank you for your article on the Walkerville Boys Home, particularly part 2. Having had ten years as a boarder at Scotch College, Torrens Park (Feb 1938 to Dec 1947) I was making comparisons while reading. Discipline was strict but not harsh.

When I started at Scotch there were about 300 students, including about 60 boarders - from farms, sheep and cattle stations all over South Australia, Broken Hill, Birdsville, Alice Springs, Darwin. The School offered courses in agriculture ('Junior Ag' and 'Senior Ag') and had a small farm on the school grounds.

The photo of the junior dormitory on page 7 looks remarkably familiar, although there were no pictures on our walls. The most senior boys slept in the 'sleep-out' - a wide veranda protected by roller blinds above timber panelling. We never got wet. We had to make our own beds but never did housework. The kitchen, etc, were 'out of bounds'.

A resident house master sat at the head of each table for mid-day dinner. The food was adequate and reasonably varied. Over that decade there was a succession of cooks, each with his own style, but they all, without exception, produced BOARDERS' STEW. It was grey and watery, bony fore-quarter mutton chops with potato, turnip, or whatever was in season.



Young John Love with his older brother

On Sunday morning we all walked from Torrens Park to the Presbyterian Church in Hawthorn, and back. On the way we passed a loquat tree with a branch hanging over the fence. In a certain

season, boys paid close attention to that tree. After dinner on Sunday, boarders were more-or-less obliged to sit in the boarders' common room and write a letter to their parents before having the rest of the afternoon free. Boarders had to ask a house master for 'leave' to leave the school grounds.

Each day's schooling began with muster, roll call, Bible reading, a hymn and the Lord's Prayer. Every class had one half-hour 'Scripture' lesson and one half-hour of gymnasium each week. Football in winter and cricket or tennis in summer were almost obligatory (I was hopeless at them all). On the whole, we were proud of the School and cheered loudly at inter-college sports.

The Scotch College Old Collegians Association sponsors some sporting teams and social occasions. I usually go to a dinner for old, old boys, but I have out-lived most of my contemporaries.



(Image Scotch College website)

In 1919, in the aftermath of WW1, benefactors and elders within the Presbyterian Church in South Australia came together to fund a new school that would be a memorial to the "Sons of Scotland" who lost their lives in the great war. The house was built in 1853–4 by Sir Robert Torrens, the third Premier of SA and known for his world-first introduction of the Torrens Title system of land transfer. In 1865 he sold it to his partner in the Moonta Mines and later founder of the University of Adelaide, Sir Walter Watson Hughes, who enlarged it and sold it to Robert Barr Smith in 1874.

WALKERVILLE BOYS' HOME - part 3 Lyn O'Grady

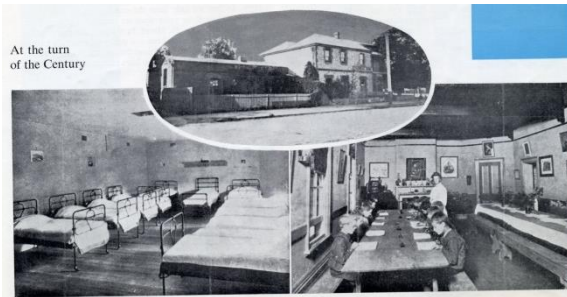
Here's the next instalment of the Walkerville Church of England Boys' Home

Stories from 'Old Boys' of the Walkerville Boys Home.

It will be noticeable that I have somewhat glossed over the sad, hurtful episodes in their lives, whether it occurred in the home or out of it. A few of the boys joined a class action against the Anglican Church. Similar stories are plentiful and have been dealt with in the media and won't be enlarged here.

My purpose has been to highlight aspects of life as a 'homie' and to tell an alternative story. A few 'Old Boys', as they call themselves, once they left the Home, agreed to talk about their time in institutional care; those who lived interstate were interviewed over the phone. I also interviewed, a former superintendent of the Home (1953 onwards), 90 year old Ivor Snaith, and two committee members who were descendants of Priscilla Barker (and a member of the Barker family had been on the committee since the beginning).

Reminiscences from residents and a former headmaster were also noted. The stories revealed from those interviewed were many and varied.



Allan, 90 years old, told me he was in the Home with his older brother from 1926.

"My earliest memory is riding on a train with my father and brother late at night. I was about 5, my brother 7. It was a long and cold train journey, I was wrapped in my dad's coat and tucked under the seat in the carriage. Unbeknownst to us we were to be left at the Walkerville Boys Home. I realised much later that it was the

result of a broken marriage, tough economic times and a build up to the Great Depression of the 1930s”.

Allan remembered Matron Miller, nurse Akwood and laundress Dorrie. His memories of those early days were fairly hazy but he had vivid memories of always being hungry.

“Consequently”, he said “no orchard or market garden was immune from being raided by the boys.”

“Grace was sung before each meal and it paid to open one’s mouth well or the cane would fall on bare legs. Typical meals were bread and dripping, raw onion, sometimes marmite. Bread was mostly ‘bullies’ [the crusty ends of loaves collected from cafes in the city] bubble and squeak or ‘muck and marrow’ as we called it. A Sunday special was what they called ‘spotted dog’, a thick heavy pale coloured cake laced with currants.

Weekends were mostly spent raiding the orchards and veggie patches or rock fighting. Punishment, when caught, was a flogging from Canon Hewgill, the Rector at St Andrews Church.

“In 1929 Matron MacGillicuddy and her husband came to the Home to take charge and things changed in a big way. Meals were bigger, more variety such as thicker porridge and a roster for the scraping out of the big porridge pot each morning. Matron introduced chooks and an incubator. A cow was purchased and the boys built a shed and had turns milking her. An orchard was planted, from which canes were cut for punishment. The offender had to cut their own cane and if they chose a small one they were sent promptly back to cut a larger cane.

Matron introduced for the older boys the wearing of shoes to school and they were taught how to repair their shoes. There was no leather so old, used tyres were hammered onto the soles. Weekends changed to odd jobs, mostly cleaning out the chook pens, gardening and running messages for Matron. Matron encouraged us to save by using the school penny bank.

“Harvest Festival time on the church calendar was jam making time. Each local church would send in a truckload of fruit of all kinds. Jam was made in the old wash copper – forty pounds of fruit, thirty pounds of sugar, sealed in large earthenware jars. We took the day off from school to do this.”

Whatever diseases were sweeping the town, the boys at the Home would never miss out, Measles, chickenpox, mumps, and whooping cough. There was an honorary doctor and dentist assigned to the Home.

Schooling was provided at St Andrew’s day school in Smith Street until Grade 5 then they transferred to Walkerville Primary to attain the Qualifying Certificate and onto Nailsworth Technical High for a year.

At the age of 14 Allan was informed by Matron that he was being sent far away from his father as ‘he was a bad man’.

“A short time later a couple picked me up by car. On board also was a girl of my own age called Dora who had come from a girl’s home somewhere in Adelaide. We headed for Mount Wedge on the West Coast. They owned a sheep property of many thousands of acres. Dora sat next to me on that trip, I was never allowed to talk to her and never did to the day I disappeared from the farm.

When the family moved to another farm in Yankalilla, Allan took this opportunity to escape. He rode a pushbike from Yankalilla to Walkerville.

It was cold and lonely but the feeling of freedom from these people was all that mattered. It was like heading home but to nowhere in particular. Two days later I was lying on the grass of Walkerville Oval trying to figure out where to spend the night.

I called on Matron and told her I was hungry. I spent a couple of nights in the cow shed below the Home. She was quite upset with me but gave me a feed and a few pounds and sent me on my way.

Lazing in the sun on the mound at the oval one day, an old mate from primary school asked me to come home with him for tea. I met the family and I think his Pop must have guessed they had a stray on their hands as a little later he told me to bunk in with his son for the night. They were a wonderful family and always treated me as one of theirs. Pop got me an apprenticeship at Gerard Industries until the outbreak of WW2.”

POLICE MUSEUM FIELD TRIP 24 May

By the time this goes to print, the museum would be closed. All to be packed into boxes awaiting a new location. Six members together with another group went on a guided tour through the Thebarton Barracks, visiting horse stables, garage where past vehicles and bikes are displayed, and the museum displaying hundreds of thousands of items relating to the police force in SA and everywhere else. It was immense and so interesting.



left: Rob Martin, Jenny Hein, Ian Sellick, Patricia Sumerling, below police horse memorial in original stalls, some of the displays.



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

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