Burnside Historical Society Inc.

NEWSLETTER - December 2011

Volume 31, No 4

Laying the floor of the new Wattle Park pumping station

From the Editor's Desk

As this is our last issue of the quarterly *Newsletter* for the year a big thank you must go to all those who contributed to its production. From the reporters and contributors to the editorial committee and then to all the distribution members who walk the streets of Burnside. Some of the *Newsletters* also get posted to our members outside the Council area.

The Society's Program Committee has been very busy and the planned meetings for 2012 are outlined in this issue. They start with the January outdoor meeting which will be followed by a dinner to celebrate the New Year (see insert). The visits and weekend away are currently being planned and dates will be confirmed early in the New Year.

The Society is grateful that we have again received an annual grant from the City of Burnside, the bulk of which goes towards producing our *Newsletter*. It is a tangible recognition of the work done by our many volunteers. As Editor, each *Newsletter* is a new challenge in the effort to keep our older members informed of the meetings that have occurred and to provide stimulating articles which record our history, particularly the history of Burnside.

Wishing you a happy Christmas time and looking forward to seeing you all again in 2012.

Don't forget, if you can help with any photos and articles next year then please contact me at esmyth@adam.com.au or on 8332 8019, or see me at a meeting.

Elaine Smyth (Editor)

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We welcome our latest new member, Malcolm Lamey, and we hope you enjoy the shared interests we have in belonging to the Burnside Historical Society.

President's Message

I have recently returned from Europe, viewing places and hearing of notable persons studied during school and university history courses. A comprehensive and educational tour of France took me to Paris – fantastic art and architecture, elaborate Versailles then down through Avignon to the Riviera and Monaco. I travelled on through Provence and the Basque country to Bordeaux. Mont St Michel was a highlight. Visiting Omaha Beach memorial cemetery was emotional with 9,000 US troops buried there. Claude Monet's beloved Giverny is presented as if the artist is just away on a holiday.

One could be forgiven for thinking that there is not such a rich tapestry of heritage and culture in Australia's cities and towns. However, within Burnside we regularly celebrate the people and places from the early colony that have shaped lives. There are plans underway to rejuvenate some Council parks and fortuitously the Society's Program Committee has suggested several plaques associated with them. They are intended to acknowledge the influence of such early families as the Brocks and the Blacks. For over 20 years now the plaques program has been a positive symbol of the Society's ongoing partnership with Burnside Council, while highlighting the significant impact of persons and places from the past.

I want to emphasise that this Society cannot effectively function without good communication. We have had and continue to seek meaningful dialogue with the City of Burnside about a range of issues – notably Wheal Watkins, History Week and new plaques. It is fortunate that Mayor David Parkin, an Honorary Member, who attended our September meeting, is aware of the range of our activities.

The article, *Pioneer Women's Trail* (pp 17-18 June 2011 *Newsletter*) made me reflect on the walk I did in 1988 with my late Mother Edna Davis, aged 75 and a BHS member, along this track as part of the 1988 Sesquicentennial celebrations. I hope stories in our high quality newsletter also bring back memories for you, for that is what history is about – researching, questioning, reflecting and evaluating the past. Don't forget the valuable resources in the Local History Collection in the Burnside Library. Speak to Andrew Ward there if you need information or assistance.

Please take time to look inside the back cover of this newsletter at the significant number of members who work on your behalf behind the scenes as *volunteers* in a variety of capacities. Don't forget to thank them for their efforts. In this context we welcome Myrith Barr, who is now our Publicity Officer. I encourage other members to become engaged with their Society in such ways as reporting back for the *Newsletter* about a speaker at a general meeting or joining one of the subcommittees. Consider nominating for the Society's Committee at the April Annual General meeting as some members will be retiring. It's one way you can

make a real difference, positively contributing your ideas and helping our Society stay vibrant and viable.

We have just been informed that once again our Society has been given a Community Grant of $750 to continue to produce our quarterly *Newsletter*. Thanks to the Burnside Council for acknowledging the importance of this valuable resource in recording and informing the readers of people and places of historic interest, especially within Council's boundaries.

The Committee and I wish all members a wonderful Christmas and very Happy 2012.

Meredith Ide JP

EASTERN DISTRICTS HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

Seminar 2012, Advance Notice

Members are advised that the biennial Eastern Districts Historical Societies Seminar, which the BHS organised in 2010, will be run in 2012 by the Campbelltown Historical Society.

The Seminar will be held on Saturday 2 June in the Campbelltown Function Centre, 172 Montacute Road, Rostrevor

This will be the 10th biennial seminar and it will also coincide with the 25th anniversary of the Campbelltown Historical Society, making it a very special occasion.

Further details will be provided as they become available.

JB Cleland Kindergarten is turning 50! Celebrations on Saturday March 31, 2012. If you attended the Kindergarten they would love you to share your memories. Contact via: **50thcelebrations@jbclelandkgn.sa.edu.au**

Program 2012

MEETINGS

MEETINGS of the Burnside Historical Society are held in the Burnside Community Centre, corner of Portrush Road and Fisher Street, Tusmore (car park and entrance off Fisher Street) at **7.30 pm** on the third Monday of the month, unless an alternative time or venue is notified. Admission is free and supper provided. Visitors are most welcome.

Monday 16 January

Foothills living in the late nineteenth century—the modest and the grand

For our traditional outdoor meeting in January we will gather on the shady lawns of Hubbe Court, Burnside, adjacent to *Undelcarra*.

> *Undelcarra*, like nearby *Ivymeade*, *Clifton* and the now demolished *Erindale* represented nineteenth century foothills living at its grandest. Large stylish buildings, expansive grounds and a full retinue of house and gardens staff spoke of wealth, privilege and high social rank. But it was not all as grand as this: only a short distance away was the heart of old Burnside Village, with modest cottages for artisan and labourer living, small shops and the obligatory public house.
>
> Our Vice President, Colin Harris, grew up near old Burnside Village and regularly leads walking tours through the area. In the delightful setting of Hubbe Court he will introduce us to foothills living in the late nineteenth century.

Please gather at Hubbe Court at 5.45 pm for a 6.00 pm start and bring a folding chair to sit in the shade. There is some parking in Hubbe Court. Otherwise use Lockwood Road or Nilpinna Street, which connects via a short walk to Hubbe Court.

The gathering will conclude around 7.15 pm and be followed by an optional dinner at the *Feathers Hotel* on nearby Glynburn Road. The flyer accompanying this Newsletter provides full details for those participating in the dinner.

Monday 20 February - Bob Korotcoff
Angel Flights

Often those needing the speed and comfort of aircraft travel are those least able to afford it. *Angel Flight Australia* is a charity that co-ordinates non-emergency flights for financially and medically needy people. All flights are free and may involve passengers or compassionate carers travelling to or from medical centres anywhere in Australia.

Bob Korotcoff was raised in Cairns in North Queensland and spent much of his working career in the insurance industry. From an early age he has been heavily involved in community service and in recognition of his service to many organisations he was recently awarded the Commonwealth Recognition Award for Senior Australians and an Unsung Hero Award from the City of Marion. He is a Life Member of Lions Club International and an inductee to the Australian Lions Foundation Hall of Fame. With his wife Erica Bob has made over 235 promotional presentations for *Angel Flight Australia*.

Monday 19 March - Max Slee
Adelaide's first Gaol (1838-41) and its association with Government House Domain

One year after European colonization South Australia's first gaol was erected, a temporary wooden structure described at the time as 'most miserable, insecure and filthy'. In 1841 a substantial new gaol replaced it and the old gaol was quickly forgotten, so much so that with the passage of time even its original location became uncertain. Recent research by Max Slee has now uncovered some of the colourful history of the old gaol and – even more remarkably – its location in Government House Domain.

In retirement Max Slee maintains a passionate interest in police history. A foundation committee member of the SA Police Historical Society, Max is also a past President of the SA Genealogy and Heraldry Society. His recent publications have included a biography of Henry Inman, first commander of the South Australian police, and an account of South Australia's first gaol, the subject of this address.

Monday 16 April - John Bennett and Sandra Lachlan
Bennett's Pottery and the Magill Cemetery

Monday 21 May - Geoff Bean
Prince Alfred's College

Monday 18 June - Valmai Hankel
Red deserts & leafy walks

Monday 16 July – Dr Andrew Black
South Australian ornithology 1802-99: pre-colonial and colonial observations of our native birds

Monday 20 August – Kate McDougall
State Heritage Areas in Burnside

Monday 17 September – Chas Grimes
Memories of Linden Park

Monday 15 October – Dorothy Heinrich
Robert Clark Morgan. Whaling Sea Captain – little-known figure of early South Australian History

Monday 19 November – Maralyn Ward
Wayville Showgrounds

ANNUAL SUBS ARE NOW OVERDUE for 2011/2012

A few members have not yet paid their subs for 2011-12.

Please pay at one of our monthly meetings

or send your money to

The Treasurer, Burnside Historical Society,

John Clark, one of our Life Members, has moved from his home in Hazelwood Park to* Gleneagles*, a Nursing Home, at 1099 Grand Junction Road, Hope Valley, 5090. He would love to see any members if they are in the vicinity.

The Magic Lantern: Images of Innamincka

Monday 15 July 2011

Once again we were treated to an entertaining and historically interesting evening with Lorraine and Ron Potts and their Magic Lantern, embellished with comments from our own Colin Harris and Rick Moore.

The historic projector and slides, now more than 100 years old, were obtained by Ron Potts' father from Mr Albert Ewens, a policeman stationed at Innamincka from 1912-20. Some modifications to the projector, originally illuminated by acetylene, now enable it to be powered by electricity. Copies of the many glass plate slides are lodged in the State Library.

Slides shown included a camel train transporting goods in the interior between Innamincka and Farina along the Strzelecki Track, Cooper's Creek in flood, Aborigines in corroboree dress, Burke's grave at Cooper's Creek, the old horse mail from Innamincka to and from Farina, the old Killalpaninna Mission station on the Birdsville track, camels crossing Cooper's Creek laden with wool and donkeys pulling a load of wool. We heard about Mr. Wallace Johnston, a flamboyant Canadian who oversighted the sinking of a bore at Patchewarra to provide stock water. The bore was a failure but traces of oil were found and the nearby area later became the gas and oil fields of the Cooper Basin. Mr & Mrs Wallace Johnston were well known Adelaide socialites with a house in Wayville. In 1916 Mrs Wallace Johnston wrote an article for *The Advertiser* describing a motor journey from Adelaide to Innamincka, copies of which were available at the meeting.

Until the 1930s pastoralists were running sheep, using Aboriginal labour as doggers and shepherds with large quantities of wool going south. One slide showed the shearing shed at Cordillo Downs with its curved roof built this way as it needed less timber than a conventional straight line roof. Later, stations changed to cattle because of the shortage of Aboriginal labour and the attacks of wild dogs. We saw slides of stockmen ready for cattle mustering, mounted on stock horses – sturdy animals bred especially for the harsh inland conditions. Bronco branding was pictured as was the old Customs house on the Queensland border, cattle on Haddon Downs and Nappamerrie stations. Innamincka Station is the third largest in Australia.

Additional information from our members added to the interest of the presentation.

Margaret Beare

A very different climate—how European settlers coped

Monday 15 August 2011

Climate and weather historian Tony Rogers opened by describing his address as 'settlement looked at through the prism of weather and climate', noting that it had originated as a paper to the 2010 State History Conference. He also advised that much of the material in it would shortly appear as a book entitled *Weather and the Science of Settlement*.

In no small way weather shaped the colony of South Australia, the early settlers being profoundly affected by its vagaries. Many had been influenced in their decision to choose South Australia as a destination by early written accounts of its geography and climate. A number of these accounts were quite misleading, in some cases through ignorance, in other cases wilfully where authors and editors had a vested interests in promoting migration to the new colony. Among others, James Nash claimed that 'the hottest summer days are followed by cool and delightful nights', T O'Halloran said that it was a 'most salubrious and healthy climate' and the *South Australian News* of 1842 claimed there was 'enough water and no drought'.

For a while it appeared that these accounts of benign South Australian weather might indeed be true, with the first two decades of settlement being blessed by cooler and wetter conditions than normal, but in the mid 1850s conditions took a turn for the worse. Summers were suddenly hotter and drier and dust storms started to make an unwelcome appearance. Cereal cultivars that had been developed for the milder conditions of England and Europe were found wanting and previously reliable water sources for domestic livestock began to fail.

For the settlers themselves life became increasingly uncomfortable. Quite apart from the inappropriate clothing they still wore, the early housing was quite unsuited to the colony's extreme summer temperatures. Canvas provided minimal protection and timber was little better. One celebrated case of just how harsh life could be under these conditions was a woman who gave birth to an infant in a tent that had an interior temperature of 127 deg. F (52.7 deg. C). A blanket draped over the tent had water regularly bucketed over it to provide some evaporative cooling and to prevent temperatures rising even higher!

Unsurprisingly, some settlers and visitors became thoroughly disenchanted. Robert Harrison, who arrived in South Australia in 1856, persisted for five years before departing and subsequently writing *Colonial sketches, or five years in South Australia*, an account which defenders of the colony regarded as a scurrilous slur on its good reputation. A highly colourful critique, the book damned out of hand South

Australia's climate and railed against its flies, mosquitoes, ants, locusts, centipedes, scorpions and frogs!

With the passage of time, increased prosperity and rising standards of living, conditions in South Australia did improve steadily and Harrison's vitriol is now regarded as a mildly amusing period piece.

Colin Harris

Tony Rogers' book *Weather and the Science of Settlement* has since been released and is available from selected booksellers, the Bureau of Meteorology at Kent Town and the Royal Society for the Blind at a recommended retail price of $30. All proceeds go to the Royal Society for the Blind.

Mitcham Heritage Research Centre

Sunday 24 July 2011

We were welcomed into the 1892 Police Station which had once been used by the SES, but which had also been vacant for a long time. It is an ideal site for a history centre, with a good location at the Mitcham Cultural Village and having benefited from some necessary recent modifications. On arrival, our President Meredith introduced us to Maggie Ragless, Community Historian and her team of volunteers. We were told how the volunteers worked extremely hard, with the support of the City of Mitcham Council, to relocate Council's history records from the Mitcham Primary School to set up the Mitcham Heritage Research Centre late 2009.

The information collected is mainly paper-based, but they are working on a local history service. To foster greater awareness of local history, projects undertaken include tiles in footpaths, on ceramic table-tops in each Council ward as well as occasional archaeological digs under houses. The collected information housed in this research centre is not locked away as they prefer to share it with the locals and others interested in specific aspects of Mitcham's rich history.

Maggie has an enthusiastic support team of 38 people who often have "feelers" into the community. As with all volunteers they give freely of their time in varying amounts as they are able. They use their initiative when contributing to projects and Maggie encourages this approach.

There was a question time during the afternoon tea time – such a generous spread! Sincere thanks to Maggie and those volunteers present for a most enlightening afternoon. We were impressed with their presentations in the centre and their enthusiasm.

Sharan Northcott

20th State History Conference, 5-7 August 2011

"In Perspective" - Rethinking South Australia's history

This year's State History Conference was held at the National Wine Centre and several of our Society members attended on selected days. The principal speakers were sourced locally and interstate and were enthusiastic about their topics, although with several sessions running concurrently it was difficult to make choices about what was best to attend. Margaret Beare and I attended on the Saturday and were impressed by the quality of the speakers.

Prof. Densley Deacon spoke on *"Outlaw Fan": an international star (Judith Anderson) grows up in Adelaide*. Judith was born in 1897 and was one of the world's greatest actresses. She died in 1992 in Santa Barbara. Her father, James, made his money in the Silverton mines, but left the family to live on the WA goldfields. Her mother maintained the four children, living in a shop and house next door to the Rose Park School.

Dr Peter Bell spoke under the theme *Who are we? South Australian identity.* His theme was *The Convict Myth: another look at those convicts and the part they didn't play in South Australia's history.* In looking at the myth Peter pointed out that there were Europeans with convict backgrounds on Kangaroo Island from 1806 onwards, regular shipping from Van Diemen's Land and travellers with convict backgrounds coming overland into South Australia prior to and after the settlement of Adelaide in 1836.

Glenda Couch-Keen continued with the overall theme and spoke of *Is it really, and will it always be the Herbig Tree?* The Herbig tree is a river red gum estimated to be 450-500 years old. A grandson of the original pioneering Herbigs, David Herbig, has a book which outlines the amazing history of the family which, by 2001, had around nine hundred descendants. The tree is a tangible symbol of early Europeans immigrants and their place in South Australia's history.

This was followed by *Who are we now?* a discussion by Christine Finnimore, Catherine Manning and Elspeth Grant. This year was the 175th Anniversary of European colonization of SA and among other things there has been a special exhibition at the Migration Museum. The multiculturalism we now have is represented by 200 countries and 50% of our population has at least one parent born overseas.

Under the heading *A Province in practice* Peter Moore spoke of the *Fatal letter: Robert Torrens and Native Title.* His address focussed on an official 1836 letter which detailed the need for Europeans to share the new colony of SA with Indigenous peoples of the (then) Empire. In the event few rights were given to the

Indigenous peoples and detribalization in the settled areas was swift and destructive of traditional Aboriginal society.

Tom Gara then spoke about *Protectors and Aboriginal rights in South Australia, 1836-1847.* A second letter by the colonization Commissioners employed Colonel Light's services so that land could be surveyed and sold, either to people in Britain or to local Europeans. Again, there were no land use rights for the traditional owners, the Aboriginal people.

The topic continued with Dr Ann Herraman speaking on *Implementing the Wakefield concepts of colonization and land settlement – a regional perspective, Mount Barker, 1829-1889.* Wakefield had set down principles of systematic land colonization, including survey and sale of the land, with proceeds from the land sales to be used to bring more immigrants to the colony. Extensive sales of good country were made to purchasers both in Britain and in the colony, resulting in the appropriation of many of the best hunting grounds and water sources for the Aboriginal people.

Later on Saturday Ian Schomburgk spoke about *Re-appraising the synergy in the role of agriculture, mining and engineering in our early rapid expansion.* His address looked at the transformation of dry land farming of wheat and associated flour mills, as well as mining and smelters. The development of different strains of wheat at the Botanic Gardens in SA greatly assisted the growth of farming. A huge metal industry evolved very quickly and paddle steamers opened up the Murray Darling Basin for commerce.

The last speakers for day were Emily Jateff and Amer Khan with an address entitled *To Eyre is human: tales of whaling and shipwreck on the west coast of South Australia.* Many of the whalers and sealers arrived from Van Diemen's Land and set up whaling stations and processing facilities at many locations around the SA coast. Shipwrecks were inevitable, but in four instances of claimed shipwreck no traces of the boats were to be found – it is possible that these may have been insurance scams.

Sharan Northcott

Burnside Historical Society has been fortunate in having the Council provide website space for them in the past. The Society is considering having a space of there own. A committee is being set up to look into the feasibility of this. If you have skills in this area, or know of someone who does, please contact the President, Meredith Ide.

The Burnside Primary School Jubilee 150 Celebrations

From the Past

The following article appeared in the Volume 6, Number 2, June, 1986 edition of the Society *Newsletter.*

Peter Davies feels that it will be of interest to members as a number of our members have either taught at, or are old scholars of, the school. It was written by foundation and life member and past President of the Society, John Clark.

On the afternoon of 17th April, 1986, the children of the Burnside Primary School had a Celebration when the whole school contributed to a Jubilee 150 theme.

The afternoon opened with the whole school assembled in the open play area, and the singing of the Australian national anthem. Many of the pupils had dressed up in 'early period costumes' and these paraded around the arena before the visitors. The visitors included the Minister of Education Mr. Greg Crafter, the Chairperson of the Parents Committee Mrs. Lorna Dunn and some parents and teachers.

The Caring and Sharing Committee of the pupils had been responsible for the production of a gigantic cake some two meters by three meters which stood as a centre piece of the arena supported on four tables. This cake was in the shape of a map of South Australia with blue icing for the sea and brown and fawn icing for the mainland and Kangaroo Island. Candles were inserted to mark the positions of the major towns and cities, but the attempt to light the candles was thwarted by the blustery wind.

The Minister of Education said a few appropriate words encouraging the pupils with the importance of our history and heritage and then the four flags for the four school teams were presented. With a Jubilee theme, this year each team has been named not as usual by their team colour, but by the name of an early family or tribe pertinent to the history of Burnside.

Before presenting the flags, Mr. John Clark explained he was the great-grandson of Francis and Caroline Clark, who with their eight children settled in the area now known as Hazelwood Park, in 1853. Their house has a wonderful garden and orchard including oranges, olives and vines. Some of the family lived on in the house till 1911, when most of the property was acquired by the government as a pleasure resort.

Mr. Clark then presented a Red Flag with a large letter 'C' on it to the pupil who represented the Clark Team. He explained that the Newland family had been early settlers in the Burnside area, and presented the Newland Team with a large Green Flag with the letter 'N' on it. The next flag presented was a Yellow Flag for the Anderson Team, as Peter Anderson had been one of the very early settlers and had been the one to name the area Burnside. The last flag was to remind all, of the Kaurna aboriginal tribe who originally occupied the Adelaide plains, and a flag with a large 'K' on a blue background was presented to the representative of the Kaurna Team.

Shortly afterwards, "God Save the Queen" was played over the amplifier and out marched a gentleman resplendent in the period costume of a Captain of the Royal Navy, carrying a Union Jack who announced that he was Captain Matthew Flinders, representing King George III on a voyage of discovery to the southern oceans. Then the French National Anthem was heard and another naval person marched out carrying the French national flag, the Tricolor, who announced to all he was Captain Nicolas Baudin, who represented the might of the French Republic 'VIVA LA FRANCE'.

Both Captains drew their swords and gesticulated their defiance at each other, but suddenly they sheathed their swords and advanced to shake hands and be kissed on the cheek. This action was greeted with cheers by the school children as they realized the enactment of the historic meeting between Matthew Flinders and Nicolas Baudin in Encounter Bay in 1802.

The two Captains then proceeded to symbolically cut the gigantic cake with a sword, and the cake was cut up into reasonably sized slices, and distributed one piece to each child and grownups present.

This concluded the afternoon with Captain Matthew Flinders (played by Ian Oliver) and Captain Nicolas Baudin (played by Val Stanley) chatting together over two pieces of blue iced cake.

J.S.C.

On 30th June I was privileged to take part in an Oral History workshop in the Mortlock Wing of the State Library run by the Oral History Association of Australia (SABranch) Inc. It was attended by about two dozen people from a variety of backgrounds with an interest in learning how to conduct Oral History interviews using state of the art digital recording equipment. I was also able to purchase for the Burnside Historical Society a copy of the fifth edition of the Oral History Handbook by Beth M Robertson which is available for the use by members.

Margaret Beare

Wattle Park Service Reservoir

Background

SA Water's North-South Interconnection System Project consists of a range of works to link the northern and southern water supply networks. Part of this project is the Eastern Pipeline which will be constructed between the Clapham and Wattle Park pump stations. Having played around the Wattle Park service reservoir as a youth, and lived in the surrounding district all my life, I was particularly interested in the substantial work being undertaken there. This prompted me to do some research on the facility.

In the early 1900s the Lillywhite family owned land on the corner of Penfold and Simpson Roads and lived in *Perroomba*, the large house in Simpson Road adjoining the reservoir. In June 1982 Miss Sarah Lillywhite wrote an account in the Burnside Historical Society Newsletter of her childhood memories when living there in the early 1900s. While not all specifically relevant to the reservoir some of her comments make interesting reading today.

The family had no electricity until the mid-20s and had to pay for the poles to bring the supply in from Penfold Road; Simpson Road was unmade and her father bought broken pots from Bennett's Pottery to make it passable. It was 1958 before deep drainage was available. Penfold Road was formed with stone delivered in horse-drawn drays, dumped in heaps and broken down to size by gangs working on the roadside. Miss Lillywhite writes that '*water had to be carted from Magill for use of the horse, cow and fowls and even when we were connected to the mains, we often couldn't get enough water (owing to the lack of pressure)'*, and that '*When the Government bought our land for the storage tank, we watched the men scooping out the earth with large metal scoops drawn by teams of horses.'*

In January 1929, prior to this work, members of the Public Works Committee inspected '*the site of the proposed service reservoir for Wattle Park, east of Kensington'*. In March the Committee recommended several improvements to the metropolitan water supply to cost £884,910 ($59,807,710 in 2008 values), including *'the construction of a 20,000,000 gallon* (90.9 ML) *reservoir at Wattle Park at a cost of £53,900'* ($3,642,890 in 2008 values). The work at Wattle Park involved *'the laying of outlet and inlet mains and 15-in.* (381 mm) *trunk mains for north and south feeders to the upper Burnside and Mitcham zones.*' Early in June 1929 '*The Commissioner of Public Works extended the time for one week for the receipt of tenders for the construction of a reinforced concrete service reservoir of 19,000,000 gallons* (86.4 ML) *capacity at Wattle Park, near Magill.'*

By 31st May 1930 the work was well under way and two photographs appeared in *The Register News-Pictorial*, one showing a large steam scoop in operation and

the other a Cletrac caterpillar tractor at work on the side of the reservoir, and, apparently pulling a man up the steep slope on a sled (Figs 1 & 2)! The cost of the reservoir was said to be £36,000 ($2,433,103 in 2008) and its capacity 19,000,000 gallons (86.4 ML).

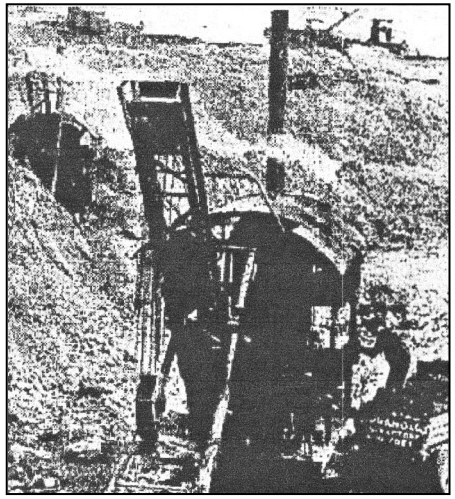

Fig. 1 'MORE WATER FOR THE CITY'

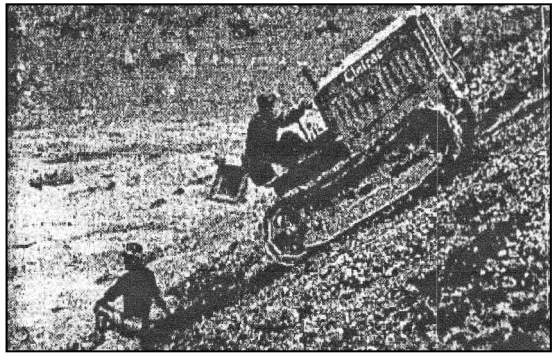

Fig. 2 'PREPARING GROUND FOR NEW RESERVOIR'

A panoramic view in the same paper on 7th June 1930 shows two steam shovels and a dragline excavator at work (Fig. 3). Two images, dated *ca*. 1930, that together form a panoramic view of the completed (but empty) reservoir, are held by the State Library of South Australia (Fig. 4).

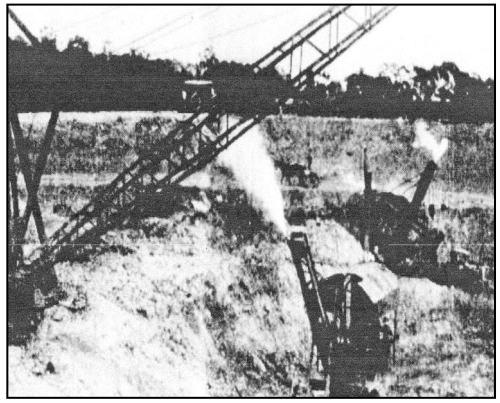

Fig. 3 'GIANT SCOOPS AT WATTLE PARK

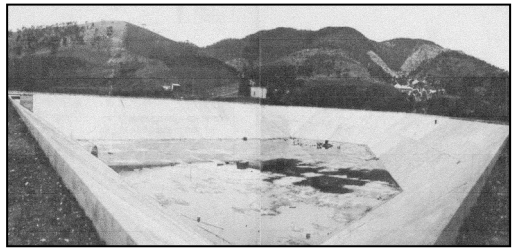

Fig. 4 'Water Supply at Wattle Park'

An Ailing Water Supply

The original supply to the reservoir was by gravity from the Millbrook Reservoir, completed around 1918, the level at Wattle Park being controlled by a large ball cock similar in principal to those used in domestic cisterns. A cursory scan of Adelaide newspapers shows that almost from its construction the supply from the Wattle Park reservoir was inadequate, particularly during hot summer spells. As early as 1934 contributing factors were attributed low pressure, the expansion of the eastern suburbs and pipes of inadequate size. Even the distressed residents' own supply pipes were blamed by the Minister! In the same year '*... pressures taken by the Norwood Fire Brigade indicated a serious position in the event of a fire*.' It may well be that this was the reason for the construction of the water towers in 1946-47 on Portrush Road near the intersection with Norwood Parade and that at Glenside near the junction of Portrush Road and Conyngham Street.

In January 1953 the capacity of the reservoir, that serviced Royston Park in the north, Kent Town in the west, Erindale in the east and Glenunga in the south, was still being severely taxed and the Engineer-in-Chief (Mr Driden) appealed to residents in the higher eastern suburbs to economise on water usage until '*a satisfactory reserve was available in the Wattle Park Reservoir'*.

Remedial Work

The gravity feed was obviously not sufficient to top up the reservoir overnight and to maintain an adequate supply during the day and a pumping station was installed in Simpson Road around 1963 to provide a satisfactory service.

In January 1980 the Anstey Hill Water Filtration Plant was commissioned and, while the water supplied to Wattle Park was said to be ... *aesthetically satisfactory, its microbiological quality has often been poor. This can be directly attributed to avian contamination and the large duck population attracted to the open storage reservoir during the summer months*. To remedy this problem a temporary chlorinator was installed at Wattle Park to dose the incoming water and the seepage water being pumped back into the reservoir. After 1988 the supply was supplemented from the Happy Valley Water Filtration Plant.

In the mid-80s, because of leakage, the reservoir could only be filled to 50% capacity and a flexible lining was proposed to counter this problem. At the same time a floating cover would be fitted to reduce airborne contamination, including from dust from the nearby Stonyfell Quarry, which resulted in the necessity to remove accumulated sediments annually.

Ancillary work included an access building, stairway, security fencing and encasing the southern inlet pipe in concrete, probably to reduce noise from inflowing water. The work was completed around the end of the decade; the

lining and floating cover were the first in SA and the largest in Australia.

Completed in mid-87 the lining and cover, nearing the end of their design life, were removed in August 2011 when major infrastructure works, that included replacing the old pumping station, were underway.

In the period 2004-06 the Friends of Ferguson Conservation Park were concerned about runoff from the reservoir being discharged into Stonyfell Creek. The Minister advised that this was probably due to a number of factors including accumulated stormwater on the cover, tears in the cover, ground water entering the pipe, or valve leakage. Corrective work was carried out that including fitting a new scour valve in the large pit on the south side of the reservoir.

In July 2010, as demolition of the pump house was imminent, the proposed work on the Wattle Park pumping station and other stations in the system came to public attention. Because of the unfortunate way in which information was released it caused a storm of protest among affected residents and SA Water acknowledged that the release had been badly handled. This initiated group discussions among the stakeholders at which various options were tabled resulting in an amicable outcome. After excavations and ground works were completed the floor of the new pump house was laid in September 2011.

The general feeling today is that SA Water and the contractors have made determined efforts to see that the work is carried out with the least possible disturbance and inconvenience to residents and the environment.

Ken Preiss

Fig. 1 'A giant scoop working at the new reservoir at Wattle Park, near Magill.' *The Register News-Pictorial,* 31 May 1930.

Fig. 2 'The indispensible tractor busily grading the sides of the new Wattle Park reservoir, which will be ready for service probably in about eight months.' *The Register News-Pictorial,* 31 May 1930.

Fig. 3 *'*....preparatory excavations for the new reservoir at Wattle Park.' *The Register News-Pictorial,* 7 June 1930.

Fig. 4 WATTLE PARK: Part of a reservoir providing the water supply for Wattle Park, South Australia.' *SLSA: Mortlock Pictorial Collection B63090 & B63901. ca.*

Merry Christmas to all

BURNSIDE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC., PO Box 152, Glenside, 5065

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Society shall be:

* to arouse interest in and to promote the study and discussion of Australian and South Australian history and in particular, the history of the City of Burnside;

* to promote the collection, recording, preservation and classification of works, source material and artefacts of all kinds relating to Burnside history;
* to assist in the protection and preservation of buildings, works and sites of historical significance in the City of Burnside;
* to co-operate with similar societies and other bodies throughout Australia;
* to do all such other things as are conducive or incidental to the attainment of any of the above objectives.

OFFICE-BEARERS FOR 2011-2012

President:	Meredith Ide, JP	(8365 3049)
Responsible Officer:	Isabel Williams, OAM, JP	(8379 4090)
Vice-President:	Colin Harris, PSM	(8331 3571)
Secretary:	Sharan Northcott	(8332 1761)
Treasurer:	Richard House	(8552 4723)

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Newsletter Subcommittee:
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Contributors: Apart from the Newsletter Subcommittee, we are fortunate to have members who contribute occasionally and their names appear with their articles in the relevant issues.
Distribution Organiser: Shirley Sumerling (8364 3505)
Program Subcommittee:
Colin Harris (Chair), Shirley Sumerling, Meredith Ide and Sandra Lachlan
Plaques Subcommittee:
Colin Harris, Eleanor Trott and Sandra Lachlan
Supper Co-ordinator: Hazel Newton

Meetings of the Society are held in the Burnside Community Centre, corner Portrush Road and Fisher Street, Tusmore (car park and entrance off Fisher Street) at 7.30 pm on the third Monday of the month unless an alternative time or venue is notified. Admission is free, including supper. Visitors are most welcome.

Membership fees: are $30 family, and $20 single, due in April each year and may be sent to the Treasurer at the Society's address (above) or paid at a monthly meeting.

Front Cover:

Laying the floor of the new Wattle Park pumping station in September, 2011. Photo by Ken Preiss

Disclaimer
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