



**No. 277**

**September 2023**



Hickson Family outside their home, with enclosed verandah, in Lower Mitcham about 1878. 'Built about 1856 for W.M. Letchford, who occupied it until 1878, when R. Hickson became the tenant.' On closer inspection you can see that the owner thought it important to include the staff - nanny, servants (wearing aprons) and the man holding the horses. And there's a little boy sitting in a wheelbarrow] SLSA B71051

## BOOK SALE AT NOVEMBER MEETING

Members have been very generous in donating books to give as prizes in our monthly raffle. As the surplus is steadily growing, we shall convene a book sale at the November meeting (in lieu of the usual raffle). There will be offered a wide range of books on South Australian and Australian history at very modest prices. Come along with lots of coins and small notes. There will be bargains galore.

**Robert Martin.**

## FUTURE EXCURSIONS

Let us know by email, which place or places you would like to visit from this list and we will organise something next year. Transport can be arranged on request. Do you have some different ideas for an excursion or an area you want to explore? Get in touch.

**Waite Arboretum Tour** (1<sup>st</sup> Sun 11am) - **Old Government House**, Belair (1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sun 1-4:30pm) - **The Cedars**, Hahndorf (Tues-Sun 10-4:30pm) - **Carrick Hill** (Sat-Sun) **Cummins House** (1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sun 2-4:30pm) - **Botanic Gardens Tour** (10:30am daily) – Capt. Sturt's **The Grange** (Sun) – **SA Health & Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI) Tour** (Thurs 10am) - **LOT Fourteen Tour** (Thurs 10am) **Z-Ward at former Glenside Hospital** (Sun 2pm).

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## VIETNAM WAR ANNIVERSARY

August 18 was the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War. A Service of Remembrance was held at every grave or commemorative plaque site and photographed by those in attendance (to be eventually uploaded to the Virtual War Memorial website).



**MEETING: OCTOBER 6 at 7.30pm**  
*Burnside City Uniting Church, 384 Portrush Rd Tusmore*

## **DESIGNING THE SLEEP-OUT IN TWENTIETH CENTURY SOUTH AUSTRALIA – Dr Julie Collins**

This paper will explore the design of sleep-outs which were common in South Australian homes during the first half of the twentieth century. These varied in design from enclosed verandahs to purpose-designed rooms and were intended for sleeping in the fresh air. This paper will trace the design, construction and use of sleep-outs within the context of medical and architectural ideas, specifically discussing the concept of the healthy home.



The public health rationale for the adoption of sleep-outs will be explored with reference to its relationship with tuberculosis (a common airborne disease of the era) and its widely accepted ‘open-air treatment’. Among the sleep-out designs to be examined are those purpose-designed by architects as well as the do-it-yourself plans for alterations and additions to existing homes by owner-builders. Using a historical interpretive method, primary archival materials, including architectural drawings from the Architecture Museum, have been drawn upon and contextualised using published contemporary sources on both health and architecture.

**About the speaker:** Dr Julie Collins is a Research Fellow and Curator in the Architecture Museum, UniSA Creative at the University of South Australia. Julie’s research interests focus on aspects of architectural history. She has written on the history of South Australian Architects and their works, architectural drawing collections, and on the relationship between buildings and health in her book *The Architecture and Landscape of Health* (Routledge 2020).

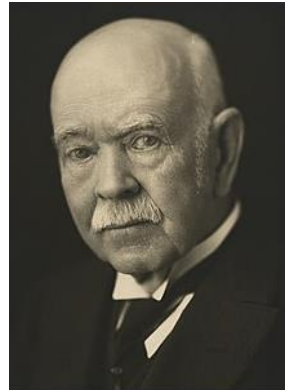
**FINAL MEETING FOR THE YEAR: NOVEMBER 3 at 7.30pm**  
*Burnside City Uniting Church, 384 Portrush Rd Tusmore*

## **SIR JOSIAH SYMON: ANTI-SOCIALIST SENATOR FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA – Dr David Faber**

David Faber's research on **Antisocialist Senator for SA Sir Josiah Symon** began with a survey of his library, preserved in the Mortlock Wing of the State Library of SA.

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.



*"Original Bookplate"*

**Symon Library**

**About the speaker:** Dr David Faber is currently an Adjunct Research Scholar at the Flinders University. He has practiced history for forty years, specialising in biographical study of Italian antifascist political migration to Australia. He has also published on the colonial history of South Australia and his native Tasmania. He is also currently the President of the Labour History Society of SA.

***Journal of HSSA will be distributed to members after the meeting.***

## WALKERVILLE BOYS' HOME - final

by Lyn O'Grady

### Stories from 'Old Boys' of the Walkerville Boys Home, cont'd

**Arthur** remembers:

*For most of the year we had meals from trestle tables on the verandah. At one end would be a platter of bread and jam and at the other end bread and dripping and seldom got a piece of each at the same meal. The local shopkeepers were good to the Home, particularly the greengrocer and the baker. At first, boys collected the food with a horse and cart. Later we used an old car which was given to the Home! At one time a car club used to take us to Semaphore beach. In later years we had a holiday annually at Victor. The Home was still supported entirely by voluntary contributions and continued to be until 1975 when they received a grant from the government.*

**Ray** was brought up first at Kate Cocks' babies' home, then St Mary's before coming to the Home in 1950 and left in 1959 when he turned 14. His mother suffered from postnatal depression and was put into Parkside. (You could describe Ray as a scallywag.)

*Tip Top used to bake double loaves joined in the middle. I used to hollow out the soft bread in the middle and stick them back together hoping no-one would notice. The Superintendent would line us up in height order and in 15 minutes the culprit had to be standing out the front. Then you had a choice of punishment, a walloping or a boxing match with the oldest lad. You learnt to take a few punches and then lie down, the punishment was over.*

*You had to be back at the Home by 4pm, if you were late you got a swipe to the back of the legs for each minute you were late. Ivor was more relaxed about it. He instilled that the Home belongs to all of us, that you don't steal from the others, and you shouldn't need to lock doors. My first day at the Home I was fascinated by the cows, my shoes were covered in cow dung. I was playing around in the*

*mud until tea time. I didn't know you had to line up, hair combed, face clean, there was I covered in mud and told to put my hands out and whack across the hands. I went off under the house; because I was so small they couldn't reach me, I stayed there 'til after dark, the laundress got me out and cleaned me up, put me to bed. I ran away several times, found a hiding place down by the river during the day, used to drink bottles of milk on the doorsteps of houses, would come back at night and sneak some food. I went to Bordertown to work on a farm. They had a son two years older, I was to give him companionship but I slept on a camp stretcher in the shed, didn't have meals with them. My job was feeding the chickens, milk the cow and then dig up stumps along the fence line. I would be sent out with two melon sandwiches and a water bag while the son went to school. I spent all day out there, couldn't come back until dark, milk the cow, lock up the chooks and tea would be another melon sandwich, lay on my bed. On weekends I used to go exploring.*

**Don** was in the Home from 1939 from the age of 4. He had a much older brother and sister who had already left home. His father was a captain of a riverboat at Morgan so Don, with his younger brother moved into the Home where the nurse was an aunt. His schooling was at St Andrews until Grade 3 and then at Walkerville Primary until Grade 6 when he worked at the Walkerville Post Office delivering telegrams. There was a manpower shortage because of WW2 so he was exempt from having to go to school. Later he went to Victoria and worked 46 years as a truck driver.

*"I had to watch out for the younger ones, help them get ready in the mornings, make beds. We took turns to ride the tram into the city to pick up cakes and had a good feed on the way back. We learnt to watch out for ourselves, the superintendent taught us to fight, to stand up for ourselves. He also taught us woodwork, gardening, leatherwork, to cut our hair and mend shoes using bike tyres for soles."*

**Al** was in the Home from 1969 for 3 years. He transferred to Walkerville after 2 years at Morialta Boys Home so he had a shorter distance to ride his pushbike to Adelaide High. His mother had to work, there was no widow's pension in those days. He became an electrician.

*“We had free tickets to the local picture show and punishment was being grounded. He used to jump on his bike and go anywhere he wanted. I thought us boys were treated as slaves but now realized we learnt life skills. Life wasn't easy but it was a great life in one respect, it may not be as good as one wanted.”*

Al's chores included feeding and milking the goat, using the ride-on lawnmower. Weekends he polished floors because he was a big lad and could handle the polisher.

**Dan** was in the Home from 1936 for 14 years. He became a teacher. Professor Mitchell who was on the Home's Committee sponsored him to attend Adelaide High and Teachers College.

*“What happened was my mother remarried and the new husband wouldn't have a bar of me about the place. By various means I don't know she made some phone calls and I was accepted in the Home at 4 years 11 months old. I have enormous affection in memory of Matron McGillicuddy. I was very lucky that she took a personal interest in me rather than an institutional impartiality. I think she almost treated me as a son she didn't have. She only had a grown up daughter. We went to church every morning and on Sunday, not just once but to every service and Sunday school session. Discipline was administered by the rector. This turned me away from the church – on one hand preaching love and forgiveness and the other, the cane. [He wasn't the only one to express these sentiments] I did 'bob for jobs' in the district, washed floors and chopped wood for 3 hours for a shilling. Chopped heads off chooks and plucked them at Christmas for 5 shillings.”*

**Adrian** came about 1964 from Salvation Army Boys Home at Eden Hills.

*“It was a hell hole, I was very fortunate to come out of there. I learnt to be invisible. But at Kennion House, you felt free and uninhibited in the sense that you could play sport all the time and have good food. Ivor knew I loved football and arranged for a family to take me to games. They eventually adopted me.*

Boys ended up at the Home for various reasons, usually the mother was dead or sick or working and/or the father was out of work or irresponsible, or he was dead. No matter what the circumstance, the boys who were at risk of becoming delinquents, were signed over to the Church of England to be educated and moulded into honest workers. There was one instance where a boy was taken back by his mother, but he always felt she only wanted him because he could earn a living.

### **The best part of the project was hearing of some of their mischievous antics ...**

Ray [the scallywag] chuckled throughout his interview and spoke of many tales of mischief; like shortsheeting the beds or putting sugar in the beds, or taking all the alarm clocks into one room and setting them to go off at different times so they wake up at half hour intervals, it really stretched the patience while trying to find out which one was going off; like hiding behind the back door (which was never closed) with a pillow and blanket, staying there for days and sneaking into the kitchen at night. While the ‘Super’ was out, he and another lad would climb inside an old water tank and roll it down Smith Street hill, sometimes to be met by a tram wanting to come up - the passengers



seeing what was coming, all got off the tram in a hurry. Or when collecting the cow from grazing on the Walkerville Oval, he would walk up the middle of Smith Street to the cow shed for milking. If the tram was coming up Smith Street he would keep walking in the middle of the road totally ignoring the tram driver and his 'ding ding ding'. Once Ray was hiding under the house and broke a hole into the floor of the pantry so he could raid the biscuit tin.

*We would crawl through the storm drain from the oval to the Torrens and would poke our head up by lifting the man trap in Smith Street and watch the drivers swerve to miss us. In nearby Vale Park we raided the market gardens, and picked fruit from trees closest to the fence ready to run if seen. Somehow we never were, I think they knew where we were from and just let us. Once I helped myself to two finger buns from the kitchen. I then thought that it was too obvious that two were missing, so I took the lot and ate them, all 22 of them.*

**Des** said that all the clothes were kept in one room on shelves, they were mostly 'hand me downs' donated to the Home. Des used to sneak in at night and choose nicer underpants.

### **Final comments:**

Many of the lads found it a lonely existence when they left the Home so that as soon as they could, they joined the Army or Navy.

They had no photographs of their childhood. When the Home closed in 1984, Ray, the scallywag, rescued some old photos from being



incinerated. I scanned and compiled them, adding class photos from the archives of the Walkerville Primary School, and gave copies to any of the 'Old Boys' who enquired.

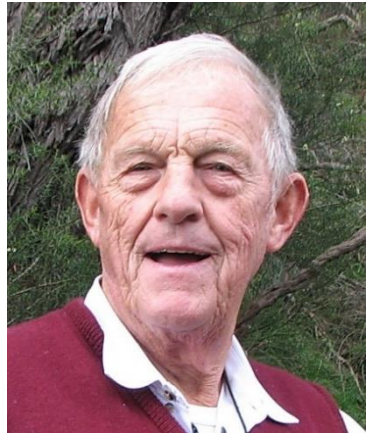
The oral history project was to discover what life was like in the Home. It was both rewarding but also a little traumatic. When I felt I couldn't do it anymore, I found it beneficial to attend a training session on protecting oneself mentally when interviewing certain situations.

(Early history sourced from: *Kennion House – A Hundred Years of Children* Elizabeth Bleby, 1986, published by Anglican Child Care Services (Pagel Production). Photo taken at opening of the Home in 1926. Training session provided by Oral History Association.)

## **ALAN FULWOOD (1936-2023)** **by John McCarthy**

Alan Fulwood died peacefully in the palliative care ward of Flinders Medical Centre, after a short illness.

He was a member of the Historical Society of SA for 35 years, a Council member of the Society for three years, 2002 to 2005. A skilled and highly qualified tradesman, rather than an academic, he was nonetheless a lucid public speaker and a fluent writer of scores of letters. He prepared an article about work in the 1930s on the Melrose property, "Rosebank," Mount Pleasant, illustrated by photographs taken by his parents while employed there before marrying. Alan grew up in a family of three boys in a small dairy farm located on Windsor Avenue, Hahndorf, attending the state primary school, followed by Mt Barker High School. As a teenager he taught Sunday school at St Michael's Lutheran Church, the venue of his funeral service.



He never forgot learning that he was born in the State's Centennial Year, and that the oak trees lining Windsor Avenue were planted in 1937 to commemorate the coronation of King George VI – the acorns coming from the Royal Park at Windsor. This I think started a lifelong interest in British culture, natural and built environments, and history generally.

Although Alan left Hahndorf in his early twenties, he had an abiding interest in the town's progress (or regress). He never had a chance to meet Hans Heysen, but he was a friend of Walter Wotzke, a young water colourist and saviour of the Hahndorf Academy building. Alan collected works of both at considerable expense. He honoured the Heysen legacy by conserving a giant bluegum (euc. leucoxylon) on a town block he owned for decades, and when recently selling it, he made sure by caveat that it could never be axed.

Alan also collected the plein-air painter and illustrator, A H Fullwood (no relation), who, on migrating from Birmingham to NSW, was a not-so-well-known colleague of Arthur Streeton and Tom Roberts.

About 1951 Alan became an apprentice carpenter in the maintenance section of the Mt Barker Jacobs Meat and Dairy Factory<sup>1</sup> riding his bike the seven kilometres from Hahndorf, over the hills along the old highway, tailgating the lumbering trucks.



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<sup>1</sup> Jacob's Meat and Dairy Factory closed 1990 – Mt Barker History

He used his first car to drive in the evenings down to the City to take every post-trade course offered by the Buildings and Furniture Trade School, Kintore Avenue. This further education was easier to attend once he transferred to the newly established building firm of Marshall and Brougham. He had high praise for his trade teachers and credits one of them for stimulating his interest in saving, and then investing in shares and real estate. In 1964, aged 28, he was off to Europe by ship, becoming a building inspector for the Croydon Council in south London, a job he held off and on for three years.

Returning to Australia in 1967 he joined AV Jennings as a project manager, building the mining towns of Karratha and others in northern WA, followed by the new town of Cabramurra in the Snowy Mountains. On completion in 1974 he and three colleagues travelled for many weeks around South America by public transport and up the Amazon River to Manaus by local boat.

He probably returned to WA with Jennings; but by the early 80's we know he transferred to building the Jabiru township for the Ranger uranium mine, 250 kms east of Darwin in Arnhem Land. Then he moved into Darwin for the John Holland build of the Darwin Entertainment Centre.



By early 1985 Alan returned to Adelaide working for Hansn Yuncken rapidly transforming the Adelaide Railway Station into the Adelaide

Casino. He stayed on as a maintenance manager, plus contributing to the design of seasonal decorations, and writing for the in-house journal about the architectural and interior design features of the original SAR's Webb 1920s era building. Alan was saddened by the lack of interest in saving enough of the century-old SAR materials and artefacts, and furious that the second operator destroyed the initial elegance by turning the building into a 'pokie palace', erasing all links with the SAR interiors – the "marble hall" being the most obvious.



On retirement in 1996 aged 60 he returned to his carpentry tools and repaired pre-loved furniture donated for sale by Lions at their Camden warehouse. He continued reading the magazine, "World of Interiors," subscribing from the first issue: and never let up on overseas travel to many destinations. Alan is survived by his older brother, John of Horsham Victoria, five nieces and nephews, and a god-daughter.

(images: Mt Barker History, Experience Adelaide, and Adelaide in Photos blogspot)

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## BOOK LAUNCH:



**29 September at 5.30pm  
at SA MUSEUM,**  
with original expedition footage.  
**“JOHN RYMILL – POLAR  
PIONEER” by Peter Rymill  
\$14/11 (incl a beverage before  
the presentation)**

## MEET HSSA COUNCILLORS



**Ian Sellick** began an apprenticeship in 1969 with the P.M.G. as an Electrical Fitter and Mechanic, and then ran his own electrical contracting business for thirty years before retiring in 2020. He has always had a keen interest in restoring cars and will be taking part in this year's Bay to Birdwood classic. Another lifelong interest has been in history and he joined the SA Genealogy & Heraldry Society 25 years ago. He is a keen genealogist but much prefers the everyday stories behind the individual. He has regularly contributed stories to the SAGHS journal with a winning entry in 2022. In the last four years he has written 3 books: *Chasing Ancient Sea Shores – a History of Australia's Inland Sea*; *Theatre Life in Colonial S.A. 1836-1856*; *Charles Hill - Colonial Painter 1824-1915*. Approximately two years ago, he joined the HSSA after Susan Marsden invited him and his wife to her talk on the painting of the Proclamation Ceremony by Charles Hill.

**Joshua McDonnell** is a keen student of the civic history of South Australia, with a particular interest in the evolution of local government and its continued contribution to our political culture. A resident of Magill and father of two, Joshua is a Senior Social Planner at the City of Salisbury and adjunct Research Fellow at the University of Western Australia. Joshua's research has been



published in leading international and Australian journals, and his PhD dissertation, on the topic of local democracy, was recently awarded the Australian Political Studies Association's prestigious PhD Thesis Prize. Joshua is excited to be a new member of the HSSA committee, and is eager to broaden his knowledge of South Australia's rich history – and the people bringing it to life – through closer involvement with the Society's activities.

## WEA 110<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OPEN DAY

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2023 10am – 4pm**  
**22 Angas Street Adelaide**

*The WEA building will be abuzz with a dazzling array of demonstrations and lectures throughout the day. Demonstrations will include Reiki, using PowerPoint, how to sharpen gardening tools, Persian cooking, Flamenco guitar, floral art, Turkish cooking, Syrian cooking, Tarot reading, cupcake decorating, pottery, making fish cakes, charcoal painting, sourdough baking, singing, saxophone, calligraphy and more. Lecture topics will include funeral planning, Roman Spain, getting started in Financial Markets, wine appreciation, intuitive eating, simplifying aged care, astrology, languages (including Greek and French), and more. We will have a Market Hall operating, with students and tutors showcasing a wonderful range of products and services for sale.*

***The Workers' Educational Association of South Australia Inc, known colloquially as the WEA, has been providing adult South Australians with affordable and accessible learning opportunities since 1913, through a program of short courses.***

*The WEA's mission is to provide a broad range of learning opportunities which meet community needs and expectations and provide pathways to work, further study and personal development; in an inclusive, welcoming environment for the benefit of individuals and society at large. Our courses are open to all, with no exams and no prerequisites for participation. Each year the WEA program includes over 1000 courses facilitated by more than 200 tutors. Topics include cooking, art, craft, languages, history, music, genealogy, fitness, dance, wine, computing, business, wellbeing, finance, creative writing, travel, photography, and more.*

*Enquiries: phone 8223 1979 or email [enrolments@wea-sa.com.au](mailto:enrolments@wea-sa.com.au)*

## Historical Society of South Australia Inc.

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Her Excellency the Hon. Frances Adamson AC

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