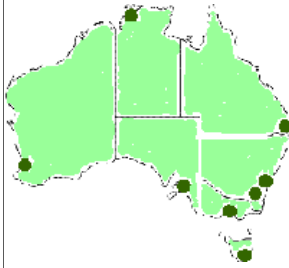




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## FAHS NEWSLETTER

### No. 33 – May 2011

Hon Editor, Esther V. Davies

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#### FROM THE PRESIDENT



FAHS President Don Garden

The recent federal budget contains both bad and good news for the historic heritage community, including historical societies.

The Heritage Division of the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities has received a 30% funding cut which will inevitably result in staff losses and curtailed functions and programmes. On the positive side, a number of important programmes such as the National Historic Sites grants have been retained.

Of particular interest to community heritage groups is the provision of \$4 million in each of the next two years for Community Heritage Grants. The details of these competitive grants have not yet been announced, but it is

understood that they will be for cultural heritage projects and for some forms of functional assistance to community groups.

It was announced that the grants program is aimed at helping the community tell its heritage stories, enhancing community engagement in heritage, bringing heritage online, and protecting national heritage assets. The program will make grants available to local governments, businesses, institutions and non-government organisations to build a sense of community and shared experience in their local area, thereby fostering a greater sense of inclusion for all citizens and more vibrant community life. The program also encourages communities to identify and manage significant heritage within a local, regional and national context, and to use this heritage to enrich their lives. The FAHS has long argued for assistance along these lines and I am personally delighted and have written to Minister Burke to congratulate and thank him.

It came to my attention recently that, while various forms of assistance are available for historical societies and museums that were affected by floods earlier this year, they have not been given operational funding and in at least one case (*see article on Charlton Golden Grains Museum – Ed.*) now have difficulty covering normal running costs. If any historical societies are in the fortunate position of being able to make a financial donation to the flood-impacted groups, we would suggest that you contact the relevant state societies (RHSQ, RHSV, RAHS, RWAHS) for information on those groups who are in need.

### Don Garden

## FEATURE ARTICLES: THE JANUARY FLOODS - TWO STORIES

*Although the vast majority of historical societies and museums in Australia did escape damage in the January 2011 floods, others were not so fortunate and this edition of the newsletter has focussed on two of these societies, one large and one quite small. Ed.*

### Royal Historical Society of Queensland



Burst water main, William St., 13 January 2011



Damage to Old Commissariat Store (photo by Ruth Kerr)

The Commissariat Store, 115 William Street, headquarters of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland, was severely damaged during the Brisbane River flood.

On 13 January 2011 early in the morning a water main below the William Street footpath burst, in front of the Commissariat Store building. The force of the water took out the 1890 concrete retaining wall, which in turn caused the collapse of the convict-built retaining wall at the back of the Store. The falling debris punched a hole in the back wall of the ground floor of The Store itself. No flood water entered the Store, though there was mud all through the yard from the burst water main, and rubble on the ground floor. Structurally there appeared to be no damage to the building itself and the Department of Public Works moved immediately to stabilize the middle floor by shoring the supporting beam that, although not damaged itself, had lost its support at one end and had dropped slightly.

The President, Carolyn Nolan, Immediate Past President, Denver Beanland and A/Manager, Chris Michie, met with Chief Architect Tom Fussell of Department of Public Works. Ruth Kerr, Hon Secretary, visited the building on 13th and met Tom Fussell and Donald Watson, architect and RHSQ member. Next day they met with Jinx Miles, conservation architect and RHSQ member, who was appointed by the government to oversee heritage issues, and the building manager Lizzie Carlton. Stonemasons were assigned, as well as security guards. On behalf of the government, Senior Manager, Stewart Grierson, also attended. State Archivist Janet Prowse has given great assistance already and is ready to help further. There is no damage to any of the Society's collection, and everything in the building is secure. RoadTek undertook repairs and strengthening of the William Street embankment. The Department of Public Works is restoring the Brisbane Tuff retaining wall. The department is sourcing appropriate mortar for the Commissariat Store building wall and the retaining wall before restoring them.

The Society has continued its operations as normally as possible. The Bulletin and the Queensland History Journal are being produced and sent out. At first, the office was in the Society's storage area on Level B2 in National Trust House, 95 William Street, Brisbane. Different venues had to be arranged for lectures and the 'Not At Homes'. (*see the item under RHSQ in NEWS FROM OUR CONSTITUENT ORGANISATIONS - Ed.*) The State Library of Queensland and the MacArthur Chambers Museum in Queens Street assisted. The Annual Conference on 4 June will be held at State Library and the Queensland Day Dinner at the Queensland Club. The Department of Public Works assisted further by providing four rooms in a 1880s historic, heritage government owned building, The Mansions, in George Street. The Hon Museum Curators set up two rooms with convict artefacts and images, and visitors can view a PowerPoint on the history of the Commissariat Store and the January 2011 flood. Council now meets in the National Trust Board Room at 95 William Street, Brisbane – the former Department of Primary Industries Building. It is hoped that the top two floors of the Store will be re-

opened soon so that the Library is again open to members and the public. Work continues on repair of the ground floor wall of the Commissariat Store building. The Society's temporary move out of the building during the period of repairs has enabled the Society to build stronger and wider relationships with historical groups.

**Ruth Kerr and Judy Rechner**

### **Charlton Golden Grains Museum, Charlton, Victoria**

The small Victorian town of Charlton had its worse flood on record on January 14th of this year. The flood devastated the town and around 80% of properties were inundated. The Museum, like so many other businesses, homes & community buildings, had over two feet of water throughout the building. Many items and cabinets were damaged and a large number of documents destroyed. The entire collection has had to be placed into storage so the building can be repaired. Grant money has been received which will enable the Museum to be set up again and it is hoped to have the research facility operating soon. However, many problems still face the Golden Grains Museum's committee. The whole town of Charlton was without electricity for a number of days leading to difficulties in implementing disaster and rescue plans. Further, the flooding of so many houses in the town meant that storage space was very scarce and much of the Museum's collection has had to be stored in sheds on a farm in a district currently experiencing a devastating mouse plague. While the grants to re-establish the Museum are very welcome, it is not possible to use these grants for operational costs and with the Museum closed, the committee has no revenue to pay such costs as insurance premiums and telephone bills. With Charlton turning 150 in 2013, the committee is anxious to re-open their Museum to the public soon. Urgent financial assistance is needed. To read more about the Golden Grains Museum at Charlton and to find contact details, please consult the Museum's website at <http://mc2.vicnet.net.au/home/colive/web/index.html>



The Charlton Golden Grains Museum after the flood peaked on 14 January 2011

**Photograph by Carolyn Olive**

**Article: Carolyn Olive and Esther Davies**

### **DISASTER PLANNING AND RECOVERY**

Information and links relevant to recovery from flood damage to cultural materials can be found on the [disaster planning and recovery](#) page on the FAHS website. The Blue Shield Australia website has a [Flood Affected Cultural Heritage Register 2011](#) and [disaster management information](#).

### **APPEAL FOR ASSISTANCE**

#### **East Perth Cemeteries Project**



East Perth Cemeteries main gate, with St Bartholomew's Chapel in the background

The site for a burial ground for the newly founded Swan River settlement of Perth in Western Australia was surveyed at East Perth in late 1829, and the first acknowledged burial was John Mitchell on 6 January 1830. Mitchell was a Private in the 63rd Regiment, 22 years of age, born in Holme, Huntingdonshire(1) . The cemeteries, within the grounds, continued to be the main burial ground for the Perth area until April 1899, when burials commenced at Karrakatta Cemetery.

The East Perth Cemeteries burial grounds were closed for new burials in 1899, except for those in vaults or with the approval of the Governor. Some burials at East Perth continued until 1916 when this practice was ceased, with a handful of exceptions. It is widely acknowledged there are over 10,000 burials within the grounds of the East Perth Cemeteries; approximately 3500 of these burials are recorded.

There was no burial register kept by either the church wardens, or the caretakers, of the Cemeteries. This led to researchers spending many hours compiling various histories, and datasets, on the East Perth Cemeteries, and these have been produced in various formats over the years.

St Bartholomew's Mortuary Chapel, designed by Mr Richard Roach Jewell(2), was built in 1870 and consecrated on the 16th February 1871 by Bishop Hale(3). St Bartholomew's opened to services on the 19th August 1888, the small church was crowded to excess for its first service and many of the population had to be turned away. Regular services on Friday evenings and Sunday afternoons commenced with Holy Communion to be celebrated at 8am on the 3rd Sunday of every month(4). A new bell was hung at the Chapel in 1888; the bell weighed 152lbs, and due to its location could be heard for some distance(5). Since being built the Chapel has seen many baptisms, marriages burials and other celebrations including the celebration of 125 years since the foundation of the colony(6).

Cherie Strickland and Lorraine Clarke as members of, and in conjunction with, the Friends of Battye Library Inc are collating a database of the numerous datasets and will carry out further research into other documents, and family histories to enable the most comprehensive biographical database on the inhabitants of this important historical cemetery.

In conjunction with the National Trust, Friends of Battye Library aim to make this research available freely online. This database would be fully sourced and would acknowledge all previous researchers who contributed to the end result. Friends of Battye Library would like to thank National Trust, Royal West Australian Historical Society, West Australian Genealogical Society, Graham Bown, Ron Bodycoat, Father Edward Doncaster, Gillian O'Mara and Anglican Archives for their support in this endeavour.

Cherie and Lorraine are keen to hear from descendants of pioneers who may be buried in the East Perth Cemeteries; if you have a photo of a headstone or any other document that places your family at East Perth, please contact them at [eastperthcemeteries@inet.net.au](mailto:eastperthcemeteries@inet.net.au) or [08] 9343 8838.

(1) AJCP Roll No 298, CO 18/10

(2) The Perth Gazette and West Australian Times 26/08/1870

(3) The Perth Gazette and West Australian Times 03/03/1871

(4) Western Mail 25/08/1888

(5) Western Mail 02/11/1889

(6) The West Australian 07/06/1954

**Lorraine Clarke and Cherie Strickland**

## GOOD NEWS STORIES FROM HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

*It is often said that good news is not news. However, it is always cheering to hear success stories from some of our many regional and local historical societies. Here are two such stories from the one society. If your local historical society has similar good news stories, be sure to let the Federation know. Ed.*

### Nepean Historical Society, Sorrento, Victoria



Nepean Historical Society Museum, 827 Melbourne Road, Sorrento 3943

The Nepean Historical Society Inc., Sorrento, Victoria was formed in March 1965. The then Flinders Shire Council made available to the Society the Mechanics Institute building which was opened as a museum in September 1967. The Society currently has around 200 members and is justly proud of two recent achievements, gaining public access to the site of the 1803 Sorrento settlement and the work of its NHS Heritage and Planning committee.

The Society took an interest in the "Rand Estate", a part of the Port Phillip beach front which was the site of the first European settlement site in Victoria in 1803 under Lt Col. David Collins. As neither the Victorian state Government nor the Federal Government was prepared to buy the site, we wanted to preserve public access to the site, called Sullivan Bay, after it was sold a couple of years ago to a private developer. We began by lobbying the State Government to buy part of the land to provide a pathway around the headland to the beach at Sullivan Bay, but without success. We next lobbied the local Council to include provision for a public pathway in any planning approvals for the site. The developers detected a sympathy within Council for our cause and offered to pay for a stone pathway around the base (above high tide mark) of the cliff face instead of over the top, so they didn't lose any of their land at the top of the headland. This offer was confirmed at a subsequent VCAT hearing at which the developer also agreed to remove a couple of trees to allow for a view from the headland across the beach. This compromise satisfied the basic aim of the Society. The lobbying was aimed at both the developer and the Council and was supported by the local Conservation Group and the Ratepayers Association.

The NHS Heritage and Planning sub-committee of the Nepean Historical Society comprises a couple of retired engineers plus 3-4 retired men who have an interest in local heritage and planning issues in the Portsea, Sorrento and Blairgowrie areas. This committee meets weekly and examines planning and building applications to the local council to ensure they conform to Council requirements, especially heights, distances, parking, traffic flow and the town's heritage and historical image. They send objections to the Council if any of these aspects are exceeded or in the case of units, not allowing for sufficient off-street parking. (The local Councillor attends these meetings once a month.) Most of these objections are accepted by the council.

This committee has won the respect of Council and the community for its role in representing community concerns over developers' attempts to go beyond the regulations and is seen by the Council as an additional community filtering device. This committee provides useful, relevant and timely publicity to the Society and its role serves to promote the modern day relevance of the Historical Society to the local community.

**Robert Barnes, President of the Nepean Historical Society**

## NEWS FROM OUR CONSTITUENT ORGANISATIONS

*(Editor's note: A quick trawl through the journals of our constituent members has revealed a treasure trove of interesting and exciting events. A small selection has been chosen to illustrate the diversity of activities happening in historical societies around the nation.)*

### Canberra and District Historical Society

#### Canberra Day Oration

On the 12 March, the Creative Director, Centenary of Canberra, Robyn Archer delivered the 2011 Canberra and District Historical Society's Canberra Day Oration. Robyn's oration, titled *The Centenary of Canberra: seed now, blossom in 2013, flower for another 100 years*, outlines her vision for the Centenary of Canberra. Her oration is a must read, and you can do that at [www.canberra100.com.au](http://www.canberra100.com.au)



Robyn Archer (on the right) is shown with Canberra and District Historical Society's Dr. Alan Roberts and Esther Davies.  
**Photo courtesy of Canberra 100 e-newsletter, March 2011**

### Historical Society of the Northern Territory

#### Australia Day Honours 2011 for Yvonne Forrest

Congratulations to Yvonne Forrest, former FAHS delegate from the Northern Territory and past Vice President, Archivist and Council Member of the Historical Society of the Northern Territory on her being awarded an Order of Australia, for service to the community of Darwin through historical, education and arts organisations.

Yvonne was a founding member of the Darwin University of the Third Age 1989; has served in various executive roles including President, Secretary and Treasurer; President, Arts Council of the Northern Territory, 1986-1988; Board Member, 1979-1987. Chairman, Arts Darwin; founding Secretary, Friends of the Darwin Symphony Orchestra, 1989; member, Course Advisory Committee, Territory North Theatre; Council Member, National Trust of the Northern Territory and currently Librarian, Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority, since 1980.



Yvonne with past NT CLP Minister, Grant Tambling, who received an AM for his work on Norfolk Island.

**Courtesy of Historical Society of the Northern Territory Newsletter, March 2011, No. 45**

**History South Australia**

**State History Conference 2011**

In perspective: rethinking South Australia's history.

20th State History Conference, 5 – 7 August 2011, National Wine Centre, Adelaide

In 2011 History SA will host a special State History Conference to mark 175 years since the official foundation of the Province of South Australia. The conference will use this anniversary as a prompt to interrogate enduring themes in South Australian and Australian history, to address their continuing relevance into the future, and to explore the place of historical understanding and popular mythmaking in South Australian identity.

This year, the State History Conference will be held in conjunction with the inaugural national conference of the Australian Council of Professional Historians Associations.

Registrations are now open for the 2011 State History Conference. [Click here](#) to download a copy of the conference brochure and registration form.

For more information email [statehistoryconference@history.sa.gov.au](mailto:statehistoryconference@history.sa.gov.au) or phone 08 8203 988

## Royal Australian Historical Society

### History in Paradise: The Royal Australian Historical Society's Tour of Norfolk Island, March 2011



Despite its small size (8 by 5 kilometres), a permanent population of less than two thousand and its isolated South Pacific location, Norfolk Island has a special fascination for historians. Polynesians lived there from about 600/700 to 500/600 years BP. It was the location of convict settlements between 1788 and 1814 and 1825 and 1855. Descendants of the Bounty mutineers and their Tahitian partners, who now comprise almost half the resident population, were resettled there from Pitcairn Island in 1856. Significant physical evidence survives of all these phases in Norfolk Island's past.

A Royal Australian Historical Society group of 23 people, including tour leader Linda Emery and her husband Langdon, visited the island between Sunday 20 and Sunday 27 March. Due to Linda's excellent work, the visit was a great success. She knows the island and its history well and proved highly accommodating and efficient. Our week on the island was both enjoyable and informative. Linda set a particularly high standard that other Royal Australian Historical Society tours should aspire to match.

#### David Carment

## Royal Historical Society of Queensland

### Not @ Home with the RHSQ

On Sunday 6 March the John Oxley Library hosted the Royal Historical Society of Queensland when they held their RHSQ Not@Home day of talks in Auditorium 2 at the State Library. The RHSQ normally hold their At Home days at the Commissariat Store but due to damage sustained on 13 January from the partial collapse of the William Street frontage during the recent floods their home is temporarily closed for repair.

The focus of the day was "Gympie Gold" and the convict artist Joseph Backler.



President Carolyn Nolan introduced a terrific line-up of speakers including RHSQ Council member Marilyn England who spoke about tracing the provenance of two 1870 oil paintings donated to the Society in 1969, Timothy Roberts, independent researcher in Australian colonial heritage and decorative arts, on convict artist Joseph Backler, and RHSQ exhibitions curator Jan Hess on 'Gympie Gold featuring the Pollock and Backler Exhibition'.

After lunch Jean Stewart OAM, Fellow of the Society and former President, provided insights into the Perseverance Nugget and Nugent Wade Brown whilst Dr Ruth Kerr, Secretary of the Society, investigated the central topic of 'The Discovery of Gympie Gold and How it Saved Queensland'. Dr Kerr has had a long interest

in mining in Queensland. Her book *John Moffat of Irvinebank* includes a history of base metal mining in North Queensland and on the Granite Belt.

Courtesy of the John Oxley Library Blog [www.slq.qld.gov.au](http://www.slq.qld.gov.au)

### Royal Historical Society of Victoria

#### Exhibitions at the RHSV

RHSV has hosted two exhibitions at A'Beckett Street so far this year. Volunteer David Thompson curated **Dancing the Skies**, a chance to showcase the many disparate photographs, books, documents and ephemera in the RHSV relating to the history of aviation. Professor Weston Bate who is old enough to have flown Lancasters in the Second World War, was at his brilliant best in launching the exhibition which ran from February till April. The exhibition is now available on line through the RHSV website. Our second exhibition is of an interesting collection of maritime paintings, titled **All At Sea: The maritime paintings of the late Jack Koskie**.



The exhibition features a colourful and diverse collection of large scale paintings featuring many important and interesting ships in Australian history, dating from the famous Endeavour and Lady Nelson vessels of discovery, through the age of sail and pioneer steamships such as Sophia Jane, Edina and Casino. The exhibition also included one of RHSV's own paintings - the "Victorian Fleet, 1888" painted by Captain A V Gregory. This painting has only just returned to the collection, having been carefully restored and reframed with the first proceeds of our RHSV Trust Fund. It was determined that each year half of the interest on the fund was to be used in some way to benefit the collection, and this was the first money from the fund used. The painting arrived back in time to be included in the Maritime Exhibition, and it makes a really splendid point of interest in the exhibition.

The late Jack Koskie, a professional artist and well known teacher, completed this series for his fine book *Ships that Served Australia*, published some years ago. The collection was recently presented to the Maritime Museum of Victoria, a grouping of independent museums from around the state for the preservation and exhibition of our maritime heritage. David Carment was present at the unveiling of the restored painting last week, as well as a number of former RHSV Presidents.

Courtesy of the RHSV News Blog – access through the RHSV website [www.historyvictoria.org.au](http://www.historyvictoria.org.au)

### Royal Western Australian Historical Society

#### Wendy Lugg Artist - Exhibition at the State Library, 9 April - 10 July 2011

The Royal Western Australian Historical Society was awarded a grant to host Wendy Lugg as artist in residence during 2009. The residency has been extended, on an honorary basis, for a further two years. Every family has stories to tell, and each story is an important part of our heritage. Wendy has explored the collections of both the Society and the State Library of Western Australia for stories that resonate with her own family memories.

In the resulting exhibition, *Mapping Memory*, artifacts, maps, ephemera and documents from these two important heritage collections intermingle with the artist's memorabilia and artworks in a rich layering of personal family story, collective memory, and the landscape they share. This beautiful exhibition runs from 9 April to 10 July 2011.



*Mapping Memory* artworks and photographs. "Mourning Cloth" back left, "Red Dust Storm on the Horizon" back right, and two artworks, using recycled garments, in the display case.

Courtesy: Museums WA website [www.museumswa.com.au](http://www.museumswa.com.au)

## Tasmanian Historical Research Association

### Excursion: Pugin Churches in Oatlands, Colebrook and Richmond, 12 February 2011



St Paul's Church, Oatlands

On Saturday 12 February, Brian Andrews led an excursion to three Pugin Churches in Oatlands, Colebrook and Richmond and gave a fascinating account of the theory and design of Pugin architecture.

**Text and photograph courtesy of THRA** website [www.thra.org.au](http://www.thra.org.au) and newsletter

## PRESENTATION OF MERIT AWARDS 2010

### Presentation of Fellowship Award to Bruce Baskerville

This presentation was made by Emeritus Professor David Carment at a reception at Government House, Norfolk Island, March 2011.

"In my capacity as Senior Vice-President of the Federation of Australian Historical Societies, I presented Bruce Baskerville, Site Manager of the Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area, with a Fellowship of the Federation. Bruce's response was a perceptive analysis of Norfolk Island history in its wider context. From Government House, we adjourned to another excellent dinner, this time at the Golden Orb Café in Burnt Pine, the island's commercial centre."

**David Carment** from Mosman Historical Society website [www.mosmanhistoricalsociety.org.au](http://www.mosmanhistoricalsociety.org.au)

### Presentation of Merit Award to Alan Foskett



FAHS Junior Vice-President, Esther Davies presents Merit Award Certificate to Alan Foskett at the Canberra and District Historical Society's Annual Dinner at the Brassey Hotel, Canberra, December, 2010.

**Photograph by John Davies**

**In 2010, awards were also made to Emeritus Professor Reg Appleyard (Fellowship Award) and to Associate Professor Don Gibb (Merit Award).**

## NOMINATIONS FOR MERIT AWARDS 2011

Nominations for the FAHS Merit Awards for 2011 close on **30 June 2011**.

Information about the awards (including a list of previous recipients) is available on the [FAHS website](http://www.fahs.org.au).

The guidelines (in PDF format) and nomination form (in PDF and DOC format) can also be downloaded from the FAHS website.

Please nominate a member of your society – nominations help raise the profile of all volunteers in local history.

## A GENTLE REMINDER



Are you passing this *FAHS Newsletter* (and its sister publication, the *FAHS e-Bulletin*) on to those within your historical society who may be interested in them? The FAHS tries to send the e-mails to the current President or Secretary, but it is not always easy to keep up with changes in office-bearers which may have taken place. If you are not the most appropriate person for us to be sending them to, we would be grateful if you would let us know of an alternative, so that the publications can reach as many of your members as possible.

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