BURNSIDE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

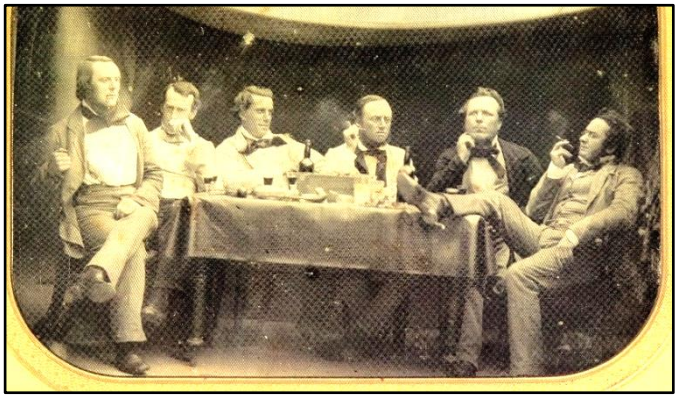
The Monthly BHS Bulletin

September 2024

THIS MONTH'S MEETING: Monday 16 September at 7.30pm

Our September meeting will feature Ian Sellick as our speaker. Ian's topic will be ***Theatre Life in Colonial Adelaide, 1836 – 1856.*** Full details of the speaker and his topic can be found in the meeting flyer on page 4 of this Bulletin.

The image below is a very early SA photograph taken around 1850 by an unknown photographer and depicts six men seated in a very casual manner around a table. It is simply entitled *Actors.* The six men are likely to all be amateur actors with the one second from right being identified as George Coppin who was known to be the "father of Australian theatre". Coppin was in Adelaide from 1846 until the end of 1851 during which time he was responsible for the opening of the New Queen's Theatre and the renovated Royal Victorian Theatre, he also performed as a comic actor. Our speaker will no doubt have some stories about actor Coppin.



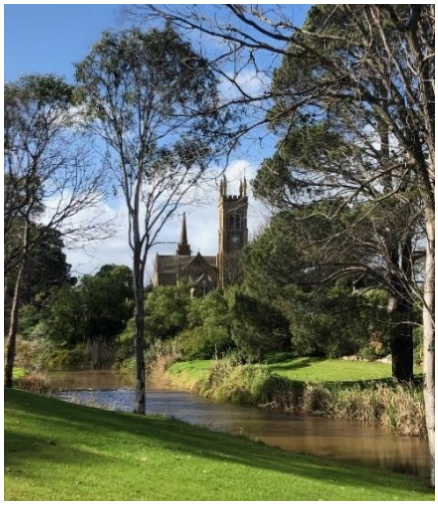
Actors c.1850
Unknown Photographer

p31, *A Century in Focus, 1840s – 1940s,*

South Australian Photography.

Art Gallery of SA

BOOK NOW: BHS DAY TRIP TO STRATHALBYN
Wednesday 25 September



All members received an information flyer a month ago with their August Bulletin advising of our day visit to historic Strathalbyn. The visit will include morning tea and a visit to the Glenbarr homestead, lunch at the Victoria Hotel, a visit to the Strathalbyn and District Heritage Museum and a range of other optional experiences in the afternoon. **Bookings need to be finalised by 16 September** (our next meeting) along with payment of $15 which covers the tour and morning tea at Glenbarr. Lunch is at your own expense (Senior's meals @ $19) and entry to the Museum is $6. Transport is in your own vehicle but if you don't wish to drive then car sharing can easily be arranged.

So far booking numbers are quite disappointing, so please give this outing your serious consideration and either book now by phoning the BHS number 0422705916, or in person at the next meeting. Payments can be made by EFT: Burnside Historical Society, BSB: 105086, Ac No: 330298840 or with cash at the meeting. Our historical outings are always enjoyable occasions and the visit to Strathalbyn will not be an exception.

So please book now and join us for a day in historic and scenic Strathalbyn.

THREE HISTORIC BURNSIDE HOMES: Can you name them?

The BHS meeting on **Monday 21 October** will feature three of our own members, Dianne Wilson, Liz Silz and Bob Stace telling the stories of three historic Burnside homes; two remaining and one gone but not forgotten.

See if you can work out from the three images, to the left and below, the names of the three homes.

THE 4 MISTRESSES OF BEAUMONT HOUSE

We were regaled with four of the costumes from the National Trust's Costume Collection when Sandy Whitelaw spoke at our August meeting. Sandy has been the curator of the Collection for over 7 years. The Collection has recently moved from Ayers House to Beaumont House. Keep an eye out for the next costume exhibition later this year which will feature a wedding theme.

Sandy spoke of the four mistresses (chatelaines) of Beaumont House during the period 1851-1967 who were represented by the models in the photo to the left.

From the left, the first mistress was Millecent Short who was the wife of Augustus Short, the first Anglican Bishop of Adelaide. The Shorts moved into Beaumont House in 1851 but left in 1856 to live in their newly built residence Bishop's Court next to Christ Church in North Adelaide.

The second mistress (2nd from left) was Lady Margaret Davenport wife of Sir Samuel Davenport. The Davenports had a lengthy stay in Beaumont House until Lady Margaret's death in 1902 and then her husband in 1906. Lady Davenport was a philanthropist who took a great interest in benevolent institutions, particularly the servants' home and the State Children's Department.

In 1907 the House was purchased by Major William Vincent and his wife Alice (nee Buzzard). Alice is represented by our speaker Sandy Whitelaw (third from the left). During their short stay until 1911 Alice , a socialite, and her husband made extensive alterations to the House.

In 1911 Beaumont House was taken over by lawyer Richard Bennett and his bohemian wife Lilian Brocksopp (portrayed in the photo by Rosie Olbryt). Richard Bennett died in 1929, and Lilian married Kenneth Brock in 1936. She bequeathed Beaumont House to the National Trust of South Australia in 1968. The property was listed on the South Australian heritage register in 1980.

Sandy stressed throughout her talk that at a time when women were very much second class citizens, these four women did not stand in the shadows of their husband but beside them and were interesting in their own right. They played a key part in the running of the House and in so doing made it possible for their husbands to achieve.

Sandy's story of the four chatelaines and her use of the costumes was much enjoyed by the 43 members and visitors who braved the thunder, lightning and rain during the night.

NEWS OF THE BHS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Also attending our August meeting was Karen Muller (on the left in the photo) who was the City of Burnside's Historical and Cultural Officer last year when Michelle Toft was on parenting leave. Karen provided an update on the BHS Oral History Project which commenced in 1988, with phase 2 achieved in 1997. Under Karens's leadership the recordings have now been digitized and are available on the computer in the Local History Room of the Burnside Library. A printed transcript is also available, which makes this important historical collection much more accessible to researchers.

It was also great to welcome Michelle Toft (centre) and Hannah Shaw (right), the current Historical and Cultural Officers who were present to "support" Karen.

If you have not visited the Local History Room lately (or ever!), then why not call in on any Monday afternoon from 1.30-4.30pm when Michelle or Hannah, with the support of volunteers, will be there to answer your questions or show you around. It is a most valuable and interesting collection.

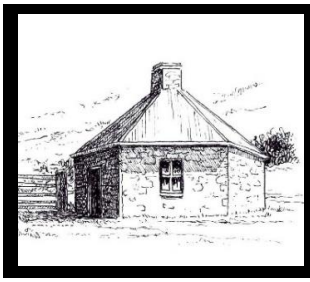
EASTERN REGION HISTORY SEMINAR

Thanks to those BHS members who have booked to attend the Eastern Region History Seminar at Lochend on Saturday 21 September. Once again BHS will be well represented. Our President Roger Bills will be presenting a 10-minute report showcasing our activities for the past 12 months and we will also present a table display which will include the showing of the Wheal Watkins video. The Seminar will give all 12 local history groups an opportunity to share and discuss common issues. Our thanks to the Campbelltown Historical Society for organizing this important event. A report of the Seminar will appear in the next Bulletin.

NEXT YEAR'S BHS PROGRAMME. YOU CAN BE INVOLVED.

Planning for the 2025 BHS programme of meetings and events is well underway. The Planning Subcommittee would like to include a "Show and Tell" night where members are invited to show and tell in 3-4 minutes the story of an historical item in their possession. If the item has a Burnside connection, then that would be a bonus. We will need at least eight volunteers to proceed with this idea. If you are interested, then please speak to Bob Stace or Judy Fander at the September meeting or phone 0417988775.

Our role as members of the Burnside Historical Society is to Preserve, Protect, and Promote our History.



Burnside Historical Society

Active in the Burnside Community for 44 years

September Meeting

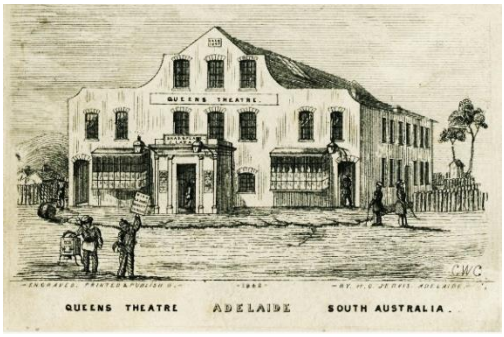
Theatre Life in Colonial Adelaide 1836 -1856

Monday 16 September @ 7.30pm

Burnside Community Centre Hall, (adjacent to Burnside Library)
401 Greenhill Road, Tusmore, enter off Fisher Street

The Speaker: Ian Sellick

Ian is a retired self-employed electrical contractor whose interest in Adelaide's colonial history has led to the publication of three books *Chasing Ancient Sea Shores*, detailing the history of Australia`s inland sea, *Early Theatre Life in Adelaide SA, 1836-56,* which provides the content of this talk and recently *Charles Hill, Colonial Painter, 1824-1915.*



The Topic: Ian's talk will detail the story of the first 13 theatres opened in Adelaide between 1836 and 1856. He will provide information on the colourful proprietors and actors of these times and give an insight into the entertainment enjoyed by early colonists. His talk will be interwoven with stories of crime and daily life in Adelaide at the time that impinged on the entertainment of the theatre goers .

Non-members - a $2 donation is appreciated

Further information

WEBSITE: www.burnsidehistory.org.au
PHONE: 0422 705 916
FACEBOOK: Burnside Historical Society, South Australia