



# The Historical Society of South Australia Inc.



Newsletter No. 92 January 1991

**CUNNINGHAM'S**  
NEW IMPORTATIONS,  
EXPRESSLY FOR 1891.  
Are Now Unpacked and On View.

Awarded the **GOLD MEDAL** for the largest and best  
Exhibit of Imported Articles of Artistic Taste  
and Elegance at the  
**ADELAIDE EXHIBITION, 1881.**

**AGENT FOR THE SILICATED CARBON FILTERS.**  
**CHEAVIN'S, DOULTON'S, AND OTHER MAKERS.**  
ALL SIZES KEPT IN STOCK.  
ESTABLISHED 1883.



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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

PATRON:	Sir Walter Crocker, K.B.E.
PRESIDENT:	Dr R.P.J. Nicol
VICE-PRESIDENT:	Mr B.J. Samuels
SECRETARY:	Mr M Keain
TREASURER:	Mrs A. Huckel
MINUTE SECRETARY:	Miss T.M. Donnellan
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY:	Mrs E. Ulbrich
JOURNAL EDITOR:	Dr J.D. Playford

MEMBERS:	Mr H. Angas
	Mr R.M. Gibbs, A.M.
	Dr P.A. Howell
	Mr M. Keain
	Ms S. Marsden
	Mr W. Stacy
	Ms P. Sumerling

NEWSLETTER EDITOR:	Dr I. Harmstorf
WORD PROCESSING:	Ms V.J. O'Neill
AUDITOR:	Mr R. H. B. Kearns

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FOUNDED IN 1974

## Cover Illustration:

One hundred years ago. Advertisement from the South Australian Directory 1891.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Friday, 1 February 1991 at 8 p.m.

Venue: State Library Lecture Theatre  
(Corner Kintore Avenue and North Terrace Adelaide)

**Hans Mincham: Experiences and Reflections of a  
Life-long Naturalist**

Hans Mincham came to history through natural history. He is perhaps best-known for his regional history the Story of the Flinders Ranges and best remembered by thousands of enquirers as the first (1964) Information and Education Officer at the South Australian Museum from where he retired in 1976. He also had a long career as a teacher, his schools including Lyndhurst, Beltana, Hammond and Whyalla. He has contributed to and written several other books.

-oOo-

Friday, 1 March 1991 at 8 p.m.

Venue: State Library Lecture Theatre

**Peter Donovan, Susan Marsden & Viv Szekeres:**

**Public History in South Australia: Communal Histories,  
Heritage Surveys and Museum Work**

This panel discussion has been arranged to coincide with the 10th birthday celebrations of the Association of Professional Historians. Peter Donovan of Donovan and Associates is the author of many commissioned histories, including those of Alice Springs, SAGASCO, Boulderstones and the Real Estate Institute. State Historian Susan Marsden's heritage publications include heritage surveys of the Lower North and River Murray, Kensington & Norwood and Hindmarsh (all with John Dallwitz), Historical Guidelines for the State Preservation Plan and the regional histories in South Australia's Heritage. Viv Szekeres was the first curator of the Migration Museum and has been its Director since 1987. She is President of the Museums Association of Australia (SA Branch) and a member of the Heritage Collection Working Party. She is especially passionate about the need to represent the cultural diversity of Australia in museums.

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# A REMINDER - SUBS 1991

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Subscriptions fell due on 1 January 1991. Pay now for a guilt free year and save our Secretary and Treasurer extra work.

Ordinary Member	\$25.00
Family Member	\$30.00
Country Member (more than 50 kms from the GPO)	\$20.00
Student or Pensioner Member	\$18.00
Institutions (Schools, Libraries etc.)	\$30.00
Affiliated societies	\$20.00
Term Membership (10 years to end of 2000)	\$200.00
Life Member	\$500.00

Use the slip on the membership form enclosed with this Newsletter or simply send your money with name and address and indicate whether new or renewal. Receipts not sent unless requested.

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NOTE: Some existing categories have been merged for 1991 to simplify administration.

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## SOCIETY NEWS

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I would like members to give the following matters close attention. Brian Samuels (Acting President)

### Constitution

Included in this newsletter is the revised constitution adopted at the April 1990 AGM (the revision features as clause 12c, regarding the establishment of a life members and endowment fund), together with minor amendments clarifying the intent of the constitution and removing gender-specific language. These minor amendments have been endorsed by the Council and will be submitted for approval at the AGM on 5 April. Their inclusion in the newsletter is the formal notice required by the constitution.

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### Typing/Word Processing Assistance Needed!

We will need a new volunteer typist in 1991. Please contact me (Work 223 8807, Home 49 8104) if you can assist. Access to a word processor is highly desirable.

-oOo-

### Nominations for Council

Nominations are hereby called for the positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and eight Council members. Nominations must be proposed by members and endorsed by the nominee to the effect that they are willing to stand. They must be forwarded to the Secretary by 14 February 1991.

-oOo-

# TIME TABLE.

## DEPARTURE

OF

# JOHN HILL & CO'S



# ROYAL MAIL COACHES.

Chief Booking Office---King William Street,  
OPPOSITE THE TOWN HALL.

### Meadows.

From Post Office.

Belair Kangarilla  
Coromandel Valley Dashwood's Gully  
Cherry Gardens Meadows  
Clarendon  
From Adelaide, daily, 3.15 p.m.  
From Meadows, daily, 6.15, a.m.

### Mount Barker, Nairne, and Callington.

### Woodside and Mt. Torrens.

From Post Office.

Crafers Grunthal  
Cox's Creek Balhannah  
Hahndorf Woodside  
Mount Barker Charleston  
Little Hampton Mount Torrens  
Nairne

### Mt. Barker—continued.

From Adelaide, daily, 2.45 p.m.  
and 7 a.m.  
" Mt. Torrens, daily 1.20 p.m.  
" Nairne, daily, 6.30 a.m., and  
2.0 p.m.  
" Mt. Barker, daily, 7.0 a.m.  
and 2.30 p.m.

### Mt. Pleasant and Palmer.

From Post Office.

Modbury Gumeracha  
Teatree Gully Blumberg  
Inglewood Mt. Pleasant  
Millbrook Tungkillo  
Chain of Ponds Palmer  
From Adelaide, daily, 7.0 a.m.,  
2.45 p.m.  
" Mt. Pleasant, daily, 6.0 a.m.  
and 1.30 p.m.  
" Palmer, daily, 4.30 p.m.

### Mount Gambier

From Post Office.

From Adelaide, Tu., Th., Sa., 6 p.m.  
From Gambier, Fri., Mon., Wed.,  
10.30 p.m.

### Strathalbyn, Milang, and Wellington.

From Post Office.

Crafers Belvidere  
Stirling East Milang  
Aldgate Langhorne's Creek  
Warland's Mosquito Creek  
Echunga Wyley's and  
Macclesfield Wellington  
Strathalbyn  
From Adelaide, twice daily, 7.0 a.m.,  
2.30 p.m.  
" Strathalbyn, twice daily, 5.30  
a.m., 1.15 p.m.  
" Wellington, daily, 8.30 a.m.  
" Milang, daily, 3.30 a.m.

### Kadina.

From Post Office.

Virginia Port Wakefield  
Two Wells Hummocks  
Light Green's Plains  
Dublin Kadina  
From Adelaide, daily, 6.0 a.m.  
" Kadina, " 7.0 a.m.

### Angaston and Truro.

From Freeling, daily, on arrival of  
first train from Adelaide.  
From Freeling, on Saturdays during  
summer months on arrival of  
afternoon train from Adelaide,  
for Angaston only.

### Clare.

Auburn Penwortham  
Leasingham Seven Hills  
Watervale Clare  
From Saddleworth, twice daily, on  
arrival of each train from  
Adelaide.

### Port Pirie.

Anaima Port Broughton  
Koolunga Rocky River  
Red Hill Crystal Brook  
Collinsfield Port Pirie  
From Saddleworth, Mon., Wed.,  
and Sat., on arrival of after-  
noon train from Adelaide.

### Laura.

Rochester Georgetown  
Anaima Gladstone  
Yacka Laura  
From Saddleworth, on Tu., Th.,  
and Sat., on arrival of 7.45 a.m.  
train from Adelaide.

### For Port Augusta.

Melrose Beautiful Valley  
Stone Hut Stirling  
Charlton Port Augusta  
Via Laura, by first train on Tues-  
days, as above.

### Normanville.

Bennet's Hill Myponga  
Aldinga Normanville  
Sellick's Hill  
From Adelaide, daily, 2.45 p.m.  
" Normanville, daily, 3.30 a.m.

### Willunga.

From Post Office.

Tapley's Hill Horseshoe  
Reynella McLaren Vale  
Morphett Vale Willunga  
Hackham  
From Adelaide, daily, 7 a.m. and  
2.45 p.m.  
From Willunga, daily, at 6.0 a.m.  
1.30 p.m.

### Blanchetown.

On Tues. and Fridays by 7.45 a.m.  
train to Freeling, and thence  
by coach to Blanchetown.  
From Blanchetown, Tu., 11.0 a.m.  
and Sunday at 2 p.m.

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NEWS

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### Directories of Museums and Historical Associations

The Community History Unit of the History Trust has recently produced two directories. "South Australian Historical Organisations 1990-91" sells for \$1.00 (plus 50c postage), "Museums in South Australia 1990-91" for \$2.00 (plus postage). The listings include 201 and 151 organisations respectively. Allowing for an overlap of functions, there are about 280 separate organisations all told.

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### Public Record Office

In anticipation of the abolition of the Department of Local Government, the PRO has transferred to the State Services Department and has changed its name to State Records. Its new Director is former State Librarian Euan Miller, who as Director, State Records and Information Policy, will also be responsible for the introduction of Freedom of Information procedures for all government departments.

\*

### State Library

At time of writing it is expected that in January the State Library will transfer to the Department of Local Government to the Department for the Arts, which will then be renamed the Department for the Arts and Cultural Heritage. A major reorganisation and integration of the Library's services is in train. More details in the March Newsletter.

\*

### Owning the Past Conference

Arranged jointly with the History Trust, this conference attracted over 150 participants and was very well received. Ian Harmstorff's keynote address is reproduced in this newsletter. More information on the outcome of the conference resolutions will appear in the March Newsletter.

\*

## CONSTITUTION OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC.

(As amended at the April 1990 AGM.) Further changes proposed by the Council are indicated thus: words proposed to be deleted are ruled through, and words proposed to be inserted are underlined.

### 1. NAME:

The name of the Society shall be "The Historical Society of South Australia Inc." (hereinafter called "the Society").

### 2. OBJECTS:

The objects of the Society shall be:

- (a) to arouse interest in and to promote the study and discussion of history, especially 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, field trips and exhibitions.
- (e) to co-operate with similar societies throughout Australia.
- (f) to do all such other things as are conducive or incidental to the attainment of any of the above objects ~~or any of them.~~

### 3. MEMBERSHIP:

- (a) Membership of the Society shall be open to all persons subscribing to the objects of the Society and paying the prescribed subscription fee and to those granted honorary membership.
- (b) There shall be such classes of membership as the Council of the Society (as constituted herein) may from time to time determine and such classes of membership may be further defined in the rules of the Society as provided for herein.

### 4. SUBSCRIPTION FEES:

- (a) Subscription fees shall be determined from time to time by the Council and shall be payable annually.
- (b) Any member other than life or honorary life members who fails to pay his the annual subscription fee before the end of the then current financial year shall automatically cease to be a member within three months of the commencement of the financial year as determined by the Council shall be deemed to be unfinancial and ineligible to vote and receive the benefits of the Society.

### 5. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:

The Annual General Meeting shall be held not later than 30th April each year. At least thirty (30) days notice of such meeting shall be given to each member by pre-paid letter posted to his the member's last known address, provided that accidental omission to give notice to any member shall not invalidate such meeting.

6. ORDINARY MEETINGS:

Ordinary meetings of the Society shall be called from time to time at the discretion of the Council.

7. SPECIAL MEETINGS:

Special Meetings of the Society may be called at any time by the Council in the manner prescribed in the rules and shall be called within thirty (30) days of the receipt by the Secretary of a requisition signed by ten (10) members in which the objects of the meeting are specified. The rules shall prescribe the procedure to be followed when the Secretary is absent.

8. COUNCIL OF THE SOCIETY:

(i) At the Annual General Meeting a Council comprising the following members shall be elected:

President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and eight additional members.

(ii) The position of any Council member absent for three consecutive meetings without leave of absence shall automatically become vacant, provided that acceptance of an apology shall be deemed grant of such leave.

(iii) The administration of the Society shall be in the hands of the Council.

(iv) Unfilled and casual vacancies on the Council may be filled for the unexpired portion of the term by the Council.

(v) The council may appoint any committee or committees.

(vi) An Honorary Editor shall from time to time be appointed by the Council and shall be an ex officio member of the Council.

9. RULES:

(i) The Council may from time to time prepare rules for the purpose of carrying out all or any of the objects of the Society and for the management thereof, and may prepare variations, amendments or deletions of such rules, or any of them.

(ii) Any such proposals shall be submitted after thirty (30) days written notice to the membership to an to-the-next-ensuing ordinary meeting of the Society for confirmation, and upon confirmation shall have full force and effect.

(iii) Any member of the Society may at any ordinary meeting of the Society give notice to vary, amend or establish a rule ~~at the next ensuing ordinary meeting of the Society~~ and any such proposals shall be submitted ~~after thirty (30) within ninety (90) days to an notice to the next ensuing~~ ordinary meeting of the Society for confirmation, provided that thirty (30) days written notice has been given to the membership, and upon confirmation shall have full force and effect.

10. ELECTIONS:

Elections for the Council shall be by secret ballot. Results shall be established by simple majority and equality in voting shall be resolved by lot. Nominations signed by the proposer and the nominee shall be called for at least sixty (60) days before the Annual General Meeting. The ballot papers shall show candidates' names in alphabetical order and shall be distributed with the notice convening the Annual General Meeting. The completed ballot papers shall be in the hands of the Secretary not later than seven (7) days prior to the Annual General Meeting. The poll shall be

declared at the Annual General Meeting. All other matters pertaining to the elections shall be set out in the rules.

11. QUORUM:

(a) (i) The quorum at all meetings of the Society shall be twenty (20) financial members.

(ii) Five members present at a Council meeting shall form a quorum.

(b) At all meetings of the Society the Chairman shall have one vote as a member and in the event of the votes being equal, shall have a casting vote, provided that in the case of a Council meeting the Chairman shall exercise a casting vote only.

12. FINANCE:

(a) All moneys received by and on behalf of the Society shall be deposited to the credit of the Society in an account or accounts at such bank as the Council shall from time to time direct. Cheques on this are to be signed by any two of the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.

(b) The Council shall cause proper accounting and other records to be kept, and shall cause such records to be audited by a properly qualified auditor or auditors. The Council shall also cause to be made out and laid before each Annual General Meeting a balance-sheet and a statement of income and expenditure made up to the end of the financial year immediately preceding such meeting, together with a copy of the Auditor's report thereon.

(c) The Society shall establish an "Endowment and Life Members Fund" and allocate to this fund any monies Council deems available for the purpose of investment. Interest from the fund may be used to:

- i. assist with the Society's publications
- ii. publish, at the Council's discretion, books, monographs or pamphlets, pertaining to the aims of the Society, which it considers desirable
- iii. further the objects of the Society at the discretion of the Council.

The money allocated to the Fund shall be invested in the name of the Fund in any investment authorised by the Commonwealth of Australia, or any of its States, for the Investment of Trust Moneys, and Council shall have the power from time to time, to sell or get in any such investments and to transpose them for other investments of a like nature.

Income and profits received from the Fund's investments shall be used for the above objects or to increase the capital of the Fund.

The capital money invested in this Fund cannot be expended except on a recommendation of the Council to the membership and acceptance by a three-fifths (3/5) majority of the votes cast at any ordinary, special or Annual General Meeting, provided twenty (20) days notice of any proposed expenditure has been given to each member by prepaid letter posted to his the member's last-known address, but accidental omission to give notice to any member shall not invalidate the passage of the motion. In addition, any member unable to attend such a meeting in person may vote by post, provided that his such postal vote reaches the Society's mailbox by the day preceding the meeting.

13. RESIGNATIONS:

Any member may resign his membership by sending in his a resignation in writing to the Council and upon such resignation being accepted by Council, he that person shall cease to be a member.

14. AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION:

This constitution may be amended by a three-fifths (3/5) majority of the votes cast at any ordinary, special or Annual General Meeting, provided twenty (20) days notice of any proposed amendment has been given to each member by prepaid letter posted to his the member's last-known address, but accidental omission to give notice to any member shall not invalidate the passage of such amendment. In addition, any member unable to attend such a meeting in person may vote by post, provided that his such postal vote reaches the Society's mailbox by the day preceding the meeting.

15. INCOME:

The income and property of the Society whencesoever derived shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the objects of the Society, and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise howsoever by way of pecuniary profit to the members of the Society or relatives of members provided that nothing shall prevent the payment in good faith of remuneration to any Officer or servant of the Society, or to any member of the Society in return for services.

16. DISSOLUTION:

In the event of the dissolution of the Society, assets shall be transferred to a fund, authority or institution which satisfies the requirements of section 78 (1) (a) of the Income Tax Assessment Act.

17. FIRST COUNCIL:

Notwithstanding anything contained or implied in any of the previous clauses, the first Council of the Society shall be elected by those present at the Special Business Meeting to be held at 8:00pm on September 4th, 1974, and those elected shall hold office until the Annual General Meeting to be called by that Council before April 30th, 1976, according to the manner outlined in Clauses 5 and 9.

18. SUBSCRIPTIONS PAID BEFORE 31ST DECEMBER, 1974:

Notwithstanding anything contained or implied in any of the previous clauses, any subscriptions, at the prescribed rates by the Council, paid for membership of the Society before December 31st, 1974, shall be regarded as subscriptions for the year 1975 and shall thus be valid for membership of the Society until December 31st, 1975.

19. INTERPRETATION:

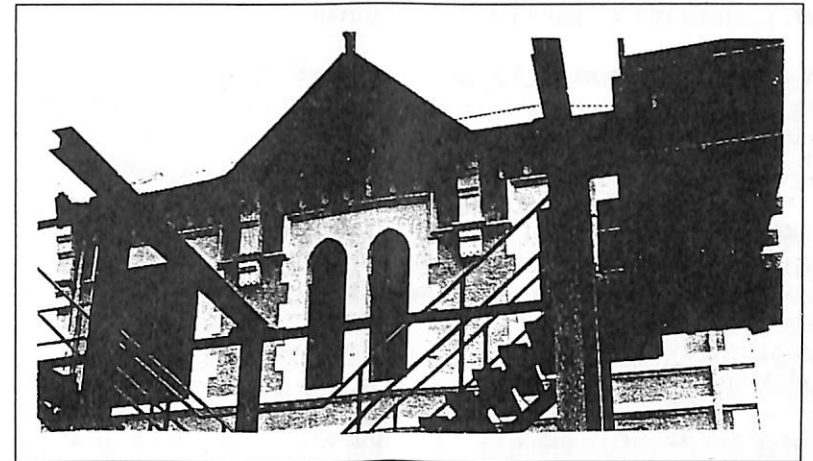
~~In this document where the words he, his or him appear the words she, hers or her may be substituted if appropriate.~~

20. PUBLIC OFFICER:

The Secretary for the time being of the Society shall be the Public Officer of the Society.

# THE POLITICS OF HERITAGE

Edited by Susan Marsden and Robert Nicol



In 1988 the History Trust of South Australia and The Historical Society of South Australia held a conference on "the politics of heritage" to increase public awareness of the basic issues and bring together prominent politicians, historians, heritage consultants, public servants, interest groups and architects to resolve some of the debates about heritage. These papers are the result.

Published by the History Trust of SA and The Historical Society of SA 1990.

To: **Community History Unit, History Trust of South Australia, 122 Kintore Avenue, Adelaide SA 5000.**

Please send me.....copies of The Politics of Heritage @ \$7.50 + \$1.00 postage per copy. Payment enclosed. Address for forwarding:

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The following address was given by Dr Ian Harmstorf at the opening of the 'Owning the Past' conference on the 20 -21 October 1990. The conference was organized by the Community History Unit of the History Trust of SA and the Historical Society of South Australia.

## WHO OWNS THE PAST ?

Minister, Ladies and Gentlemen, fellow historians,

It gives me great pleasure to be able to address you this morning to the theme "owning the past". One must congratulate the organizers of this conference on such a stimulating, thought provoking theme. But before we answer the question 'who owns the past' it is necessary to ask the question 'What is the past'?

In one sense we all know what the past is - it is what has gone before. But millions, trillions of things have gone before, who owns them? The overwhelming majority of things that happen in the world are instantly forgotten. Even things we do ourselves are forgotten. Those things we do remember about our own personal lives are owned by that individual. In one sense therefore owning the past is a very personal thing.

But most of our lives take place in interaction with others and with this interaction events happen. Who owns this communal past. Well, for a time that part of society which remembers the event does, but after they are dead to whom does this past then belong?

There are two types of the historical past. The word historical past is used to differentiate it from the unrecorded past. The past that has been recorded is the historical past. The past may have been recorded in a tangible form such as buildings and artefacts or it may be in the form of a written record. These types of records constitute the historical past. Who owns this historical past? Well everybody and nobody. Think of all the information about the past there is in old newspapers, in parliamentary reports, in old letters and journals, whose pages have never been opened. To whom does this past belong? It is generally available to all, therefore in one sense it is owned by everybody, but as the information is not available in a form that can be understood by the general community it is owned by nobody.

Enter the historian. What is an historian? An historian is any one who is actively involved in rescuing and interpreting the past. This may take many forms. Some historians may run museums, others organise displays for the public. Still others may write pamphlets or booklets about their local area. Family historians write about their extended families. Some historians are simply aware that the past is important for our sense of identity and well-being and try and encourage others to nurture and look after it. To increase this public awareness and understanding of our heritage and its preservation is the task of the historian

It is the historian who gathers all this disparate information together and tries to make sense of it. It is the historian who puts it in a form and context that can be understood by the general public. In essence then, the historian gives back to the public that which is rightly theirs, but which the general populace may not fully grasp or understand because of a lack of knowledge or skills. The past, therefore, although it is owned by the whole community often needs to be interpreted by the historian before the rightful owners, the community, can take possession.

It is clear from this that the role of the historian is of paramount importance. Without the historian acting as the intermediary to interpret or to liaise with the past, the past often remains meaningless to the general public who therefore are unable to own it properly.

This you might argue is all right for written documents but surely does not include buildings or artefacts. How can a building or artifact be interpreted by the historian? An architect is able to say that such a building is a good representation of a period and should be preserved. The historian may also argue this, but generally the historian is more concerned with what happened in the building or what the building represents in the field of human endeavour, whether it be an old cottage or a building which is an important aspect of a town's history in the context of either social life, political events, world events or local happenings. This is also true of artefacts. The artefact is important not so much for its financial value but for what it represents. It is here that the historian is most useful for it is the historian who is able to interpret the artefacts to the people of the present. It is the historian who can show why something is important by putting it into an historical perspective. It is the historian who provides this intellectual input. It is important that historians collect information about what it is considered needs to be saved for the enrichment and knowledge of others, both present and future, and it is historians who put the information in the context of its time and show why it was and is important. Let me give you some illustrations of what I mean by this.

Most of you have been in the situation when you have looked at something in a museum and although it may have had a name label you have not been told when it was used or indeed why it used. The artefact could have been a brilliant and innovative solution to a local problem, but if the historian does not explain this wider context to the general public then there will be little sympathy for the past or its preservation. It is important that people understand why something is important. Similarly you no doubt all have heard that a certain building was important "One of the finest buildings in the town". But exactly why the building was/is important, its specific relationship to the history of the town, or the country, or indeed world history, is not explained.

Let us for example imagine that we have found an old wool press. The sign says "old wool press". The average viewer often says, "so what"? But the historian through research is able to find out approximately when it was made, where it was made, and often why it was made at a particular time. It may have been at a time of good seasons and record exports, there may have been a huge demand for wool overseas because of a European war or bad seasons in the Americas. It may have been the first press in the district and revolutionized the transportation of wool to the nearest seaboard. It is the historian's task to bring this information to the public.

It is initially only the historian who can own this information for it is only the historian who has the skills to find it. But it is also the historian's task to pass on this ownership to the wider public so that the community can rightfully possess what is theirs.

But why should the historian go to all this bother? Surely people do not miss what they have never known. To a degree this is true. But we as historians believe that the past is important, we believe that our history is important. I believe that today our past, which we all own but which the historian interprets and makes meaningful to the general public and therefore allows them to own it, is more important than ever. We have all heard the term the global village. The term infoglut may be less well known to you. It is short for information glut. We are in a situation of information overload. Books are printed by the million. Television and radio bombard us with news from around the globe, the newspaper assails us daily with new crises. The global village may be fine for some people but for most of us there is simply too much happening and we withdraw into our own homes and as it were, shut the door. But we can't completely shut the door because we all live in various communities. We live in our geographic community, and in others as well, which may be ethnic or related to our work, sport, hobby, club, association or even extended family.

These smaller communities are therefore very important to us for they are an essential part of our lives. The history of all of these various communities is also important. They are important because they give us a sense of identity, a sense of belonging. When we feel we are being lost in teeming world events we at least have the chance of understanding our own community. Why can we understand it? We can understand it because the historian has collected the information about the past, if you like the facts of the past, and presented them to the public in a form that can be understood and appreciated. Again the historian has owned the past by understanding it and then passed on this understanding to the general public so that it can be owned by anyone interested in their collective past. In this way people are able to gain a greater sense of self, they feel re-inforced in their sense of identity and not overwhelmed by thinking they are part of some system over which they have no control. Their common past given to them by the historian makes it their past, their present, their here and now, and therefore something to treasure and pass on with nurture and care to future generations. In turn the community histories are incorporated into larger histories of the state and country to merge into the history of mankind.

If I could give you an example from my own research. This has been concerned mainly with the German community in South Australia. By explaining to people of German descent why the German community was treated so unjustly in two world wars I have been told I have helped a number of people understand themselves and their community's history and enabled them to come to terms with it. This then is allowing people to own their history on a personal level and to put it also in the context of larger events. But there was an interaction too, between those of German descent and those of British descent. Explaining this interaction has contributed also to a greater understanding of this aspect of the general history of South Australian.

Some time ago I was involved in trying to make the people of Hahndorf more aware of their heritage. Many of the people living in Hahndorf at that time considered that the old buildings were a heap of junk or at least unimportant and the various artifacts lying around would be better burnt to tidy the place up. The local people interested in their heritage banded together and a series of public meetings were held. A heritage display was mounted in one of the town's halls explaining why the history of Hahndorf was important not only to Hahndorf but to all South Australians. The local primary school teachers took an interest and made the children aware of their heritage and generally throughout the community there was an increasing recognition of the historical importance of Hahndorf. When the developers moved in there was enough public pressure on the council to ensure that Hahndorf did not become another cream brick Adelaide suburb. This would certainly have happened had there not been an increasing understanding of history and heritage in the area. It is important to emphasise that this increase in understanding was brought about by local people at all levels interested in history, some without any formal historical training but people who were prepared to work for what they considered important. I am not suggesting you all might like the way Hahndorf looks at the moment, but I can assure you that the alternative was a thousand times worse. It is also worth remembering that this was some fifteen years ago and the town was under extreme pressure. Towns and areas under less direct threat may be able to do it better.

The point I wish to make is that it does not matter how small your community might be in either a geographic or numerical sense, for in what ever way you as the historian interpret that history and put it in a wider context, you are not only ensuring that it will be owned by the people who are most intimately connected with it, the local community, but that it will be also part of a greater mosaic and be owned in a sense by the wider community encompassing this state and all Australia. As such it will be able to be enjoyed by all and will increase the richness and enjoyment of our lives

It is not difficult to deduce from what I have said that I consider the role of the historian - and by this I mean the historian in the widest sense - is crucial for the well being of our society. Without the historian interpreting the past, without the historian putting the past in some sort of meaningful context so that it can be understood and therefore owned by the general public, we are doomed to live in a one-dimensional world, a world which is unable to pass on the legacy of the past to the future. More immediately it is a world which cannot use the past to help the present. A world composed of communities without a history they feel they own is a world composed of communities and individuals unable to draw strength from the past, to draw inspiration from the past, to draw courage from the past, to draw feelings and ideas from the past in which to enrich their own lives and make them more enjoyable and rewarding.

To the question then who owns the past. All can own it when it is made available to them by the historian. This is the trust and brief of the historian, to make the past available in a form that is meaningful and enriching: to illuminate the past in such a way that it can be owned by everyone, for without understanding our past we can have no real understanding of ourselves or the community in which we live.

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DIARY OF COMING EVENTS

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January

- to 20 Jan. Migration Museum: "Your Past Is What You Keep?"  
Wedding Customs.
- to 29 Jan. Migration Museum Forum: "Naya Desh (New  
Homeland)". The Indian Australian Association  
of South Australia.
- Migration Museum Forum: "Lithuanians Alive".  
Lithuanian Cultural Society.

February

- 1st at South Australian Police Historical Society. AGM.  
8.00 p.m. Jean Schmaal Meeting Room, North Adelaide Police  
Station.
- Continuing Adelaide Gaol Open Days first weekend of each  
month. 10 - 3.30. Guided tours. Adults \$5,  
Children \$2.50, Pensioners/Students \$3, Family  
tickets (4) \$12. Tel 216 7741.
- Continuing The Cummins Society Open Days every Sunday.  
2 - 4.30. Guided tours 2.05 and 3.05. Sheoak  
Av., Novar Gdns. Tel 294 1939.