

Department for Environment and Heritage

# Heritage South Australia Newsletter



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Government  
of South Australia

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For further information please contact:  
The Editor,  
*Heritage South Australia Newsletter*  
GPO Box 1047, Adelaide, SA 5001  
Telephone: (08) 8124 4947  
Facsimile: (08) 8124 4980  
Email: [baxter.lyn@saugov.sa.gov.au](mailto:baxter.lyn@saugov.sa.gov.au)  
[www.heritage.sa.gov.au](http://www.heritage.sa.gov.au)

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# Chief Executive's Update



In May 2004 Heritage Directions set out a new framework and strategies for heritage management in South Australia. An additional \$2.9

million in State Government funding was allocated to implement the strategies over a five-year period.

The vision is now becoming a reality.

The *Heritage (Heritage Directions) Amendment Act 2005* came into operation on 17 November 2005. This Act renamed the *Heritage Act 1993* the *Heritage Places Act 1993* and includes important changes to assist heritage management in South Australia.

The South Australian Heritage Council, which provides strategic advice on heritage issues to the Minister for Environment and Conservation, has now been established and the first meeting was held in February 2006. Details of its membership are provided on page 14. The Council will assist in achieving the goals outlined in *Heritage Directions*, including expanding support for Local Councils' heritage programs, and increasing the focus on heritage education, interpretation and promotion. The Council will also provide advice on broader strategic issues such as the impact of urban consolidation policies on heritage and the contribution of heritage conservation to sustainability.

While changes to legislation and the formation of the Heritage Council provide a new foundation for future heritage management in South Australia, much has been achieved:

- The Heritage Advisory Service continues to expand across the State, with local advisors now providing services in Norwood, Payneham and St Peters Council and the Flinders Region.
- A focus on education and celebration of heritage continues. Schools across the State embraced the theme of *Our Heritage – Their Stories: Telling Tales of Heritage Places* to prepare a wonderful

array of entries for the 2005 Schools Heritage Competition. Details of the winning and highly commended entries can be found on page 12.

- A new website packed with information about South Australia's seventeen State Heritage Areas is now available. For details see the card inserted in this newsletter, or browse to it from the DEH website [www.environment.sa.gov.au](http://www.environment.sa.gov.au).
- A Heritage Conservation Seminar is to be presented in May this year on the topic of 'Painting Older Buildings' and will appeal to a range of people interested in maintaining the heritage value of buildings. Expert presentations on a number of topics will help all involved to make better decisions about painting older buildings.
- Since May 2005 around one-quarter of our State Heritage Places have been visited as part of the 'fieldwork project'. This project aims to update and complete the information we hold about State Heritage Places in the South Australian Heritage Register, providing a better picture about what we currently have and helping to identify places at risk.
- Open Heritage, a project initiated by the Department for Environment and Heritage and developed in partnership with the History Trust of South Australia, will be presented as part of History Week in May 2006.

There has been widespread reaction to the Productivity Commission's Draft Report following its Inquiry into the Conservation of Australia's Historic Heritage Places. Like many in the community we are concerned that, if implemented, the key recommendations in the Draft Report will be a backward step for heritage conservation. The South Australian Government's concerns have been outlined in a response to the Draft Report and the release of the Final Report is awaited with interest.

**Allan Holmes**  
Chief Executive  
Department for Environment and Heritage

## Original Poltalloch Homestead, and Poltalloch Station Homestead & Outbuildings

### Narrung, Lake Alexandrina

Turning off the Princes Highway and heading toward Narrung, a string of buildings along the southern shore of Lake Alexandrina stand testament to the glory days of large pastoral holdings in this area in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

Although the original property is now fragmented into various smaller holdings, both the original Poltalloch Homestead (circa 1840), and the newer Poltalloch Station Homestead (1879), together with numerous out-buildings, have not only survived, but prosper under the care of their current owners. Both homesteads and various other out-buildings are State Heritage Places entered in the South Australian Heritage Register.

Bill and Judy Holmes have lived in the original Poltalloch Homestead since 1993, and their respect for their heritage home is evident both inside and out.



Original Poltalloch Homestead

'The house is still very much in its original form,' explain Bill and Judy of the limestone and timber shingle roofed homestead they purchased in 1987. They are intimately acquainted with the history of their house, and have clearly enjoyed researching its past. They discovered that in 1839, Neill Malcolm of 'Poltalloch', Argyllshire,

Scotland, paid four thousand pounds for what was known as a 'Special Survey' which allowed him to select four thousand acres of a surveyed 15,000 acres on the southern shore of Lake Alexandrina. Although he was never to set foot on the property, his Scottish influence is clear in the construction style of both the homestead and stables.

'The homestead is modelled along similar lines to a Scottish highland cottage, while the design of the stables is very similar to examples of mid-seventeenth century Scottish stables,' explains Bill.

They have also turned up such juicy details as a visit to Poltalloch by the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) and his brother Alfred (later the Duke



Stables at the Original Poltalloch Homestead



Judy and Bill Holmes, Original Poltalloch Homestead, Narrung

# Heritage Places



Poltalloch Station Homestead (1983)

of Edinburgh), and the fact that two bullocks from Poltalloch Old Station took out first and second prize at the 1859 Adelaide Show.

Almost the best fate to befall a heritage place is to be lived in, or used, rather than becoming a 'look not touch' museum. The original Poltalloch homestead is clearly functioning very well as a warm, family home with a palpable sense of its past.

Two Maine Coon cats rule the roost, with any outdoor action restricted to the end of a leash – no doubt a relief to the rich birdlife the Holmes have attracted to the environs of their house through their extensive tree planting.

'All our trees are grown from locally collected seed' says Bill of the green bank of native trees now surrounding the house and hugging the roadside along the length of their property.

Five minutes further along the road to Narrung is the 'new' Poltalloch Station Homestead (a mere 127 years old), an imposing two-story residence and one of 22 historic buildings forming the Poltalloch Station 'village'.

Poltalloch Station is considered one of the most significant of the stations situated around Lake Alexandrina, and the functions of a large pastoral

station are well demonstrated by the extensive complex of original buildings.

Chris Cowan farms the remaining 5,500ha of Poltalloch Station – and he is the fifth generation of his family to do so since John Bowman bought the property from Neil Malcolm in the 1870s. Chris and wife Beth take the business of looking after both the future and the past of Poltalloch seriously.

This includes making several of the heritage-listed buildings available to the public for accommodation. Visitors who choose to stay overnight in Overseer's, Boundary Rider's and Station Hand's cottages get a serious dose of heritage set down in a spectacular natural environment – bird-watchers' heaven.

The shearing shed was the first and most important building on the property, and is still in use today. Constructed from iron and stone, the design of the unique double arched roof allowed a greater expanse without the use of timber. The thickly cobwebbed windows are an added feature and deliberately left as is to the delight of visiting photographers.

Beth Cowan takes guided tours through the station complex by arrangement and has plenty of



Poltalloch Station Shearing Shed window

interesting stories that help bring to life the buildings and objects from Poltalloch's past.

For information about visiting Poltalloch Station, see [www.poltalloch.com](http://www.poltalloch.com) or contact (08) 8574 0043.



Poltalloch Station Stables and Barn, from the lake



Jetty House, Poltalloch Station



Conserving the ceiling of the Summer Sitting Room, Ayers House

## Seminar - Painting Older Buildings

### *A DEH Heritage Conservation Seminar*

There's a lot more to painting older buildings than choosing the 'right' colours. The best approach will help protect the fabric as well as the aesthetics of the property. Don't miss this opportunity to find out about:

- applied decorative finishes
- paint systems and alternatives
- quality of materials
- workmanship
- historic and contemporary colour schemes

and much more.

Seminar style presentations by industry experts will be supplemented by case studies and a site visit. There will also be ample opportunity to seek specific information.

This seminar will be of interest to owners of properties (heritage listed or not), architects, heritage advisers, colour consultants, tradespeople and others.

Convened by the Department for Environment and Heritage, the seminar will run over two days; 18-19 May, 2006 at the Radford Auditorium, Art Gallery of South Australia. Registration fees are \$75.00 per single day, or \$150.00 for both days. Program details and registration forms will be available from 3 April on the DEH website [www.environment.sa.gov.au/heritage/seminar.html](http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/heritage/seminar.html) or by contacting the Heritage Branch on (08) 8124 4947.



Conserving the Mt Gambier courtroom

## South Australian Heritage Fund 2006/07 Grants Program

Applications for heritage conservation grants are now invited from owners of State Heritage Places listed in the SA Heritage Register, situated within State Heritage Areas and those with an interest in the maintenance and management of small historic cemeteries and individual graves.

Grants are available in two categories:

- the 'State Heritage Places' category to assist in the conservation of places of State significance or located within State Heritage Areas.
- the 'Heritage Cemeteries' category to assist in the maintenance and management of small historic cemeteries and graves. (Applicants to this category are encouraged to discuss potential projects for other related structures/small historic monuments.)

Applications are open to private and corporate owners, local Councils, community organisations, volunteer groups, Church bodies and cemetery trustees and are subject to specific terms and conditions.

Grants are typically given on a 'dollar for dollar' basis up to \$5000 for State Heritage Places and \$2000 for Heritage Cemeteries.

Grant information packages contain further information and are available from Monday 3 April by:

- Contacting the Heritage Branch on 8124 4922
- e-mailing [heritage@saugov.sa.gov.au](mailto:heritage@saugov.sa.gov.au)
- Downloading from our website at [www.heritage.sa.gov.au](http://www.heritage.sa.gov.au)

The closing date for applications is 30 June 2006.

# Heritage Advisory Services

*Heritage Advisers in South Australia provide professional heritage conservation advice to local communities, including individual advice and assistance to owners of heritage places. Over the last 12 months new services have commenced in the following areas:*

## Flinders Region



**Heritage Adviser:**  
Alex James

Alex James graduated from the University of South Australia in 2000 with a B Arch, is a member of the RAlA and registered to practise as an architect in South Australia in 2003. Alex has worked on a range of heritage projects, and has a particular interest and empathy with regional communities, having worked in the South-East, Alexandrina Council area, Barossa Valley, the Riverland and remote Western Australia.

Remote townships are subject to specific heritage, construction and maintenance issues. From his experience in Oodnadatta, Tjuntjuntjara and Ilkurlka Alex has an insight into the difficulties of maintaining buildings in regions with limited access to specialist tradesman.

## Norwood, Payneham & St Peters City Council



**Heritage Adviser:**  
Therese Willis

Therese Willis is a conservation architect with conservation and heritage consultants McDougall and Vines. Commencing her career as a student architect with the Sydney Cove Authority in the Rocks, Therese has maintained a strong interest in the conservation and the appropriate re-use of heritage buildings throughout

her career. Therese has consulted with state and local government agencies on heritage and master planning issues throughout Australia. She was Asset Manager for the National Trust of South Australia from 2001 to 2004, and a Council member of the National Trust in Tasmania whilst residing there. Therese is also heritage Adviser for Port Adelaide and provides heritage advice to other councils including the Cities of Holdfast Bay, Burnside, Charles Sturt, West Torrens and Adelaide City Council.

## Upper Spencer Gulf



**Heritage Adviser:**  
Kym Verner

Kym Verner rejoined Flightpath Architects in 2005 having previously worked for them from 1995 to 1998. He has extensive experience in education, government, heritage, commercial, and residential projects for a wide range of clients.

Some of his work includes the Murray Bridge Heritage Plan Amendment Report, new community housing in Morphet Street, the National War Memorial, Yalumba Winery, and Elder House conservation works.

Kym's heritage experience ranges from survey work through to reporting, sketch design, documentation and contract administration. He has also provided a locum service as Heritage Adviser to Goyder Regional Council and the City of Gawler.

## Adelaide Hills

*Newly appointed to the existing Adelaide Hills Advisory service is:*



**Heritage Adviser:**  
Michael Queale

Michael is an architect with over fifteen years of acknowledged expertise in architecture, conservation and urban design. He has extensive experience in the preparation of Conservation Management Plans, was conservation architect for the recently refurbished Torrens Parade Ground and is chair of the RAlA (SA Chapter) Heritage Sub-committee and Significant SA 20th Century Architecture working group.

Michael considers that heritage is a living concept, not a static, academic one. His work is informed by the principles of The Burra Charter and current Australian conservation policy and practice, but also with due consideration for client needs and functional requirements. He approaches every heritage project with the attitude – do as little as possible and as much as is necessary – to maintain significant building fabric and not diminish the interpretation of heritage value. He also supports the development of innovative solutions for the future use of heritage listed buildings – because this approach extends the serviceable life of these buildings and allows the heritage values to continue to be appreciated by the community.

# Heritage Advisory Services

## Outback Heritage Advisory Service

The Outback Areas Community Development Trust (OACDT) and the Department for Environment and Heritage cooperatively provide the Outback Heritage Advisory Service (OHAS) to the Unincorporated (out-of-Council) areas of South Australia.

The main objective of the service is to preserve places of heritage significance in the Outback.

Through the Heritage Branch, DEH overviews technical aspects of the service while OACDT administers the service and provides the interface with Outback communities



Pondana ruins before stabilisation work

The service commenced on 1 July 2005 with the first project involving urgently needed stabilisation work at Pondana Ruins in the Gawler Ranges, approximately 100km north of Kimba.



Pondana ruins after stabilisation work

The stone buildings of these former shearers' quarters and cook-house had been seriously affected by rising damp and salt attack, and work was carried out to stabilise the stonework and make the place safe for visitors.

## Need Heritage Advice?

*The following list shows councils with a Heritage Advisory Service. Contact your local council to arrange an appointment with a Heritage Adviser. If your council is not listed, contact the Heritage Branch of DEH for assistance on 8124 4960.*

### Greater Metropolitan Region

Adelaide City Council, Contact DEH Heritage Branch	8124 4960
Adelaide Hills Council	8408 1400
Alexandrina Council	8555 7000
Barossa Council	8563 8444
Clare & Gilbert Valleys Council	8842 6400
Gawler Town Council	8522 9211
Goyder Regional Council	8892 0100
Light Regional Council	8525 3200
Marion City Council (local heritage only)	8375 6600
Mitcham City Council	8372 8888
Mount Barker District Council	8391 1633
Norwood, Payneham & St Peters City Council	8366 4555
Onkaparinga City Council	8364 0666
Port Adelaide Enfield City Council	8405 6600
Tea Tree Gully City Council	8397 7444
Unley City Council	8372 5111
Victor Harbor City Council	8551 0500

### Flinders Region

Flinders Ranges Council	8648 6031
Peterborough District Council	8651 3566
Orroroo Carrieton District Council	8658 1260
Mt Remarkable District Council	8666 2014

### South East

Grant District Council	8721 0444
Kingston District Council	8767 2033
Mount Gambier City Council	8721 2555
Naracoorte Lucindale Council	8762 2133
Robe District Council	8768 2003
Tatiara District Council	8752 1044
Wattle Range Council	8737 0900

### Upper Spencer Gulf

Port Augusta City Council	8641 9100
Port Pirie Regional Council	8632 1222
Whyalla City Council	8640 3444

### Outback (unincorporated areas)

Contact DEH Heritage Branch	8124 4960
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### All other areas of the State

Contact DEH Heritage Branch	8124 4960
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# Volunteers to the Rescue

*When local communities make up their minds to do something, they are a force to be reckoned with – particularly, it would seem, when it comes to saving a heritage building in their midst. From southern metropolitan Adelaide to the southern Flinders Ranges – the common theme is perseverance.*

## Former Coaching Stables, Wilmington

A South Australian Heritage Fund grant and funding from the Mt Remarkable District Council have been important, but volunteers have been the real driving force behind the restoration of the Former Coaching Stables at Wilmington in the Southern Flinders Ranges.

This two-storey stone building built at the rear of the Wilmington Hotel some time prior to 1860 was entered in the South Australian Heritage Register in 1982. Protection by law alone, however, does not ensure the future of a place.

Marie Storey grew up in Wilmington – her grandparents had owned the local bakery – but it was not until she travelled further afield that she realised how much more could be done with heritage.

'I was inspired when I saw the fantastic things the Western Australians were doing in terms of heritage buildings and tourism,' said Marie.

When she returned from WA in late 2002, she turned her attention to the heritage of her local town. The Wilmington Progress Society was able to negotiate a peppercorn lease with the owners of the stables; in return the Society would take on the conservation work.

A Department for Environment and Heritage Conservation Architect provided expert advice and a professional stonemason was engaged from Adelaide to carry out the restoration work. Together with the input from around a dozen volunteers, stage one - the restoration of the front of the building - is now almost complete, with only some painting to finish.



Former Coaching Stables, Wilmington, before conservation work



Former Coaching Stables, Wilmington, after conservation work

'Fortunately our local mechanic is not afraid of heights, as he is the volunteer painter for this project,' said Marie.

This year the group has been allocated another small South Australian Heritage Fund grant to begin work on stage two - restoring the roof.

A third and fourth stage will see the rear of the building repaired, and some lime washing and other interior work completed.

The Progress Society plans to use the stables to house related artefacts, and to include it as a stop on a Heritage Trail.

# Volunteers to the Rescue

## Former Reynella Changing Station Dwelling and Stables

An inspiring collaboration between government, business and community culminated in October 2005 when the Minister for Environment and Conservation, the Hon John Hill, declared open the first stage of the restoration of the Changing Station. Horse-drawn public transport was an important feature of South Australian society from the early years of the colony until around the time of the first World War. Horses pulling long distance coaches were rested at changing stations, usually located at hotels. Confirmed in the South Australian Heritage Register in 1993, the former Changing Station Dwelling and Stables at Reynella is considered noteworthy as the only purpose-built changing station - not located at a hotel - on the Register. The stable portion of the stables/ostlers' rooms building is also significant as being possibly the oldest building (1850s) remaining in the town. There seemed little hope for this particular piece of South Australia's heritage. By 2000 the stables had fallen into disrepair to the point where they were considered unsafe, requiring



Minister for Environment and Conservation, John Hill congratulates Rob Moise, chair of the Reynell Business and Tourism Association

a chain mesh fence to be erected around the perimeter. Feasibility studies indicated that the costs of conservation could be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

This is when the Reynell Business and Tourism Association, through Rob Moise, presented a 'plan of restoration', which was acceptable to all parties. Under the guidance of Heritage Adviser, Andrew Stevens, conservation work began on 28 February 2003.

'The initial preparation involved an immense clean-up operation, which was achieved with the assistance of enthusiastic local volunteers in conjunction with Volunteers International,' said Mr Moise. 'Young people from England, Japan, Belgium and Denmark participated.'

Work then began on restoring the stone walls, and regular working bees were held on Mondays. In fact, there was to be only one Monday that the core group of volunteers comprising Lester McNerney, John Surfield and Ron Mason did not meet over the next two and a half years. Mr Moise estimates that over 5,000 volunteer hours – not including meeting time – were invested in the project.

The wider community was involved through two very successful Open Information Days. A history group was also formed, and the Stable is now home to interpretive displays and artefacts that help tell stories of the past.

The community spirit embodied in the project was clear on the day of the official opening when an estimated two and a half thousand people came to help celebrate. The Former Reynella Changing Station Stables are open every Saturday from 10am until 4pm, with extended opening hours planned during SA History Week in late May.



Former Reynella Changing Station Stables, before restoration work



Former Reynella Changing Station Stables, before restoration work



Former Reynella Changing Station Stables, after restoration work (photograph by Malcom Harrington)

# State Heritage Areas of South Australia

## New Website Launched

[www.stateheritageareas.sa.gov.au](http://www.stateheritageareas.sa.gov.au)

A comprehensive new website to celebrate and interpret a unique group of South Australia's significant heritage places – the 17 designated/ authorised State Heritage Areas – has been launched by the Department for Environment and Heritage (Heritage Branch).

These Areas are a diverse group of regions representing exceptional aspects of the State's natural and cultural heritage. Some are recognised for their architectural merits, for their town plan or contribution to South Australia's development, while others are predominantly natural areas of scenic or geological importance. No two State Heritage Areas are alike, differing not only in significance, but also in size and location across the State.

They range from the State's far north (Innamincka/Cooper Creek, Arckaringa Hills and Beltana) to the south-east (Penola, Mount Schank and two at Mount Gambier) and include the mid-north towns of Burra and Mintaro, the former mine site at Moonta and the Murray River port of Goolwa. Nearer Adelaide are historic precincts at Port Adelaide and Gawler, the garden suburb of Colonel Light Gardens and the Adelaide Hills towns of Hahndorf and Mount Torrens.

The State Heritage Areas of South Australia website provides detailed information about each of these Areas. It features contemporary and historic images, maps, text and stories to highlight the character and significance of these distinctive regions.

A special feature is the Stories & Images category, which invites the public to share their original stories and experiences. So if you have lived in, worked in or visited one (or more) of South Australia's State Heritage Areas why not take the time to contribute some of your personal or family memories. These stories could be of long ago or more recent times. They might be stories of adventure or simply of everyday life. Your thoughts, impressions, events, anecdotes and factual information will all contribute to a wider appreciation of our State Heritage Areas.

Feature articles focussing on individual State Heritage Areas are planned for future issues of this newsletter.

For further information about the State Heritage Areas of South Australia website contact the Senior Heritage Interpretation Officer, Robyn Ashworth, on 8124 4957 or email [ashworth.robyn@saugov.sa.gov.au](mailto:ashworth.robyn@saugov.sa.gov.au).



Goolwa Wharf area, Goolwa SHA



Tourist railway, Moonta Mines SHA



Visitor Information Centre, Port Adelaide SHA

# South Australia's first entry in the National Heritage List

## *Old and New Parliament Houses, North Terrace*

Australia Day 2006 was marked by South Australia's first entry in the National Heritage List. On that day the Hon Greg Hunt MP, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Australian Government's Minister for Environment and Heritage, announced that the first place in the world where women were given the right to stand for parliament, namely South Australia's Old and New Parliament Houses, were to be included in the National Heritage List. Mr Hunt said that South Australia's Houses of Parliament had played a major role in the development of democracy in Australia.

The National Heritage List is intended to be for places of outstanding National significance (that is, a level above a State Heritage Place).

The South Australian Parliament Houses are significant for their association with the enfranchisement of men and women in the 19th Century. Full adult manhood suffrage, notably including Aboriginal men, was first granted in an Australian colony in South Australia in 1856, and this may have been the first time this voting right was granted anywhere in the world. South Australia was the first Australian colony, and one of the first jurisdictions worldwide, to give women the vote. It was the first jurisdiction in the world to allow women to stand for parliament.



New Parliament House, North Terrace, Adelaide

The original section of Old Parliament House (or Legislative Council building), on North Terrace just to the west of the current Parliament House, was opened on 10 October 1843 following the creation of the Legislative Council, which replaced the smaller Council of Government that had previously met at Government House. The single room building was brick with a slate roof and was constructed by Jacob Pitman. The Council met in this building until 1855 when, to accommodate a larger Council, a new two-storey building, incorporating parts of the old one, was opened. It was designed by W Bennett Hays, the Colonial Architect, and built by English and Brown. Further extensions (designed by Colonial Architect Edward Hamilton and built by I W Perryman) were opened in 1857 following the granting of responsible government and the creation of the House of Assembly, and other extensions followed.

The New Parliament House, to the east of the Legislative Council building, is a major work of civic architecture. A competition for the design of this building was held in the early 1870s and was won by architects Edmund Wright and Lloyd Tayler. However, the decision to proceed was delayed and construction did not commence properly until the 1880s, with Colonial Architect E J Woods using the Wright-Tayler plans in his design. The initial contractor was the Kapunda Marble Company, but due to dissatisfaction with their work, the government terminated the contract and a second contractor James Shaw completed the job. The new building, finished to the west wing stage, was opened in 1889 and housed the House of Assembly; the Legislative Council remained in the old building next door. The new building was the most impressive building in South Australia at that time and reflected the optimism of the period. It was deliberately constructed from South Australian materials, had an



Old Parliament House, North Terrace, Adelaide

innovative ventilation system (the old building had for years been criticised for its poor ventilation) and was wired for electricity.

The First World War delayed completion of the east wing of the New Parliament House, which remained unfinished until the 1930s. South Australian benefactor and newspaper proprietor Sir Langdon Bonython donated £100,000 toward the project and work re-commenced in 1936 – the State's centenary year. The design was by Architect-in-Chief A E Simpson, and the contractor was Mr A Slater. The east wing, and thus the whole building, was finally completed in 1939. The Legislative Council then moved into the new building. A proposed domed tower was never built.

The National Heritage List, established in January 2004, recognises places that are of outstanding significance to the nation and protects the heritage values of these places under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. South Australia's Parliament Houses join 23 other places on the List. Full details are on the Australian Government's Department of the Environment and Heritage website [www.deh.gov.au/heritage/national/sites/sa-parliament.html](http://www.deh.gov.au/heritage/national/sites/sa-parliament.html)

# 2005 Schools Heritage Competition



This PowerPoint presentation by Year 2 students from Modbury West Schools was awarded 'Most Outstanding Entry' in the Year R-3 category.

State heritage-listed Urrbrae House provided the perfect setting to award the prize-winning entries from the 2005 Schools Heritage Competition.

Inspired by the 2005 theme *Our Heritage: Their Stories – Telling Tales of Heritage Places* students used information and communication technology (ICT) formats to present stories of their local places.

Vini Ciccarello MP, representing the Minister for Environment and Conservation, Hon John Hill, was on hand to present the awards.

The competition encourages students and teachers to identify with their local history and built environment, and raises their awareness of the significance and diversity of our State's built heritage.

This year's entries were outstanding. Some of them presented heritage stories that were significant to an individual or family while others looked at a community's identity, or related more broadly to the State's history.

Students researched local reference and photographic collections, went on tours, talked with older residents and interviewed patrons of restaurants. But they also sought the memories of their families and included their own memories of a place.

Further information about the Schools Heritage Competition is available on the Education & Research section of the Heritage Branch website, [www.heritage.sa.gov.au](http://www.heritage.sa.gov.au), or from Robyn Ashworth, Senior Heritage Interpretation Officer, on 8124 4957. Winning entries can also be viewed on the website.

This year eleven prizes were awarded to the following recipients:

## **Modbury West Schools:**

*A Heritage Story*  
Most Outstanding (Years R-3)

## **St Peter's College:**

*Horatio's Heritage Walk*  
Highly Commended (Years R-3)

## **Mintaro Farrell Flat Primary School:**

*Time Machine in Farrell Flat*  
Highly Commended (Years R-3)

## **Melrose Primary School:**

*Melrose Heritage*  
Most Outstanding (Years 4-5)

## **Mundulla Primary School:**

*Buildings Change – Mundulla School Continues*  
Highly Commended (Years 4-5)

## **Portside Christian School:**

*Magical World Of Mangrove Cove*  
Highly Commended (Years 4-5)

## **North Haven Schools:**

*The Semaphore Palais*  
Most Outstanding (Years 6-7)

## **Port Vincent Primary School:**

*History: Not A Mystery*  
Most Outstanding (Years 6-7)

## **North Haven Schools:**

*The Semaphore Odeon Star Cinema*  
Highly Commended (Years 6-7)

## **Kimba Area School:**

*The Hub At Bundaleer*  
Highly Commended (Years 6-7)

## **Parndana Campus – KICE:**

*Soldier Settlement*  
Highly Commended (Years 6-7)



Year R-2 students from Mintaro Farrell Flat Primary School with Vini Ciccarello, MP



Year 2 students from St Peter's College with Robyn Ashworth, Senior Heritage Interpretation Officer, DEH

## 2006 Schools Heritage Competition - 'Heritage Connections - links with our past'

For information about entering this year's competition, please contact Robyn Ashworth on 8124 4957 or [ashworth.robyn@saugov.sa.gov.au](mailto:ashworth.robyn@saugov.sa.gov.au).

# Architects and Builders of South Australia - 1

*SARA, George, (1813 – 1914), stonemason, quarry operator, builder and contractor, of Willunga, SA*

George Sara was born in Mylor, Cornwall, on 6 November 1813, the son of George and Sarah (nee Martin). He was trained in the trade of stonemason, working in the mines at Perranwell, Cornwall, before emigrating to South Australia with his wife Esther (nee Paull, 1808 – 1881), whom he had married on 19 May 1836. George and Esther, with their four sons Thomas, (1837 – 1917), George (1839 – 1903), William (c1843 – 1920) and Almond (c1846 – 1908) arrived in Adelaide aboard the *Westminster* on 9 July 1848. Also travelling with them was George's orphaned twelve-year-old nephew, William George Sara, for whom George and Esther had taken responsibility.

After a brief time in Adelaide the family moved to Willunga where George was offered work in connection with the slate quarries which had been opened some years before. George worked on several of the major building projects in the village, as the population grew with the influx of settlers and slate workers (many of them from George's native Cornwall) to the area. Numerous surviving tombstones in local cemeteries bear his signature and attest to his skill as a stone carver and inscriber.

News of the discovery of gold in Victoria in 1851 enticed George to travel to the goldfields with two of his sons, but six months prospecting yielded only a 'modest' (his words) profit of £600. Returning to Willunga to rejoin his wife and the rest of the family, George appears to have used this capital to set himself and his older sons and nephew up as building contractors. Several of the churches in the area, including the original Anglican Church (later demolished) and its replacement and parsonage, two Wesleyan churches, and the tower of the Catholic Church were all the work of George Sara and Sons, as were several of the notable private dwellings in the town.

Other buildings credited to them are dotted all over the Fleurieu Peninsula, and include a number of chapels, sheds and industrial sites such as the Butterworth Flour Mill at Aldinga. The firm built and occupied a prominent two-

storey stone business premises fronting the main intersection of the town (demolished in the 1960s).

Further afield, the firm won lucrative contracts for building all the railway stations from Riverton to the Burra, erected the Burra School, the Gladstone Gaol, a hotel at Ororoo, the Gorge Bridge at Yankalilla, the viaduct at Currency Creek, Police Station and Courthouse at Clarendon, and many other important country works.

George Sara later diversified his contracting work by investing in both the Willunga Flax Mill and Bangor Slate Quarry. Both of these ventures unfortunately turned out to be financial disasters: the flax mill burned down under 'mysterious circumstances', and the quarry, which he leased in the name of Sara and Sons in 1883-4, had to be abandoned as an unprofitable venture at a reported loss of thousands of pounds.

Throughout his long life, George Sara maintained an active participation in the Wesleyan Methodist Church. He was one of the first superintendents of the Wesleyan Sunday School at Willunga and took occasional church services when the regular preacher was unavailable. He was a Steward for the Willunga Circuit and a representative to the Wesleyan Conference for many years. He was also a respected member of the South Australian Cornish Association, and friend of its President Sir Langdon Bonython.

Although his formal education may have been rudimentary - he appears to have been apprenticed at nine years of age - George had a great interest in reading, and kept up an extensive correspondence with friends, including the Chief Justice Sir Samuel Way and other influential figures. He also took an active role in local politics, serving as Councillor and Chairman of the Willunga District Council for several terms during the 1860s and 70s, and was a Justice of the Peace for many years.

In 1881 George's first wife Esther died, and in 1884 he married a local widow, Mrs Peggy Pointon, nee Polkinghorne (died 1896). George himself appears to have enjoyed extraordinarily good health, except for failing hearing, and continued to live an active life -



George Sara & Sons constructed one of the Colony's most distinctive Police and Courthouse complexes at Clarendon in 1868-69. The architect was William H Abbott.

including chopping his own firewood - right up to his death at one hundred years of age. On the occasion of his one-hundredth birthday, a large gathering of family and friends including many of his 62 direct descendants was held in the Willunga Show Hall, and the event was marked by the presentation of a cheque for £60 raised by subscription organised by Sir Samuel Way.

The death of 'Father Sara' as he was by then known, occurred 'unexpectedly' on 24 January 1914, apparently as a result of his choking on a plum whilst eating breakfast (some locals dispute this, claiming the fatal fruit was a cherry - or perhaps a cherry plum!). His funeral was held at the Willunga Wesleyan Church which he had built many years before.

## **Deb Morgan, Heritage Officer.**

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- Willunga Progress Association, *Willunga: Place of Green Trees*, The author, 1952 (reprinted by the National Trust of SA 1982)
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## Introducing the South Australian Heritage Council

Amendments to the Heritage Act have paved the way for the formation of the South Australian Heritage Council, appointed at the end of November, to replace the State Heritage Authority. Chaired by Mary Marsland and comprising experts from a range of fields, the Council will provide strategic advice to the Minister for Environment and Conservation on heritage issues. It also administers the SA Heritage Register, in particular the listing of State Heritage Places, a role it has delegated to its Register Committee.



Back Row (L to R): Michael O'Connell, Carolyn Wigg, Gavin Leydon, Helen Haltis, Lew Owens  
Front Row (L to R): Judith Brine, Alan Graham, Mary Marsland (Chair), Christine Garnaut

## Twentieth Century Heritage Survey - Stage 2

*The Depression and Second World War (1928-1945)*

The next 20th Century heritage survey project will be a heritage survey of the period 1928-1945. This period begins with the Depression and ends with the massive social and economic effects of the Second World War and the beginnings of planned industrialisation.

It is expected that work on the survey will commence in May 2006 and be completed by the end of 2007.

Since 1981 the Department for Environment and Heritage and its predecessors has pursued a systematic

program of heritage surveys to identify and record the non-Aboriginal heritage of South Australia.

To do this the State was divided into fourteen regions. By December 2000 thirteen of the fourteen regions had been surveyed. It was then decided to initiate a series of thematic and targeted area surveys, commencing with targeted area surveys of the Oodnadatta Track, completed in 2001, and the Birdsville and Strzelecki Tracks, completed in December 2002.

The present South Australian Heritage Register has a significant imbalance of State Heritage Places, with a far greater number of places representing the history of South Australia from the 19th Century rather than the 20th Century.

Approximately 400 State Heritage Places representing the 20th Century are entered in the Register, as opposed to 1800-odd pre-20th Century places.

Hence the Department for Environment and Heritage decided that the first thematic surveys would be surveys of 20th Century heritage. However, given the multitude of sub-themes represented throughout this period, there needed to be a reduction in either the number of themes or the timespan. The first 20th Century heritage survey project was an overview history of the post-Second World War period (1946-1959), completed by Marsden Russell Historians in January 2005.

## Vale Keith Borrow and Brian Condon

The heritage assessment work of the Branch draws upon many general historical sources and it is therefore fitting to note the recent passing of two significant South Australian historians.

Keith Borrow (9.9.17-17.12.05) was a great-grandson of BT Finnis, one of Colonel Light's surveyors, who later became the Colony's first Premier. Keith's special interest was the Colony's foundation period, and he produced

many booklets for the Pioneers Association of SA and co-authored with Shirley Wilson a substantial book, *The Bridge Over the Ocean*, about Adelaide's second Mayor, art collector Thomas Wilson.

Brian Condon (20.9.37-25.11.05) specialized in the history of education and produced many invaluable series of source documents, including several volumes of the SA Education Department's and the Church of England's newspaper clipping books

and collections of Catholic and Methodist material on education and social issues.

In 2001 he finally succeeded in having his long-running bibliographical project, SASS (SA Sources for History and Social Science) made available on the University of SA web site ([www.unisanet.unisa.edu.au/research/condon/sass](http://www.unisanet.unisa.edu.au/research/condon/sass)). Brian had a long career at the University and links to his other databases are at [www.unisanet.unisa.edu.au/research/condon](http://www.unisanet.unisa.edu.au/research/condon).

## Heritage Branch Staff Changes

- **Duncan Ross-Watt** resigned his position as Principal Conservation Architect to take up a similar position with the EPA in Queensland.
- **Ken Body** joined the Branch as a Graduate Planner
- **Jane Crosby** took up the role of Executive Officer, SA Heritage Council
- **Carmela Santoro** joined the Branch as an Administrative Officer
- **Pippa Morgan** is now acting in the Senior Heritage Officer, Conservation Management position while Alison Radford is working with the Adelaide Region of National Parks.
- **Bron Lloyd** is currently on a development placement with the Branch working to index the Branch's black and white photograph collection
- **Luigi Vitale**, Senior Conservation Architect, has a six-month placement with DAIS Heritage Unit, commencing 20 March



Ken Body



Jane Crosby



Carmela Santoro



Bron Lloyd

## Heritage Bookshelf

*Vintage Adelaide: Beautiful buildings from the Adelaide Square Mile*

By Peter Fischer & Kay Hannaford  
Seamark, Revised Edition, East Street Publications, Adelaide, 2005

This publication aims to showcase the heritage of the City of Adelaide and features full-page illustrations of some of the grand houses, pubs, churches, public buildings and parkland features which will be familiar to most Adelaide residents, as well as a few lesser-known gems tucked away in some of the more out-of-the-way parts of the city.

The accompanying text is well researched and provides some fascinating detail about the history of the buildings and their architects, builders and occupants, including some of those quirky snippets that bring the history to life: stories like the disgruntled builder of the Adelaide Magistrates' Court who, dissatisfied with his fee, refused to hand over the key to the completed building, forcing government officials to take the undignified course of breaking in.

The photographs themselves have been digitally manipulated to erase all flaws and references to the present. All visual distractions such as cars, overhead wires, traffic lights, signage, and for the most part, people, have been eliminated from the images, leaving the buildings to stand alone and isolated in a way we are not used to seeing them in real life.



This is intended to focus attention on the detail and form of the buildings, but for me has the effect of making them appear somewhat lifeless and unfamiliar. It's rather like meeting an old friend who has gone off and had a facelift: some of the character has gone.

The book includes sketches showing the location of each place, a brief biography of some of the builders and architects whose work is represented, and a useful if perfunctory glossary of architectural terms at the back. The design of the book is uncluttered, though many readers may find the typeface too small to be read comfortably, especially where the text is run over a dark coloured background.

The 42 places featured are indeed some of Adelaide's most beautiful buildings, but they deserve to be seen in their context as part of a vibrant, living city. Read this book, but go and see these special places for yourself.

**Deb Morgan**

# Events

*Heritage related events, conferences, workshops and seminars around the State: March – September 2006*

## 7 May

### Tea Tree Gully and environs

An Historical Society of South Australia field trip.

Includes the original Tea Tree Gully and Golden Grove, Glen Ewin at Houghton and the former Highercombe Hotel Museum.

**Date:** 7 May

**Bookings:** (08) 8277 2953  
(Non-members welcome)

## 18-19 May

### Heritage Conservation Seminar

*Painting Older Buildings*

Owners of older buildings - heritage listed or not - will find something of interest in this seminar. Topics to be covered include: decorative finishes, paint systems and alternatives, materials, workmanship, colour schemes and more. Architects, heritage advisers, colour consultants, tradespeople and others will also find this seminar worthwhile.

**Venue:** Radford Auditorium, Art Gallery of South Australia

**Date:** 18-19 May, 2006

**Cost:** \$75 one day, \$150 two days

**Enquiries:** (08) 8124 4947

[www.heritage.sa.gov.au](http://www.heritage.sa.gov.au)

## 20-28 May

### 2006 SA History Week

This year's program introduces Open Heritage – a new event that offers a behind-the-doors glimpse of some of South Australia's lesser-known heritage places.

The full range of History Week activities will be published in the Program Booklet, available late April.

**Venue:** Across SA

**Date:** 20-28 May

**Enquiries:** (08) 8203 9888

[www.history.sa.gov.au](http://www.history.sa.gov.au)

## 28 May

### 'In History we Trust'

*State History Conference - Adelaide*

This year's theme reflects on history making in South Australia with a particular focus on the past 25 years. Will interest amateur and professional historians, academics, historical societies; anyone with an interest in history.

**Date:** 27-28 May

**Enquiries:** (08) 8203 9888

[www.history.sa.gov.au](http://www.history.sa.gov.au)

## 7 July

### Gardens as a reflection of culture - Elizabeth Caldicott

An Historical Society of South Australia regular meeting.

**Date:** 7 July 7.30pm

**Venue:** Prince Philip Theatre, Prince Alfred's College, Kent Town (Non-members welcome)

[www.hssa.org.au](http://www.hssa.org.au)

## 26 July

### Parliament House with John Bannon

An Historical Society of South Australia field trip.

**Date:** 26 July

**Bookings:** (08) 8277 2953  
(Non-members welcome)

## 3 August

### St Jude's Cemetery, Brighton

An Historical Society of South Australia field trip.

**Date:** 3 August

**Bookings:** (08) 8277 2953  
(Non-members welcome)

## 20 September

### Royal Adelaide Hospital and Michell Residence

An Historical Society of South Australia field trip.

**Date:** 20 September

**Bookings:** (08) 8277 2953  
(Non-members welcome)



## Edmund Wright Heritage Awards

*The timing of the Edmund Wright Heritage Awards has been changed to allow the presentation ceremony to coincide with SA History Week in May 2007. This means there will be no presentation of Awards in 2006. Look out for details in the next edition of this newsletter.*