

HISTORY COUNCIL OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER MARCH 2010

SA's Mad March is almost over, with the all events successfully staged, and only the State Election pending.

Speaking of the election, we have taken the occasion to prepare a history wish list or manifesto for the consideration of the parties, and in particular the next Government, whatever its composition. The list includes a number of issues we have been concerned with while making a general case for history to be part of policymaking. A copy will be posted on our website.

National Archives – Success (Stage 1)

We continued our campaign against the proposed closure of the Adelaide National Archives office in conjunction with many interested groups and individuals, including making representations directly to the Minister at the Community Cabinet meeting in Adelaide in late January. Although things did not look hopeful for a while it seems that the arguments were having some effect behind the scenes. So we were delighted and grateful when, on the eve of a major protest demonstration, Minister Joe Ludwig announced that the decision would be reversed.

It was a great outcome, at least initially. The challenge now is to ensure that the detail of the decision 'to maintain a presence' meets the needs and expectations of the community. I have had productive discussions with the head of SA State Records about models of co-location which could benefit all users of government records. It will be important that each partner retains its identity and professional staff in any joint facilities. We must also use this an opportunity to recover the extensive SA records removed from the Adelaide office some years ago. This is why the decision can only be seen as Stage 1.

175th Commemoration

The Working Party chaired by Margaret Anderson, continues to meet with a view to having detailed proposals and a marketing and sponsorship plan in place to present to Government after the election.

2010 Annual Lecture

We are delighted to have secured Professor Angela Woollacott to present our lecture this year. It will be held in the Hetzel Lecture Theatre in the State Library on the evening of Tuesday 27th July.

Professor Woollacott is currently the Manning Clark Professor of History at the Australian National University. She has published on imperialism, immigration, settler society, gender and post-colonialism. Her current research is on Australia's connections with other parts of the British Empire and categories of race and gender. The topic and other details of the lecture will be announced later.

History Week Forum

The forum on the topic *State Collections: Why keep all this old stuff?* will be held in conjunction with the State Library during History Week. We will be exploring the nature and significance of collections held by government and non-government bodies and how we can justify the resources needed to keep and them and make them accessible. It will be held on Thursday 27 May at 6 pm. Details of the panellists and format of the evening will be announced shortly.

All good wishes

John Bannon
President