BURNSIDE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

The Monthly BHS Bulletin

June 2025

BHS JUNE MEETING: Monday 16 June

The meeting will feature a 65-minute film ***Madge and Bibs and the Advancing Girls*** which will be presented by its producer Rob George. Full details of this meeting and the film can be found in the flyer on page 4 of this Bulletin.

NEXT BHS OUTING: Tuesday 8 July

The original Burnside Council Chambers built in 1869.

Our much anticipated next outing will be a very local visit to the Burnside Council Chambers, both Old and New, with lunch in between. The morning will feature a visit to the current Council building on Greenhill Road and will be hosted and guided by Mayor Anne Monceaux. Lunch will be at the Marryatville Hotel at your own expense on the day. In the afternoon we will move to the St David's Anglican Church precinct where their volunteers will guide us through the original Burnside Council Chambers (1869), the original Church (1887) and the present Church (1962) with its striking internal features and architecture.

Full details of this outing, along with booking arrangements, can be found in the Flyer attached to the email bearing this Bulletin. Importantly, this outing is limited to 25, so please book early to avoid disappointment. Bookings can be made at the June meeting or by phone (0422 705 916).

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS NOW DUE

Our Annual Subscription Fees are now due. Invoices were distributed to those who attended the May meeting. Thank you to those of you who have responded with prompt payment. Payments of $30 for single and $45 for family membership can be made in cash at the upcoming June meeting or by Electronic Funds Transfer to the Burnside Historical Society, BSB 105086, AC No. 330298840. **Please add your full name/s to the Reference.**

JULY MEETING: MONDAY 21 JULY

Show and Tell with a Bell: Historic Items with a Burnside Connection

We are looking forward to our July meeting with a great deal of anticipation. Eight of our members will showcase an item of theirs which has a relationship with the history of Burnside. Each member will speak for 4 minutes about their item, its significance to them, and to the Burnside story. Each presentation will be enhanced with a few slides to illustrate the item. An historic bell will be rung to signify when the time is up. (hence the title of: *Show and Tell with a Bell*)

This is sure to be an interesting, entertaining, and enjoyable evening and one not to be missed.

Changed Your Contact Details Lately?

If you have changed your home address, phone number or email address lately can you please help us update our records by emailing the new details to:

burnsidehistorysoc@gmail.com

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Roger Bills

Annual General Meetings present an opportunity to stop, take stock, reflect, and look forward.
Taking stock: The revised constitution was accepted unanimously at the AGM. The next step is to approve the minutes at the June Meeting, then lodge the constitution with Consumer & Business Services.
Reflecting: The BHS Local History Room volunteers work with the CoB's Historical and Cultural Officers every Monday 1:30 to 4:30 researching enquiries. Recently, the team discovered a few hitherto unknown hospitals in Burnside's past, recovered recorded talks and Newsletter reports of several past speakers at our meetings, and researched potential names for un-named lanes in our region.

The BHS is often seen as a doorway into Burnside's past.

Reflecting further: The BHS has been superbly served by the program committee which plans and runs meetings and events. It is their aim always to bring interest into the meetings. Thank you.
May History Festival gave the opportunity to showcase the history of Burnside. Thanks to Ally, Polly and Ray, and Dave who conducted walks of Eastwood and Dulwich and tours of inspection of Wheal Watkins.
Looking forward: Bring your popcorn to the June movie meeting.
All the best to Michelle Toft (CoB Historical and Cultural Officer) for the birth of her second child, and welcome to Jade Hastings who will be covering her position.

On a personal note, I believe that a place that ignores its past cannot expect a future.

A CURIOUS AND INTERESTING LIFE

Once again, we had a great turnout for our recent May meeting with 71 present which included 16 visitors. Our speakers Helen Hennesy (at left in photo) and Pat Booth told the intriguing story of the life of Ephraim Henry Coombe (1858-1917). Born in Gawler, Ephraim was a self-made man of strong principles. With no more than six years of formal schooling, he became a journalist, newspaper editor and member of parliament, representing the Barossa District for a total of 14 years. He advocated for proportional voting, women's suffrage, the extension of the railway to country towns, and against the closure of Lutheran schools during the First World War. But his steadfast anti-conscription stance led to his persecution, and many of his parliamentary colleagues labelled him a coward, a traitor to the men at the Front, and disloyal to King and country.
E H Coombe's life and legacy is still remembered in the Barossa with a memorial in the main street of Tanunda. We thank Helen and Pat for providing this very personal and interesting account of his life. It reminded us that there have been many relatively unknown and hitherto unrecognised contributors to South Australia's history.

AGM REPORT

The 2025 AGM of the BHS followed our May meeting. The amended Constitution and most reports were emailed/delivered to members prior to the meeting with the financial statements being distributed at the meeting. As members had the opportunity to read the documents they were taken as read. The business was all dealt with speedily and effectively by President Roger Bills. His comprehensive President's Annual Report highlighted the many positive achievements of the Society over the past year and thanked members for their support in helping to protect, promote, preserve, and celebrate the history of Burnside.

It is timely for us to also thank Roger for his very positive and productive leadership of the Society in his first year as President.

The BHS Committee for 2025-26; elected at the AGM, is as follows:

Roger Bills (President), Chris Kelly (Secretary), Dave Monceaux (Treasurer) with Committee members Cathy Bransbury, Helen Bills, Judy Fander and Bob Stace.

We thank Liz Silz, who has now retired from the Committee, for her many years of service and commitment to the BHS. Liz is still an active member of the Programme subcommittee and the Supper Group

THE BHS HISTORY FESTIVAL EVENTS

The State's annual History Festival over the past month certainly gave all of us the chance of immersing ourselves in a wide range of events well beyond our local area. Our own events were very successful and well attended as follows:

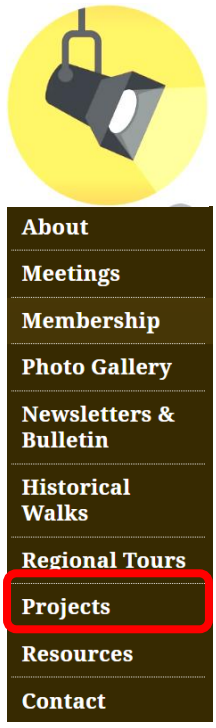
- The two guided walks in Dulwich led by Polly Dundon were both fully booked with 24 attending each walk.
- The two guided walks in Eastwood led by Ally Preiss attracted 17 walkers to both. One of the two Eastwood groups can be seen at left with Ally in the right foreground.
- The two surface tours of Wheal Watkins organised by Dave Monceaux attracted 9 and 8 participants despite competing with Mother's Day.

Feedback from participants at all our events was very positive. They were engaged, interested and often contributed information of their own. We plan to continue with another series of walks showcasing the history of Burnside in the 2026 History Festival.

A big "thank you" to the leaders of our walks for the time they spent in preparation and for their engaging commentaries along the way. Well done!

EXTENDED INDEX TO *THE PADDOCKS BENEATH*

Thanks to the generosity of BHS Life Member Richard House, his extended index of the "The Paddocks Beneath" is now available for sale and can be purchased at our meetings for $10



SPOTLIGHT ON THE BHS WEBSITE -

https://www.burnsidehistory.org.au/

The BHS website is a treasure trove of information and resources

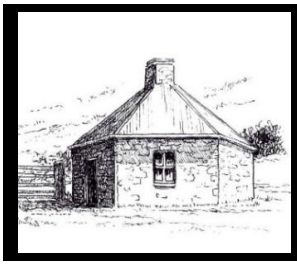
The MENU has a link to PROJECTS
https://www.burnsidehistory.org.au/projects/

There you can see 9 projects listed. The first is a
1. Video about the history of Wheal Watkins Heritage Mine
https://www.burnsidehistory.org.au/historical-project/wheal-watkins-heritage-mine-1843/

Wheal Watkins was part of Australia's first metalliferous mining area. The area was worked in the 1840s and was the forerunner to the mining industry based on copper in SA. It transformed the economy of South Australia from depression to rapid growth and prosperity. The mine is owned by the City of Burnside and in 1984 was listed in the S.A. Heritage Register.

John Clark was a founding member of the BHS and President from 1984-85 and 1987-89, He was always to the fore when it came to celebrating Burnside's history, especially its mining history. For many years he was the driving force behind the Society's underground tours of the nationally significant Wheal Watkins Mine at Glen Osmond. The mine is now closed permanently. John's significant donation of $30,000 is enabling restoration of the mine exterior.

Bulletin Editor: Bob Stace, Editorial Support: Helen Bills, Email Distribution: Roger Bills



Burnside Historical Society

Active in the Burnside Community for 45 years

JUNE Meeting

FILM

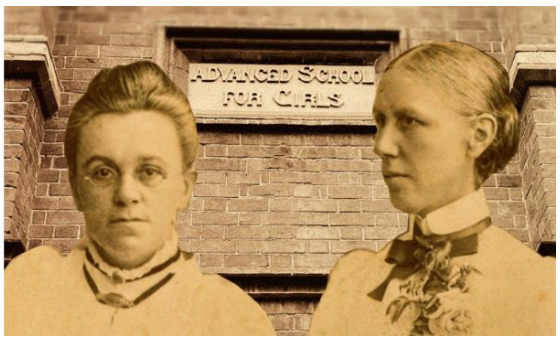
Madge and Bibs and the Advancing Girls

Monday 16 June @ 7.30pm

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

FILM SYNOPSIS Madeline Rees George ("Madge") dominated girl's education in South Australia for almost half a century. She was the long-serving Headmistress at the revolutionary Advanced School for Girls and an indomitable figure in the colony and always with her, but in the shadows, was her younger sister, Marian ("Bibs"). Most of the female graduates of Adelaide University in the 19th century were former students of the Advanced School for Girls and the success of the school played a significant role in women gaining the right to vote in 1894.

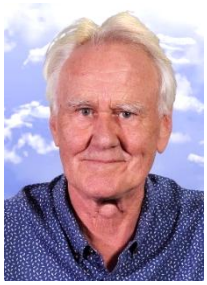
Moving between re-enactments and interviews with leading historians, "Madge & Bibs and the Advancing Girls" paints an entertaining, engaging, and extraordinary picture of a radical colony that uses education to transform the status of women in society, politics and their own hearts and minds.



A composite image showing Marian and Madeline Rees George and the Advanced School for Girls building on Grote Street

OUR SPEAKER **Rob George** is a graduate of Adelaide University with a diverse body of work in film, television, and the stage. For 45 years he has been a writer, director and producer at Prospect Productions and has a keen interest in Adelaide's past. He has premiered two documentaries at past SA History Festivals.

When Rob was growing up, his father was a bank manager, so the family moved around a lot. They always took with them an old box which had a pile of family letters from around 1870-1875 and some diaries. Madge and Bibs were Rob's great, great aunts, and he used this rich family archive to write his film.



VISITORS - a $2 donation is appreciated

Further information

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FACEBOOK: Burnside Historical Society, South Australia