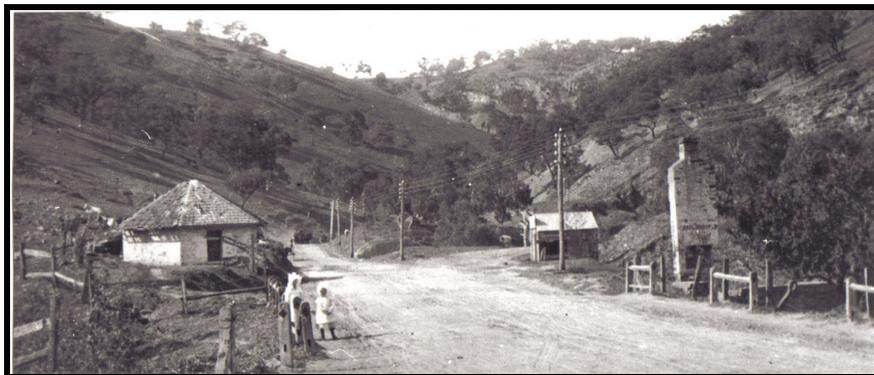


# Burnside Historical Society Inc.

NEWSLETTER - September 2010

Volume 30, No. 3



**Old Toll-bar House**

## From the Editor's Desk

Many of you participated in the Eastern Regional Seminar our Society hosted in June. What great support we had from our group. Thanks go to Sharan Northcott for being such an enthusiastic team leader. And thanks also to all those people who came into the kitchen and offered the behind the scenes help in seeing that food was on the table for the participants. Hope you all enjoyed the day as much as we did organising it. Reports of the day appear elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Note the change in talks for August and September. Kristin Weidenbach has had to defer her talk until she returns from overseas in September.

The Upper Spencer Gulf Tour regional tour members will be packing their bags soon as this leaves on Friday 10 September for Port Pirie, Port Augusta and Whyalla. Let's hope the weather is pleasant and that all participating have a great time.

If you can help with articles or photos with the Newsletter, please contact me on my new email address [esmyth@adam.com.au](mailto:esmyth@adam.com.au) or on 8332 8019.

**Elaine Smyth (Editor)**

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## President's Message

In the June 2010 *Newsletter* I observed that the pace of activity within the Society would be picking up as the year advanced and that is certainly the case as I write.

On Saturday 19 June our Society hosted the 9<sup>th</sup> biennial Eastern Regional Seminar for historical societies and the day proved a great success. Our organising Committee for the Seminar, led by our Secretary Sharan Northcott, had put a great deal of thought and hard work into making sure that everything ran smoothly on the day and their efforts were amply rewarded. The speaker programme throughout the morning was well received with an important opening address from Mayor Wendy Greiner followed by a keynote presentation on the history of Burnside by our own Richard House. Individual societies then spoke of their activities over recent times and the morning concluded with a tour of the Local History Room in the Burnside Library and a chance to inspect the many displays within the main Hall and the foyer of the Community Centre. After an ample lunch the 55 delegates broke into three groups for afternoon tours, reported on elsewhere in this *Newsletter*. All in all a most successful event: our thanks to Sharan, Meredith, Mary and Elaine for their highly effective organisation.

One of the highlights of Mayor Greiner's opening address at the Seminar was the news that the City of Burnside had been granted \$25 000 from the State Heritage Fund as a contribution towards the works needed for the reopening of the Wheal Watkins Mine at Glen Osmond. Mayor Greiner went on to say that, when added to the \$30 000 anonymous donation previously received and \$16 000 set aside in the Council's budget, the heritage grant would allow the works to proceed. This was very good news because the Society has been working assiduously towards this end. It now looks forward to continuing its partnership with the Council at Wheal Watkins, both in the works needed for reopening and in the running of public tours in History Week each year.

Closer to home, the Society celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a dinner at the Feathers Hotel on Saturday 14 August. Our local State Member of Parliament, Vickie Chapman, is a member of the Society and joined us in what was an enjoyable celebration of the good work the Society has been able to do since its inception. And, of course, in mid September we will be undertaking our regional tour of the Upper Spencer Gulf. Planning for this is well in hand and a full report will appear in our next *Newsletter*.

Meanwhile, our programme of regular monthly meetings continues with a range of interesting speakers and topics. At our July meeting it was a pleasure to have Federal Member for Sturt Christopher Pyne MP (like Vickie Chapman, a member

of the Society) with us to present volunteer certificates to a number of our members. A report on this occurs elsewhere in the Newsletter and it is a reminder of how much we depend on volunteers in our community. As government funding at all levels becomes increasingly constrained more and more reliance is being placed on our volunteers, so congratulations to those in our Society whose efforts have been recognised!

**Colin Harris, PSM**

### **Lost property - Ladies jacket**

Found on a chair after our 21 June 2010 general meeting:

Ladies wind and shower jacket, light beige colour, zip front opening  
St Michaels UK brand, polyester/cotton, 102 cm chest measurement  
Good condition.

Contact our President, Colin Harris, (08) 8331 3571

## **Program 2010**

**Monday 20 September, 8 pm**

***Tom Kruse and Reg Sprigg – Legends of the Outback***

Kristin Weidenbach

In very different ways Tom Kruse and Reg Sprigg became legends of South Australia's Outback.

Tom, a knockabout truck driver and earth moving contractor, was to be immortalized by his central role in John Heyer's classic 1953 film documentary, *Back of Beyond*, the story of the Marree-Birdsville mail run, whilst Reg Sprigg achieved his legendary status through geology. Amongst many other things, Reg discovered the world's oldest fossils at Ediacra in the Flinders Ranges, helped found the oil and natural gas producer *Santos*, played a pivotal role in the discovery of the Cooper Basin oil and gas field and later in life established the Arkaroola Wildlife Sanctuary, one of Australia's first eco-tourism resorts.

Kristin Weidenbach has a PhD in immunology, but switched to a career in writing after completing postdoctoral research at Stanford University in California. Her biography of Tom Kruse, *Mailman of the Birdsville Track*, has sales of over 90 000 and is currently in its 20<sup>th</sup> printing since publication in 2003. *Rock Star*, her biography of Reg Sprigg, was published in 2008.

**Monday 18 October, 8 pm**

***A National History Curriculum – Attainable Goal or Pie in the Sky?***

Paul Foley

Paul is currently President of the History Teachers' Association of South Australia. He has been a secondary teacher specialising in history and geography for the past 26 years and his posts have included schools in both regional and urban South Australia, Victoria and the greater London area in the UK. Paul is a member of the national executive of the History Teachers' Association of Australia and is currently the humanities co-ordinator at Loreto College, Marryatville.

In his address Paul will provide the background to the development of a national history curriculum, looking at a range of the papers prepared for this process. He will talk about some of the practical problems involved in implementation in South Australia and nationwide and the role of both federal and state governments in providing guidance on matters such as reporting and assessment. His final point of discussion will be the professional development needed for teachers and the crucial role to be played by groups such as historical societies.

**Monday 15 November, 8 pm**

***Mound Springs and the Burnside Connection***

Simon Lewis and Colin Harris

In his epic attempts to cross Australia from south to north the nineteenth century explorer John McDouall Stuart relied heavily on the mound springs in the Far North of South Australia. Natural outlets for the waters of the Great Artesian Basin, the springs occur in some of the most arid country in Australia.

Stuart certainly appreciated their importance to his expeditions and he devoted considerable space in his journals to describing them and speculating on their origins. On his final expedition in 1861-62 he had with him a number of individuals with strong Burnside connections.

Simon Lewis is a biologist who worked for over thirty years with the South Australian Department of Environment & Heritage. In the course of his work he became a specialist in the natural history of the springs and in his address he will outline some of their fascinating features. Our President, Colin Harris, has worked with Simon in the mound springs country for many years and will round out the address by talking about the heritage importance of the springs and their historical connections with Burnside.

## **MEETINGS**

MEETINGS of the Burnside Historical Society are held in the Burnside Community Centre, corner of Portrush Road and Fisher Street, Tasmore (car park and entrance off Fisher Street) at 8 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.

(Information regarding our talks is always posted at the Burnside Library.)

## **The Magic Lantern – Glass Images from the past**

Monday, 15 March 2010

Ron Potts and his wife Lorraine gave us a nostalgic trip back in time with their Magic Lantern show and tell evening. With Ron operating the 1906 projector and Lorraine as narrator, we experienced life and culture in South Australia from approximately 1910 to 1950.

We were told the intriguing story behind the collection of the old glass plate images, these particular ones being acquired by Ron's father and colleagues. The images became the nucleus of the Magic Lantern shows which Ron's father presented in various country towns.

Many of the examples depicted advertisements for all those things essential in life, such as toothpaste, corsets (at one time!), tea, etc. A wide array of railway advertisements included vacancies for engine cleaners, porters, etc. with a commencing salary of twelve pounds fourteen shillings per week.

What seemed to be incredibly cheap fares needed to be offset by the wages of the time. But we felt very envious seeing an ad for four pounds first class Adelaide-

Melbourne return to see the test matches, with a similar price for the Melbourne Cup. Attractive railway fares here included six shillings to Victor Harbour and likewise to Oakbank for the Easter races.

Of particular interest to our members were the slides depicting historical scenes in South Australia, including diverse means of transport. We saw horse-drawn trams, electric trams (now back with us!) and trolley buses. The view of the Semaphore clock tower was taken at the time when trams ran down the main street of that seaside suburb.

Scenes of the horse-drawn tram between Victor Harbour and Granite Island reminded us that it first operated in 1894. Pictures of early aviation in South Australia included those of Keith Smith when he landed at Lameroo. Among other nostalgic images were the main street of Edithburgh when farmers brought their produce to the town to be loaded on to a ketch; the old Glenelg jetty with its aquarium at one end; the pioneering Birdseye buses on the early roads leading to Port Lincoln; the crowd at Tailem Bend in 1927 waiting to welcome the Duke and Duchess of York – and much more.

A very magical evening, indeed.

**Elizabeth Rogers, OAM**

## **Solo Travels in the outback – with a Glance at some Explorers**

Monday, 19 April 2010

Our speaker Valmai Hankel is not only a dedicated bibliophile, with many distinguished accolades throughout her long career (much of the time with the Rare Books Collection in the State Library of South Australia), but in her 'spare moments' she undertakes solo travels in the outback.

During those solo travels, Valmai often follows the footsteps of some of Australia's early European explorers. Although those explorers were primarily male, we heard of one female explorer Emily Caroline Creaghe who, with her husband Harry, joined an exploration party that travelled from Normanton to Port Darwin in the 1860s. Emily's journal gave details of camp life and food eaten, information that was often omitted in the records kept by men.

Valmai's visual presentation included a number of the sites she had explored on her solo trips, such as aspects of Cooktown, named after the spot where Captain Cook

had landed, Sturt's cairn of stones at Depot Glen, and John McDouall Stuarts' cairn. We also saw Mount Finke, which Stuart named, and the site of the lush Cooper's Creek where Burke and Wills died in 1861 – and the DIG tree. Other sites on Valmai's outback trips included the Simpson Desert, waterfalls on the Atherton Tableland, Sturt's Desert Pea and various unique Australian flora and fauna, such as the striking red mulga trees, lizards, flying foxes, dingoes, termite mounds and broilgas. We were intrigued by a number of distinctive outback Queensland pubs, including Croydon, Ravenswood, Toompine and Urandangi.

We also saw one of Valmai's own camp sites – a swag on top of two mattresses, under which was a shower curtain, with eight layers of blankets, and our speaker comfortably ensconced by a campfire with adjacent food and wine, and the ideal companions of sunsets and stars.

During her talk, Valmai referred to the facsimiles of explorers' journals produced by the Friends of the State Library. She recommended these journals, particularly if travelling in the outback, and if so, it would be even better to take the journals and read them on site, as she does.

**Elizabeth Rogers, OAM**

## Seymour College – a History and a tour of the buildings

Monday, 17 May 2010

Saturday 19 June 2010

In addition to being a former student of the college and mother of students at the college, Margaret MacDonald is a member of the Australian Society of Archivists, the Federation of Australian Historical Societies and the History Council of South Australia, making her well qualified to talk to us at our general meeting on 17 May and to subsequently lead us on a tour of the College as part of the Regional Seminar on 19 June.

The 17 room *Wootton Lea* mansion was built for Mr FH Faulding in 1860-61 as a family home and after his death in 1868 it eventually came into the possession of Mr.GS Fowler, another well-known Adelaide identity, in 1873.

Mr .Fowler made many changes to the property. In 1876 an access driveway with

an avenue of trees was formed with a lodge at the gateway to Portrush Road. The lodge was home to the head-gardener. Most of the trees are surviving. The cement pillars and verandah roof across the western façade of *Wootton Lea* were removed and replaced by balconies with wrought iron pillars and balustrades. In later years, the senior boarders slept on these balconies protected from the elements by canvas blinds and their raincoats!

A basement with a tiled swimming pool was added and a billiard room. Other improvements inside the house were parquet flooring and superb William Morris Wallpaper in the grand drawing room and dining room, to say nothing of the ceilings and chandeliers. Outside, a conservatory was constructed, trees and shrubs and orange and stone fruit orchards were planted. I have it on the best authority that the orchards were raided from time to time when the fruit was ripe.

Fowler also acquired land between *Wootton Lea* and Glen Osmond Road and gifted a 40ft wide strip to enable a road connection (Fowlers Road) to Glen Osmond Road to be constructed. Mr. Fowler died in 1896.

In 1921, with the authorisation of the State Assembly of The Presbyterian Church, *Wootton Lea* was purchased to become a private Girls College, and in 1922 Presbyterian Girls College (PGC) was founded. With the formation of the Uniting Church in 1977, the College was renamed *Seymour College*, after Dr J.A. Seymour who had become the first Chairman of the Council of Governors of PGC.

In 1925, McGregor House with six acres of land adjoining the College was purchased and was used as a boarding house, although during the depression it was closed for a term or rented out. Due to severe deterioration, it was demolished in 1971 and replaced by a new Junior School.

Many of the old outbuildings still exist and are in use, though not necessarily for teaching. The cottages known as *Oodnadatta* and *Tipperary*, were so named by students because they were such a long way from the rest of the college. The former was a classroom for up to grades 5 and 6, and the latter was a dormitory for boarders and one mistress in the early days. Others are *Brown's Cottage* (the coachman's dwelling in 1868), and the coach-house (1881).

The Clan System, equivalent to other colleges house systems, initially consisted of Wallace, Bruce, Douglas, and Stewart, but when Wallace tartan was hard to get in 1927, that clan was replaced by Cameron. An early Principal, a Miss MacDonald, obtained on a trip to Scotland special permission from the Black Watch hierarchy for her girls to wear Black Watch Tartan as part of their uniform, but only if they wore grey gloves and stockings!

It was ideal to visit the College so soon after the initial talk by Margaret and I will not readily forget the magnificent rooms in *Barr Smith House* (the former *Wootton Lea*). I only hope the students get to see them too.

**Bob Steele**

## Bits of Burnside – Some aspects of Burnside's early history

Saturday 19 June 2010

Richard House presented a detailed coverage of the early settlement and subdivisions in the Burnside Council area for his keynote address at the Eastern Regional Seminar hosted by our Society.

Richard described the Adelaide plains from the hills of Beaumont and Ferguson Park and how the Kurna Aboriginal people lived in the area. Then with the assistance of an 1839 map he talked about the city acres which were for sale, initially at £1 per acre. Most of the early European population settled near the creeks and well known rural properties included *Prescott* and *Tusmore* farms.

Another well known name was Metters, the whitegoods manufacturer. Fred Metters built a large house, still standing, on the corner of Kensington Rd and Prescott Tce.

The first Council Chambers on Glynburn Rd. were built in 1869 at a cost of £219. The first woman Mayor was Margaret Bond, in 1975.

Olives were first planted in Burnside in 1839 and there were two producers of olive oil in Burnside – the Stonyfell Olive Oil Co and G F Cleland.

Magill was the first village to be subdivided and was named after David Maitland Makgill of Fifeshire Scotland.

A little known gem was that sericulture, the cultivation of silkworms, was promoted by Sir Samuel Davenport of Beaumont in the 1860s. The Adelaide Silk Industrial Association was formed in 1871 with Davenport on the Board. Mulberry trees were planted at the Parkside Asylum in 1874 and the resulting cocoons sent to France to be spun. Silk dresses were paraded by fashion conscious ladies. Silk was also used (in later years) to make parachutes. Sericulture continued until the late 1890s.

Some of the many lesser known historical sites described by Richard were Stevenson's violet farm at Leawood Gardens and another, Walkers, on Old Norton Summit Road at Magill.

In about 1878 William Murray established a jam factory near the intersection of Bevington & Glen Osmond Roads.

One of the world's longest lived persons, Beatrice Mears, was born near the Victoria Park racecourse and lived most of her life in Burnside. She died in 2001 aged 113.

John Cresswell lived in Statenborough St., Leabrook. Among other things, he ran the Royal Adelaide Show and was secretary of the South Australian Cricket Association. Gardens near the Adelaide Oval and the southern public stand at the oval, erected in 1923, are named after him.

These were just a few of the numerous 'bits of Burnside' ably described by Richard.

**Geraldine Treloar**

## Chiverton, St. Peter's Collegiate Girls' School

Saturday, 19 June 2010

Anne Daniel, curator of the museum, welcomed us and gave an enthusiastic presentation of the history of *Chiverton*. We were later able to view the museum and parts of the School's older buildings.

Then Ken Preiss, long time BHS member and keen local historian, talked about Ferguson Park which is attached to the school grounds. The various owners of the land which is now Ferguson Conservation Park have, for over 120 years directed their efforts to conserving the native birds and vegetation. In 1949, shortly before her death, the then owner of the land, Miss Effie Ferguson, gave it to the State '...for the benefit of the public in perpetuity.'

Since 1972 it has been under the control of the National Parks and Wildlife Services and in 1976 it was given the status of a conservation park. In 1982 the Friends of Ferguson Park was formed, the first such group in SA, and since 1984 the staff and students of St Peters have been involved with planting seedlings raised from seed collected in the Park.

The main aim of the group has been the reduction of weeds and revegetation.

Early projects were the construction of a bridge, steps and the preparation of a walking trail. With the help from the NPWS many of the pest plants such as African Daisy, olives, ash and pines, have been eliminated or at least kept under control. There are 12-15 *active* members of the group, but new members are always welcome.

Ken's enthusiasm for this project showed through in his talk and I'm sure that many of those present have since made a point of visiting Ferguson Park.

The afternoon finished with Wines supplied by Howard vineyards and hot drinks.

**Mary Wilson**

### Natural Heritage Conservation, important biodiversity sites in the Burnside Council area

Saturday, 19 June 2010

Colin Harris led this tour to five different sites around Burnside. Some of these conservation areas show the noteworthy biodiversity work of the City of Burnside's Andrew Crompton and his volunteers.

*Linden Gardens* (Corner Greenhill/Portrush Roads) once the site of a service station, now seen by motorists, is a haven to view SA blue gums, native pines, acacias, young river red gums and kangaroo grass, all with planned drainage. Pop in to see it.

*Beaumont Common* is on a much larger scale. Parts of it have been mulched and planted with an understory of natives and careful flood control has been undertaken. The majestic SA blue gums and the ancient grey box trees (perhaps up to 500 years old) are worth a visit.

The 1839 *Finnissbrook Water Mill site* is of real historical importance, but has no plaque to mark its location on First Creek near Glynburn Road.

*Bellyett* (Bell-gate) opposite St Peter's Collegiate Girls' School, is a showpiece of careful conservation work, again by Andrew Crompton and his team.

*Ferguson Conservation Park*, a gift of 20 acres to South Australia from the estate of Effie Ferguson, is being tackled by the Friends of Ferguson Park, volunteers led by well-known figures such as Dr Geoffrey Bishop and the Preiss family. Erosion, soursofs, periwinkle and neighbourly aggression are problems. They need help!

**Glen Woodward**

## Certificates of Appreciation

For the past four years the Society has been invited to nominate individual members for Certificates of Appreciation, an initiative to recognise the work of volunteers in our community.

At the July 2010 general meeting of the Society seven certificates were presented by Christopher Pyne MP, Federal Member for the seat of Sturt, four for 2009 and three for 2010.

### 2009 Round

**Margaret Preiss:** Margaret is a foundation member (1980) and Life Member and was on the Committee of the BHS for its first four years. Among other things, she has drawn on her lifelong association with Burnside to author historical material on Knightsbridge and has led a number of walks through that area's historical precinct.

**Irma Steele:** Irma joined the Society in 1981, shortly after its establishment, and was a Committee member for five years throughout the 1980s. For three years in the late 1980s and early 1990s she was a member of the Newsletter Editorial Subcommittee, providing support to the then Editor Meredith Ide.

**Margaret Sando:** Margaret is a foundation member (1980) and was a Committee member for ten years throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Margaret has combined her ongoing support for the BHS with a number of other community roles, including a high profile commitment over many years to the National Trust of South Australia.

**Eleanor Trott:** Eleanor joined the Society in 1995 and has been a Committee member for the past six years. She continues to make a major contribution through the documentation of the history of the parks and reserves of Burnside, including in this an exhaustive examination of the City of Burnside's official Minutes books.

**Meredith Ide:** Meredith is a founding member of the Society (1980) and was Newsletter Editor for three years (1986-89). She has been a Committee member for five years (1986-89 & 2009-10) and Vice President for the past two years (2009-10). Meredith has had a sustained involvement with the Society over the past 30 years and has been a willing helper throughout that time.

**Sharan Northcott:** Sharan joined the Society in 2000 and has been Secretary for the past six years (2005-2010). As members will appreciate, the position of Secretary is demanding, with many tasks requiring constant attention. Sharan has also taken on a range of additional projects, including the significant task of convening the organising committee for this year's Eastern Regional Seminar.

**Mary Wilson:** Mary joined the Society in 2001 and was a Committee member for three years (2006-09). She continues to help in a number of roles, including ongoing publicity for meetings and activities generally. Mary never seeks recognition for the considerable amount of help she provides, but is always to the fore when support is needed, the most recent example being her active role in the planning and running of this year's Regional Seminar.

In previous years certificates have been presented to Peter Davies, John Love, Richard House and John Clark (2007) and Ken Preiss, Alan Brooker, Elaine Smyth, Barbara Parker, Brian & June Ward, Edna Bayfield, Elizabeth Rogers, Isabel Williams, Dr Ross Both, Lucille Haddy, Barbara Harris, Wendy McGuffog, Pam Whittle, Glen Woodward, Margaret Black and Alan Cross (2008).

#### ANNUAL SUBS FOR 2010/2011 WERE DUE ON 1ST APRIL

Most members have paid their subs but a few are still outstanding. If there is a pink slip in your newsletter could you please submit your money to:

The Treasurer, Burnside Historical Society  
PO Box 152, Glenside, SA 5065

Single subscription \$20  
Family subscription \$30

#### Errata:

In the March 2010 Newsletter, Volume 30, No. 1 the November meeting report incorrectly referred to Sally Hopkins on page 13. It should have read Sally Hopton.

## The Trak Cinema – Past, Present & Future

Monday, 21 June 2010

Michael Schneider was a refreshing advocate for cinema – in particular the *Trak Cinema* at Toorak Gardens.

He outlined the history of motion pictures as a series of steps: the first animated, blurred images in Britain in 1899; special effects; stories; live music; colour; narration and the introduction of sound. Hollywood emerged as the most important pivot for the industry. Australia was a vanguard in that it made the first feature length movie *The Story of the Kelly Gang* in 1906. Only a few minutes of film are left in the National Film and Sound Archives. As the industry grew, so did the theatres – in Australia the *Regent Cinemas* led the way.

The introduction of television in the 1950s changed the momentum. The film industry responded with new technology - including Cinemascope, Cinerama, better sound quality and drive-in theatres. Videos again slowed the momentum in the early 1980s and the industry responded with multiplexes, then digital sound.

The Trak Cinema started in 1975 and after two years was bought by Barry Loane. At first, foreign films with sub-titles were shown and he chose to target mature audiences. His project to run an art-house cinema expanded and eventually he occupied the entire first floor of the building on Greenhill Road.

Michael Schneider started working at the Trak in 1991 and with his business partner Michael Todd (both formerly with the *Capri Theatre*), bought the *Trak Cinema* in 2004. Their niche in the market had been growing – they expanded to a second screen (1995) and a third (2008). Some of their films have run for many months and become icons, providing a lead for other states to follow.

Michael spoke of Cannes and other film festivals, where the practice is to show cuts of 5000 films in two weeks. This is a melee of all aspects of the industry, and drives eventual decisions for choice of purchases.

Michael was very generous in allowing a long question time. He stated that digital film is getting very big, and that DVD and Blue Ray are set to expand. He sees no future for the single screen theatre and would love to see the Australian film industry expand.

**Barbara Parker, PSM**

# Gorebats – A Postwar Construction System

*Ken has researched and written this article in response to a lecture we heard in August 2009 that was recorded in the December 2009 Newsletter, Volume 29, No 4 on page 7.*

Following World War II there was a building boom that resulted in a shortage of labour and building materials. Clay bricks were difficult to obtain and alternative materials were sought – Mount Gambier stone and cement bricks were two options and Gorebats were another material that found some favour.

The name, Gorebat, comes from Claude Gore who conceived the idea in collaboration with a Mr Bateman. The panels were made on part of the Gore's property at Chisholm Avenue, Burnside the remainder of which was a commercial flower garden, well-known to local residents. The system was well thought-out and provided a quick and cost-effective means of building, particularly for halls and the like at a time when labour and materials were at a premium.

A Gorebat is a hollow modular construction panel made up from two concrete halves, or 'skins', that have been likened to two shoebox lids. The skins were cast over a former that produced a cavity, and a central strengthening rib. The cavity resulted in a skin with a wall thickness of about 25 mm that could be readily handled for transport and construction. Adjustable steel formwork was used to determine the outside dimensions and two 'L' shaped reinforcing rods were cast into the skin during manufacture (see accompanying diagram,). To speed up manufacture batches of skins were cast on two long parallel benches with a concrete mixer mounted on rails between the benches.

The skins were laid individually as the inner and outer courses of a cavity wall and bonded together with 'U' shaped ties inserted in holes formed during the casting process; together, the two skins made-up the hollow panel. The skins were made to order in various sizes, nominally 1200 mm x 1000 mm x 150 mm deep. Smaller modules were available and could be laid in different combinations to allow for the building-in of doors, windows etc. Special corner skins, with a 300 mm return on one edge, were also pre-formed and these significantly reduced construction time and cost. As both external and internal skins were factory finished no further rendering or plastering was required (see accompanying photograph).

A few homes were built with Gorebats, but the large size of the panels made them particularly suited to structures such as church and community halls. Following the war there were tax incentives to erect memorials to those killed in the war and

this contributed to the erection of many memorial halls built in the postwar years. Many of the buildings also used Perry steel windows, popular in the postwar years.

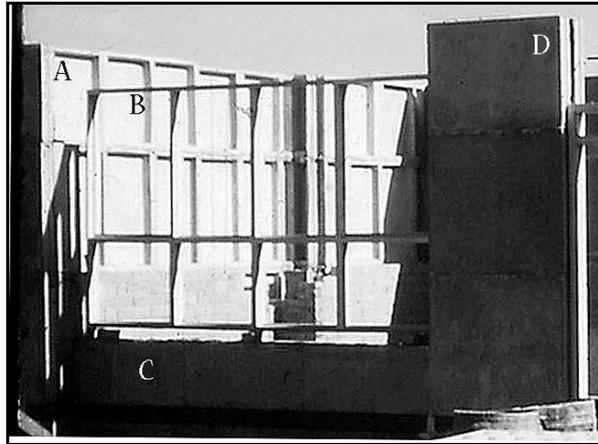
A house owned by J Crotti, built in 1948 at 180 Burnside Road (now 498 Glynburn Road), was the first house built using Gorebats and was opened by the then Premier, the Hon. Thomas Playford. This house was demolished sometime after 2004, when it was the subject of a court case over the removal of a significant tree. The house was then described as being ... *built of Gore bats. A Gore bat is a hollow rectangular concrete block, approximately 1m x 800mm x 250mm in dimension. The Gore bats are laid on a concrete strip footing.*

As the building industry gained momentum in the postwar building boom the concept of large panels was taken up by Monier and many of their panels, with exposed aggregate, are a feature of schools and other public buildings of the late fifties. The small-scale manufacture of Gorebats could not compete and production ceased after the business was sold to the sole builder, Mr. Frank Johansen, who exhausted the remaining stock.

I am aware of fourteen buildings still standing in 2009 where Gorebats were used in their construction:

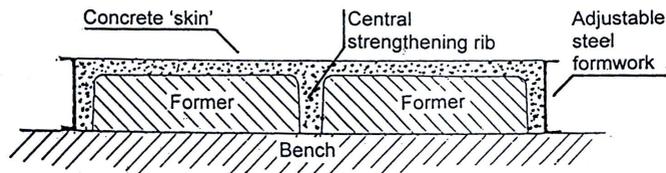
- Aldgate Memorial Hall (1958).
- Building at 8 Piccadilly Rd, Crafers built for a refrigerator manufacturer (1951-52) and now disposed as several commercial units.
- Cherry Gardens Memorial Hall (1956).
- Echunga Memorial Institute (1956).
- House at 1a Young Street, Burnside, (1957-58). Built for Geoff Gore, son of Claude Gore, as an example of the system. Gorebats were also used for the floor. This house is listed by the City of Burnside as a Local Heritage Place.
- House, 66 Hindmarsh Road, Victor Harbor. Built by Claude Gore for a family holiday home.
- House, 170 Longwood Road, Heathfield.
- House, 5 Wright Road, Crafers.
- Knightsbridge Baptist Church Hall (1952).
- Reynella Memorial Hall (1953).
- Seventh Day Adventists Church Hall, 150 Longwood Road, Heathfield, later converted to a residence.
- Summertown Uniting Church Hall (1964).
- Uraidla RSL Hall.
- Verdun Memorial Hall (1960).

I am indebted to Geoff Gore for his firsthand knowledge; help in compiling this account and for allowing me to copy photographs of his home under construction, Keith Powell, who worked on the construction of the Crafers building with Frank Johansen and who provided useful information and Andrew Ward who searched Council records for details of the house owned by J Crotti. I wish also to thank Christine Garnaut and Bill Wallace for comments on early drafts and David Gerner, the occupier of 1a Young Street, who allowed me to inspect his home.



### House detail at 1a Young Street, Burnside

The top course on the left clearly shows, on the extreme left, the use of a 'corner skin' (A) and a standard skin with the central 'strengthening rib' (B). Fractional, or half-height, panels have been used below the window frame (C). Three panels have been completed between the window and door frames and the gap between the skins can be clearly seen as a dark line (D).



Casting a Gorebat 'skin'. In the diagram the concrete has been poured and the 'skin' awaits removal after curing.

Ken Preiss

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

### OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Society shall be:

- 2.1 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;
- 2.2 to promote the collection, recording, preservation and classification of works, source material and artefacts of all kinds relating to Burnside history;
- 2.3 to assist in the protection and preservation of buildings, works and sites of historical significance in the City of Burnside;
- 2.4 to co-operate with similar societies and other bodies throughout Australia;
- 2.5 to do all such other things as are conducive or incidental to the attainment of any of the above objectives.

### OFFICE-BEARERS FOR 2010-2011

<b>President:</b>	Colin Harris, PSM	(8331 3571)
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Isabel Williams, OAM, JP	(8379 4090)
<b>Vice-President:</b>	Meredith Ide	(8365 3049)
<b>Secretary:</b>	Sharan Northcott	(8332 1761)
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Richard House	
<b>Committee:</b>	Margaret Beare, John Clark, John Love, Eleanor Trott, June Ward, and Isabel Williams OAM, JP	

### Newsletter Subcommittee:

Elaine Smyth, Editor (8332 8019), Peter Davies, Barbara Parker, PSM and Elizabeth Rogers, OAM.

**Contributors:** Apart from the Newsletter Subcommittee, we are fortunate to have several occasional contributors whose names appear with their articles in the relevant issues.

**Distribution Organiser:** Shirley Sumerling (8364 3505)

### Program Subcommittee:

Colin Harris (Chair), Shirley Sumerling and Mary Wilson

**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 8 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 now \$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:**

Entrance to the Gorge, old Toll-bar House on the left. Probably taken in late 1890s.

Tolls were first levied on the Great Eastern Road in 1841 with management of it by tender. The Government took over direct control in 1844. There were many exemptions for the toll including the Governor's horses and carriages, horses and vehicles of the Survey and Police departments, conveyances with agricultural produce to be sold and persons travelling to Divine Service on Sunday. Tolls ceased to be collected after December 1847 as it was considered unfair that this road should levy a toll on settlers and not others.

Thomas Gill, *The History and Topography of Glen Osmond*. Vardon & Pritchard, 1905. Libraries Board of South Australia facsimile, 1974 p 22.

## **Disclaimer**

Views and opinions expressed in articles in the Newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the Burnside Historical Society Inc. While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of articles printed, responsibility is not accepted for any errors they may contain that are out of the Society's control.

## **The Privacy Act**

A member's personal information collected by the Society, for example name, address and telephone number, will only be used for forwarding of the Newsletter and relevant information concerning the Society. The information will not be shared, sold or given to any third party without the member's consent.

Any e-mails will be treated as above. However, any information sent by e-mail will be at the sender's risk and the Society will not be held responsible for any unintended use or disclosure of this information.