



The  
Historical Society  
of  
South Australia  
Inc.



*Newsletter No. 70 May 1987*



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# THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA Inc.

Institute Building, 122 Kintore Avenue, Adelaide 5000.

## OBJECTS

- (a) to arouse interest in and to promote the study and discussion of South Australian and Australian history,
- (b) to promote the collection, preservation and classification of source material of all kinds relating to South Australian and Australian history,
- (c) to publish historical records and articles,
- (d) to promote the interchange of information among members of the Society by lectures, readings, discussions and exhibitions,
- (e) to co-operate with similar societies throughout Australia,
- (f) to do all such things as are conducive or incidental to the attainment of the above objects or any of them.

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## COUNCIL

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FOUNDED IN 1974

*Cover Illustration - Test cricket against England at Adelaide Oval in 1902. The test began on 17 January and ran for six days. The 48000 people who attended paid 1/- for admission to the outer and 2/6 for the stand, and gate receipts came to 3717/10. Children were admitted for half price. In this photograph (taken from the outer) there are hats and coats galore but no women.*

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Friday, 29 May 1987 at 8.00 p.m.

Venue: State Library Lecture Theatre  
(Corner North Terrace and Kintore Avenue.  
Entrance off Kintore Avenue.)

### **Nigel Hart and Bernard Whimpress: The Sacred Turf: Anglo-Australian Approaches to Test Cricket at Adelaide Oval.**

Nigel Hart and Bernard Whimpress published their history of test cricket at Adelaide Oval in 1985. Their illustrated lecture will pursue some of the themes in the book and will be followed on Sunday 31 May by a tour of Adelaide Oval. (Please see the separate notice for that tour if you intend coming.)

Bernard Whimpress, a photographer and former editor of the South Australian National Football League's Football Budget, is author of The South Australian Football Story and a cricket manual. Nigel Hart's road to Adelaide Oval is a different one. An academic administrator and freelance historian, he has taught classical history at university level, but came to sporting history out of a deep affection for the game of cricket.

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Friday, 3 July 1987 at 8.00 p.m.

Venue: State Library Lecture Theatre

### **Philippa Fletcher: The Working Women's Champion - Agnes Milne, Factory Inspector**

Philippa Fletcher came to university study in the early 1980s. An adult student with another career behind her, she capped off a brilliant Honours degree at Flinders University with the University Medal and the James Millar Main prize for History. That was in 1986. She is now pursuing a Graduate Diploma in Adult and Further Education and works part time as a research assistant in Sociology.

As for Agnes Milne, she was a remarkable member of South Australian society around the turn of the century. A shirtmaker from Bowden, she was factory inspector from 1896 to 1906, founder of the Working Women's trade union, and a campaigner for the Anti-Sweating League. She played a prominent role in arousing public opinion about the plight of so many working women but died unnoticed in 1919. Philippa Fletcher's look at Agnes Milne takes us into a bleak and

unhappy corner of South Australian social history.

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\*\*\* FUND RAISING TOURS \*\*\*

Sunday, 31 May 1987, 1.45 p.m.

Adelaide Oval

A notice appeared in the March Newsletter and anyone intending to come was advised to contact the Historical Society's Secretary at 356 0099 on or before Thursday 21 May. There is no limit to the number of people who may come along but the South Australian Cricket Association needs to know how many guides will be required. We ask you therefore to reserve a place (or places) at the above number and not just appear on the day.

For those who missed the March notice, the tour, by courtesy of the S.A.C.A., will take in the scoreboard, the Dressing rooms, the Ridings room and the Bradman room. It will take about an hour.

As this is a tour designed to raise funds for the Historical Society's publications we would suggest a donation of \$2.

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Sunday, 26 July 1987, p.m.

You may recall that this afternoon was set aside for another tour in the 1987 programme. Walking tours are very risky in mid winter so Council has been searching for a suitable indoor activity, but to no avail. I hope the July Newsletter will have better news!

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## SOCIETY NEWS

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### Report of February Meeting

One hundred and twenty seven members sweltered at our first meeting for 1987 which was addressed by Helen Tolcher. The temperature, which at times seemed as hot as the 61 degrees Celsius measured by Sturt in the Stoney Desert, was appropriate for her subject; policing the Cooper in the far north east corner of South Australia.

The area was first settled in the 1870s. The government in the form of police and census collectors soon followed,

but only as visitors. The first police patrol in the area was an epic journey of 2704 kms through heat and flood. Two police officers with two pack camels, Polly and the "notorious" Tommy, set off to collect stock returns and check for sly grog. Tommy appears to have sided with the lawbreakers rather than the law enforcers, for he seized every opportunity to become lost, fight, stray or refuse to cross flooded creeks. The patrol returned with a lunatic, who consumed nearly all their scarce rations, and a 5 gallon (20 l) keg of rum which had been confiscated from a sly grog dealer. When opened at the end of the patrol the keg was found to be empty; the native tracker who confessed to consuming the contents was dismissed.

As the population in the area grew, and by the 1890s Innamincka township had 1000 inhabitants, the police established a station. Besides the necessary equipment such as tents two, pannikins four, the inventory for the new station included Acts of Parliament twelve!

Maintaining an establishment in the area was hardly any easier than patrolling it. The police station collapsed in the floods of the 1880s. Its small "temporary" replacement, where prisoners were chained to a post, was thrice destroyed by storms but rebuilt each time by the officers and lasted until 1929 when it was replaced by an unlined galvanised iron shed. Another privation endured by the hapless police who placed their beer in the well to keep it cool was having it silted in by floods! Constable Flynn, one of the thirty-four officers posted there, stated that "it was a hard life being a copper in Innamincka."

Constable Dukes enforced the law so rigidly that the people petitioned for his removal. Dukes reported that he aimed to please the inspector of the division rather than the local population. Constable Charles Kean, the first solo officer, was popular with the locals, while Constable Bert Ewens was the longest serving, staying in Innamincka from 1912 until 1920. Not all the coppers were honest. Constable Depurey, a French nobleman, abused the dingo bounty and Constable Powers molested a lady prisoner which led to the rebuke that "a police cell ought to be a safe place for female virtues."

With the departure of the last officer at 11 a.m. on 4 January 1953, the station was closed and the door shut on a remarkable chapter of this state's history. It was a fascinating tale which Helen Tolcher spun for us, full of human interest and drama and richly illustrated with examples demonstrating the resourcefulness of the hardy people who live in this inhospitable area.

Bill Stacy

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## Report on the March Meeting

Hon. Martin Cameron MLC addressed the Society on Friday 6 March 1987. Mr Cameron's talk was entitled "A New Outlook on Burke and Wills and South Australia's John McKinlay".

The bare bones of the Burke and Wills story are known to most Australians. They set off from Melbourne at the head of an expedition equipped at enormous expense (\$60,000 had been outlaid on 21 tons of supplies and equipment which included bullock wagons designed so as to double as boats for the crossing of inland waterways). The greater glory of Victoria was at stake; there could be no question of entrusting command of this expedition to a non-Victorian, and as the seasoned explorers mostly lived in other colonies command was entrusted to Robert O'Hara Burke. He was to select the route for a trans-continental railway.

Burke proved to be a disastrous choice. In one way or another he would bring about the death of seven men. He was notoriously obstinate; he kept no written journals, refused to put his instructions in writing, and told his men to have no contact with the local Aborigines, even when they came bearing food. In those last desperate days he refused to budge from Cooper's Creek and this despite the fact that Menindie was only 19 days away by a track he knew. There he remained with Wills for 69 days. There he died of starvation with Aborigines and food around him.

This was the core of Mr Cameron's talk but the twist came at the end. 'The unfortunate Burke', it seems, was a murderer: there is now evidence to suggest that he had murdered one of his team, Charles Gray, by bashing him around the head with a lump of wood, all in a fit of rage. There were rumours to this end at the time. Evidently some onlookers shouted 'murderer' when his bones were carried by on to their final resting place in the state funeral Melbourne would accord him. And John King, another member of the party, probably witnessed the assault: he said as much at Menindie but soon changed his public testimony. The conclusive proof of Burke's perfidy came to light only recently. King, it seems, confided the truth in a letter he addressed to his family back home in Ireland, and although that letter no longer survives Mr Cameron has interviewed those who can recall having seen it years before.

Did Burke consciously or unconsciously seek death as a way out? Who can tell! Whatever the truth of the matter the Victorians treated his bones right royally. The coffin was mounted on a gun carriage modelled on that of the Duke of Wellington and parliament was closed for the day as a mark of respect. And \$4,000 was spent on a public memorial.

And what of John McKinlay? This unsung South Australian hero crossed to the Gulf of Carpentaria where Burke had

failed. He did so at a modest cost, losing no lives and accounting carefully for every sheep his party consumed. There was one moment of quiet drama. Somewhere in the remote north of South Australia Hodgkinson, one of McKinlay's men, decided he wanted to return home. Sitting around the campfire, hundreds of miles away from civilization, he addressed a formal request to the expedition leader. On the other side of the campfire, and with equal formality, McKinlay wrote back: 'No'. These remarkable letters survive in the Mortlock Library.

The hundred or so members present enjoyed a splendid evening.

Tony Stimson

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## ARTICLES

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### FORT GLANVILLE

[The following is reproduced by courtesy of the Fort Glanville Historical Association Inc. Members of the H.S.S.A. would find it well worth a visit. Ed.]

Fort Glanville, probably Australia's best preserved 19th century colonial fort, has after many years of neglect, been brought back to life by a very successful programme of co-operation between government and public.

Constructed as part of a comprehensive plan for the defence of the anchorage, harbour and commercial heart of the province of South Australia, Fort Glanville, alone amongst the defensive structures built, remains largely unaltered.

Commissioned in 1880, by Federation in 1901 it had been relegated to a training establishment, its guns having been outranged by more powerful modern armament of its sister fort at Largs, installed a few years earlier. Deterioration and neglect during the 1920s and 30s, led to the then Department of Defence stripping Fort Glanville of all its saleable metalwork for scrap, including the carriages of the Fort's main armament, two 10" 20 ton muzzle loading cannon.

Occupied by the Boy Scouts just prior to World War II and during the war once again by the military, although by now the fort was of no defensive value, it was transferred back to South Australian State administration in 1951. Largely ignorant of its heritage value, the new administrators converted the surrounds into a caravan and camping ground, whilst the barracks, parade ground and gun emplacements were put to use as the residence and garden of the site manager.

A gradual awakening of the awareness of Australian Heritage led, in the 1970s, to recognition of Fort Glanville's historical importance. The caravan park and its manager were re-sited and a programme of restoration works commenced. Fortunately the years had seen little structural change to the fabric of the fort and by 1980 restoration had progressed to a point where it was considered public visitation of the site should be encouraged.

As part of this restoration, a pair of smaller 64 pdr cannon, removed in 1908 for display as curios in an Adelaide park, were returned to their original location at Fort Glanville. Restored sufficiently to allow a blank charge to be fired, the guns spoke again at a special ceremony exactly 100 years after the first 1880 firing.

Restoration of Fort Glanville had been encouraged by local groups and interested persons and from these grew a Ministerially appointed Consultative Committee and a volunteer Historical Association, both aiming to promote the use and continued development of the site. Formed shortly after the centenary firing of the cannon, the Historical Association soon developed to a position of being able to stage, with Ministerial approval, public open days. These aimed to bring the fort alive by means of living history presentations of cannon and carbine firing and drill displays, with guided tours of the site included to complete the picture for visitors.

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#### MORE ON THE BUILDING ACT OF 1857

[Parts of the Building Act of 1857 were reproduced in the March Newsletter without much in the way of background information. David Kilner, Politics Department, University of Adelaide, has been kind enough to rectify that situation. The extract reproduced below is part of a draft of Mr Kilner's forthcoming doctoral thesis on the history of South Australian housing policy. As he says, conflict over building controls is hardly a recent development in Adelaide. Ed.]

All societies, especially urbanising ones, must decide whether or not to establish rules for the construction and composition of dwellings. In South Australia the decision to regulate was taken in response to the deleterious effects of uncontrolled urban development in the first 20 years of the colony's life.

As early as 1847 complaints were being made about the unsatisfactory standard of building in the colony. The "Register" deplored the "want of a Building Act", and while reaffirming the basic principle of non-interference by the

state, recognised the need for government action to protect the public interest. A correspondent in the same issue complained of the "speculators in bricks and mortar ... erecting traps for the unwary". Public control of building standards was therefore necessary to improve matters. Unfortunately it was to be many years before these calls were heeded.

The earliest measures took the form of the Building Act (No. 17 of 1857). In its final form the act simply attempted to control fire risks by banning inflammable materials such as timber and canvas. The need to do this was fortuitously demonstrated by the "great fire at Port Adelaide", which broke out on 10 November 1857 and caused \$140,000's worth of damage.

In their original form, however, these proposals were wide-ranging and, in principle, comprised a modern building code (notwithstanding that their source was the London building code adopted after the fire of 1666!). The code ran to 62 pages containing 96 clauses. Attached were various schedules which laid down extensive rules governing building construction. These proposals were introduced by Francis Dutton, member for the City of Adelaide and Commissioner of Crown Lands, but Dutton was forced to lay them aside because of "considerable opposition", for example from certain architects.

The end result was a pallid and ineffectual measure which simply outlawed inflammable materials, much to the delight of the insurance industry. Even this did not have unanimous support: one correspondent of the "Register" argued that "... wooden houses are cooler, more ornamental, and less subject to vermin, than any others, and ... make a residence fit for a prince". Fires, in any case, gave an "... impetus to the timber trade ...".

There ensued a 25 year battle between the supporters and opponents of building controls. By-law powers were added in 1861 which gave further controls, but these too were ineffectual.

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#### ORAL HISTORY IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

[Oral history is doing very well in South Australia as the following short piece suggests. The Oral History Association of Australia (South Australian Branch) welcomes new members and offers advice and useful publications for people embarking upon an oral history project. Membership rates for 1987 are as follows: Individual \$20, Household \$30, Institution \$30, Student/Unemployed/Pensioner \$10. Subscriptions, correspondence and queries should be addressed to the Secretary at 122 Kintore Avenue, Adelaide 5000. Ed.]

The Jubilee 150 year is behind us but its passing should no mean a return to 'business as usual' for oral history in South Australia. The Sesquicentenary celebrations channelled unprecedented funds and enthusiasm towards the practice of oral history resulting in a legacy of tape and transcript collections, practical experience and heightened public and government awareness that should benefit oral history in this State in the years to come. The Jubilee 150 Heritage Now! Programme for schools gave many teachers the impetus to experiment with oral history. The Jubilee year also encouraged local history groups to undertake oral history projects or afforded established oral history groups the opportunity to show their local communities the results of their efforts. The major J150 project, 'S.A. Speaks: An Oral History of Life in South Australia before 1930', also came to a successful conclusion. The project resulted in a large body of tape recorded interviews, annotated transcripts, a subject index and illustrative photographs that will not only provide an oral archive of an era for use by researchers at the Mortlock Library of South Australiana but has also resulted in invaluable information about the cost and methodology of oral history projects.

If you are thinking about starting an oral history project, or if you have already begun but were not aware of our Association, get in touch with us. We will introduce you to a network of people throughout the State, and indeed throughout Australia, with similar interests and give you access to a wide range of information and resources. The South Australian Branch of the Oral History Association was formed in 1979 (shortly after the Association was founded in Western Australia), to stimulate interest in oral history and foster the exchange of ideas and information.

Membership of the South Australian Branch of the OHAA has many benefits. Members receive the Branch's first-rate bi-annual newsletter Word of Mouth and the substantial annual National Journal. Branch members are also offered a variety of occasional activities, including at least two workshops on the theory and practice of oral history, and every two years the National Conference of the Association gives members from all over the country the chance to meet and exchange ideas. Branch members have access to Branch files which include a survey of oral history projects in South Australia, extensive bibliographies and various international oral history journals.

The Oral History Handbook is available from the Branch. Compiled by the S.A. Branch Committee, it is Australia's first oral history handbook and was written to fulfill a pressing need for a comprehensive but concise and inexpensive Australian-oriented guide to the practice of oral history. The Handbook, an instant best-seller, was first published in May 1983. In February 1985 the second edition, fully revised

and extended, was launched and at only \$2.50 for members and \$3.00 for non-members continues to sell rapidly.

The Committee of the SA Branch of the OHAA meets monthly and with much enthusiasm; certain that oral history is a worthwhile and significant activity, yet well aware of the effort required to further the aims of the Association. Apart from dealing with a wide range of general business the Committee frequently provides speakers for the meetings, seminars and workshops of other interested organisations.

In addition to the impetus and experience afforded by the Jubilee 150 year another development marks the beginning of a new era in oral history in South Australia. The SA Branch has persistently lobbied for the establishment of an adequately equipped, central repository for tapes and transcripts. With the appointment of an Oral History Officer to the Mortlock Library of South Australiana in February 1987 and, subsequently, the establishment of the J D Somerville Oral History Room, South Australia will at last have a well-funded central repository for tapes and transcripts and a venue where the public can use them and learn about this important technique.

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## NEWS

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### THE DIARY AND CORRESPONDENCE OF JOHN MCKINLAY, EXPLORER

In his lecture to the Society in March, Hon. Martin Cameron M.L.C. said that certain items from McKinlay's estate had been lost since his niece died at Gawler in 1930. He can be contacted at Parliament House, North Terrace, in the event that any reader knows the whereabouts of the missing items.

Mr Cameron writes:

"John McKinlay died in the 1870s and his niece, Jessie Pile, died in 1930. The estate at that stage was broken up and a clearing sale held.

I would be very interested in any information that anybody has about several items that John McKinlay took out of the archives, most importantly correspondence he wrote about the resignation of Mr Hodgkinson during the expedition, the original copies of his diary and any other items that identify with him.

John McKinlay led the Burke relief expedition in 1861 and was the first man to drive sheep across Australia, which he used as fresh meat during that expedition. He was also well

known for his explorations in the Northern Territory and any material associated with that era would be appreciated.

It is my opinion he was probably one of the greatest explorers in Australia's history and one of the most successful. His efficiency in his work shows up in his diaries and I believe it is a pity that he has been so neglected. So, If anybody in the society can assist with information he/she may well be assisting in resurrecting the memory of one of South Australia's famous yet forgotten sons."

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#### INFORMATION CONCERNING RICHARD THELWELL MAURICE, EXPLORER

Chloris and Heinz Moeller of Ceduna (P.O. Box 156, Ceduna 5690) would appreciate any information about R.T. Maurice, explorer. They write:

"We are ... anxious to collate and have printed the journeys and explorations of one of SA's least known explorers, Richard Thelwell Maurice, who made an historic journey from Fowler's Bay on the edge of the Great Australian Bight to Cambridge Gulf, over 2000 miles away, near Hall's Creek in WA, an epic voyage which to our knowledge has never been written up from his extensive journals and letters held in the Archives of the Public Library."

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#### DOCUMENTS

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#### OUR FIRST ZOO

[The following piece is from the Rev. John Blackett's The History of Unley and Goodwood, published by the City of Unley in or about 1934. It appeared as a typescript in foolscap and quarto formats but with identical texts. Brian Samuels.]

It may interest South Australians to know that in primeval times the Province could boast a Zoo, and that the Zoo was located in Unley. How many today can remember the old "Cremorne Hotel", Unley, as I knew it when a lad. It was a very humble structure, but saw some stirring times. Not only were some elections excitedly contested there, but the Zoo was located there. In the early days it was a centre of attraction, especially to the children of the South Australian pioneers. In connection with the hotel, tea gardens had been planted. Into these gardens the proprietor introduced birds of various kinds, turtles from the River Murray, and other animals, including an elephant. The reader

may imagine how the children of the pioneers went to the "Old Cremorne", Unley, to see its living treasures. The road to Unley, at that time, was execrable, at least in winter. I read, (I think in one of our pioneer papers) of a bullock that went down in a quagmire near "Moonlight Corner", Unley, and did not rise again. The skeleton remained there for a considerable time. Travellers sometimes left the track called the "Unley Road" for the open paddocks, but at times these were covered with mud and water. But what were bad roads, mud, or water-covered paddocks to the first generation of children born in South Australia? These were romantic natural conditions to which they were accustomed, and, no doubt, in which they revelled. Neither mud, morass, nor water would prevent them from visiting the old-time Zoo in the Cremorne Gardens. In the public press one of them has left on record how he, in the early days, with other lads, walked from Marryatville to the "Old Cremorne" to see the elephant and gardens. On the way, in crossing a morass, his foot became jammed in a wheel track. He had first to pull the foot out of the shoe, and then extract the latter, covered with mud, and filled with water. When not on exhibition the elephant was at work, and some of the paddocks on which the aristocratic suburb of Malvern now stands were once furrowed by the plough drawn by this animal. The elephant found its way to Gepp's Cross, on the North Road. Here it was a source of danger and trouble. Pioneer horses in South Australia were not accustomed to elephants. The editor of the pioneer press (I think it was John Stephens, editor of "The Register") found it necessary to publish a word of warning, which he did in the following terms: "That exotic gentleman, who formerly resided at Unley, has now, for some time, quitted the service of his late master, and concluded an engagement with Mr. Matthews, of Gepp's Cross, where he is now gaining some credit for his strength and perserverance (sic) in drawing the plough; but the horses who pass on the road (whether jealous of his superior strength, or dazzled at his elegance of form) jib, buck, and dance the polka. We would recommend any traveller on the North Road to give the paddock by Gepp's Cross rather a wide berth." I notice that a writer to the "Register", signing himself "Old Boy", says that the elephant ended his days working on a farm at Cherry Gardens.

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#### CENTENARY GREETINGS FROM SOUTH AUSTRALIA

[Now that the sesquicentenary year is over it may be useful to reflect on how South Australians celebrated the centenary of European settlement on 28 December 1936. That evening 5CL broadcast three 'Empire Addresses' - those of the Duke of Kent, speaking from London, 'the heart of the Empire', on behalf of the King, the Governor of South Australia, Sir Winston Dugan, and the Premier, Hon. R.L. Butler, M.P. The strength of imperial ties half a century ago is evident in

these addresses and Mr Butler's is reproduced below. The source is Completion of Parliament House: The Centenary of South Australia (Government Printer, Adelaide [1937?]) pp 30-40. Ed.]

The Premier of South Australia (Hon. R. L. Butler, M.P.) said :--

FELLOW CITIZENS OF THE EMPIRE—CENTENARY  
GREETINGS FROM SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

To-day, with infinite pleasure and the pride which follows upon achievement, South Australia has celebrated her hundredth birthday, 100 years of progress and development of which any country might well be proud.

In the first place, I desire to send a message of good cheer to the infirm and to those in ill-health and who have not had the opportunity of participating in the festivities of this week and sharing in its pleasures. The earnest desire of everyone is that they will soon be fully restored to health, once more able to enjoy the good things of life, and enabled to assist in carrying out the great tasks which lie ahead.

Secondly, I send greetings to the men and women outback, where distance and their duties prevent their being present with us during our celebrations. Let me assure them that we have not forgotten them. I know that they are with us in spirit, and with smiles on their faces and goodwill in their hearts they will, in their own way, celebrate this great occasion.

It is difficult to realise that only a century ago this State was founded, and memories of the struggles of our pioneers, and of the present generation during the dark days of depression, are brightened by remembrances of the sacrifices freely made to overcome all difficulties. The State's history reveals the fact that goodwill, co-operation, and strenuous endeavour bring their own reward.

If there is one thing more than another which we to-day could not, or should not, forget, it is that help and protection which we have always received from the Mother Country. It was she who gave us our charter of liberty; it was she who gave us, and is still giving, that protection which has permitted us as British people to work out our

own destiny. She nursed us in our infancy; and with abundant trust made us a partner in this great British Commonwealth of Nations.

To-night, His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, by the gracious consent of His Majesty the King, will broadcast a message to the people of South Australia. It is impossible for me to adequately express our appreciation of this typically thoughtful action, for it is not only a compliment to the State, but it again shows that the welfare of every part of our far-flung Empire is constantly in the thoughts and minds of the members of the Royal Family.

To the Monarchy there are no boundaries, no classes and no creeds; and it desires beyond everything else the common weal; the happiness of the people; and the peace of the world. His Majesty is assured of our people's unswerving loyalty and devotion, and we pray that he may long be spared to reign over us.

The future demands the full recognition of our obligations not only to Australia, and to Great Britain, but to the great British Commonwealth of Nations as a whole, which is the greatest force for good and for peace in the world to-day. Although each member has its own individual problems, yet in the great essentials we stand on common ground ever ready to fulfil all the obligations which membership of such a combination of nations demands.

I would like to take this opportunity of expressing South Australia's gratitude to the 44 nations from all parts of the world who have sent us Centenary messages and their national flags. These we accept in the spirit in which they were given, namely: Messengers of peace and goodwill.

And now, to the people of my own State, may I express my sincere thanks and appreciation for all that has been achieved in the past. Such achievement justifies us in facing the future with faith and confidence. May God speed us all in carrying out our sacred duties and great responsibilities, so that those who come after can say, as we do to-day, of those who have gone before, "Well done".

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NEW PUBLICATIONS

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Department of Lands

The Measure of the Land

47 pages with illustrations and maps. Published by the Department of Lands, Adelaide, 1986. \$5 over the counter or \$7 posted from Mapland and government bookshops.

This little book is the Department of Lands' contribution to J150 historical publications. In his preface the Hon. R.K. Abbott, Minister of Lands, says that it is

'a story of surveyors, administrators, law makers and how they have affected people who work on the land and urban landowners. It reflects changing attitudes to the land.'

So The Measure of the Land is more than a departmental history. The settlement of the land is so central a theme in South Australia's past that it could hardly be otherwise. Goyder, selectors, soldier settlers and later developments - they are all here.

In sum it is a book which reads well, the credit for which must go to its real author, John Love. In his introduction, D.J. Alexander, Director of Lands, is less than charitable in his acknowledgement of Love's work and we are told simply that he 'carried out the necessary research and writing'.

Is it too much to expect the author's name to appear on the title page? Surely not!

The maps and photographs complement the text well.

Tony Stimson

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Bill Gammage

Narrandera Shire

1986, Retail price - \$25.00

Narrandera Shire is in the eastern Riverina district of New South Wales but a notice in this Newsletter is well and truly warranted. For one thing Bill Gammage is a member of this Society. He is the author of numerous books and articles and teaches History in the University of Adelaide. More

importantly perhaps, the book is a serious attempt to relate local history to wider issues of state and national history. Dr Gammage says in the preface:

"The great difficulty in writing local history is to relate local events and interests to Australian themes. Local people, although interested in their place in the world, expect the former; historians, although knowing that their generalizations about Australia urgently need testing by local studies, expect the latter. With a few distinguished exceptions, local histories have therefore been either collections of names and anecdotes, or detailed studies of selected periods or themes. The writers of each have kept to what they know, and thereby failed to meet, to their mutual disadvantage.

I do not pretend to have resolved this difficulty. I can only say that it explains what I have attempted. I have tried to respond to both a just local desire to remember noteworthy citizens and events, and to a historian's urge to understand what happened in Australia. I have deferred most to local interest, although no doubt some readers will resent my omission of names and achievements, and in general I have avoided overt academic analysis, although some readers will know that some of my opinions, for example on Wiradjuri population and political organization, the social origins, religious antipathy and town interests of the squatters, the outcome of land selection, the effect of land taxes, the early wheat industry, and the origins of rural conservatism, challenge accepted versions of Australia's past.

Despite very generous local and professional help, I found this book difficult to research. I found virtually no personal diaries or letters, station journals or early narratives, and therefore relied heavily on genealogical sources, lands maps, titles records and the excellent obituaries my grandfather wrote for the Narrandera Argus between 1910 and 1978. These proved very valuable, giving illuminating insights into the nineteenth century particularly, but they helped little with such topics as workmen and women, and this weakness is reflected here. I hope that what has been included will have some interest for those who so long and so patiently helped me prepare it, and those whose district it describes."

Linking the parish pump to the cosmos is probably the most difficult task facing anyone writing local history. Bill Gammage's history of Narrandera Shire may well offer a model for South Australians working in this field.

Tony Stimson

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Marjorie Andrew and Shirley Clissold (eds)

The Diaries of John McConnell Black, Volume 1, 1875-1886

(Investigator Press, 1986). Pp. 21. \$23.50

These fascinating diaries of John McConnell Black, author of The Flora of South Australia, have been meticulously transcribed by his grand-daughters, Marjorie Andrew and Shirley Clissold. They describe his time as an unsuccessful farmer at Baroota for five years, and his first three years as a journalist on the Register and the Advertiser. The volume finishes in 1886, fourteen years before J.M. Black found his true vocation as a botanist.

Volume II of the diaries, which the editors hope to complete in 1988, will describe Black's life from 1887 to 1929. Both volumes will be reviewed together in a later issue of the Journal of the Society.

John Playford

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National Council of Women of SA

Greater than their knowing ...:  
A glimpse of South Australian women 1836-1986

(Wakefield Press, 1986). Pp.310

This anthology, collected by the National Council of Women of SA, pays tribute to a cross-section of women who have influenced the development of the State. It is full of useful biographies and anecdotal stories.

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