

The Friends of South Australia's Archives Inc Newsletter

#84

December 2023

President's Annual Report

This past financial year has been rather quiet, with four meetings of the Committee (August, February, April, and June), plus the AGM held on the 9 November 2022.

Section 42 Packets

A significant pre-occupation of the Friends over several years has been access to Section 42 packets created under the Real Property Act. It was reported at the last Annual General Meeting that a reply had been received from the Minister of Planning, Nick Champion, in September 2022, stating that:



The suggested amendment to the Act to allow public access to the records older than 80 years appears to provide sufficient protection for the privacy of landowners. I am advised that the Registrar General also supports this proposal and will seek to prioritise this particular reform during the next review of the Act.

Nothing further has been heard from the Minister and a year has passed, so it is now time to ask whether there has been any movement in reviewing the Act and including our amendment.

National Archives of Australia

Virtually all records formerly held by the Adelaide branch of the National Archives of Australia are now in Canberra. Heidi Ing has represented the Friends at the periodic Consultative Forums called by the NAA in Adelaide. There has been positive progress in categorising, describing and digitising records which had been promised by NAA when they relocated the records to Canberra.

State Records of South Australia

State Records has been reviewing its Strategic Plan 2022–2026, and a Draft Plan was released in Nov 2022 for comment. The Strategic Plan has four underpinning goals: Identity, Priorities for First Nations People, The Archives, and Information Governance. The Strategic Plan has now been released with little change from the Draft and with no suggestion that the State Records Act should be reviewed.

History Council of South Australia

The Friends continues to be represented by myself on the History Council of South Australia where I sit on its Executive Committee. The HCSA is the peak history body in South Australia and has gained a high profile with government and the history community. The History Council and the History Trust jointly sponsor an Awards Night at the conclusion of History Month in May. The Friends nominated Alan Jones and he was presented with the Regional Historian of the Year for 2023. Alan was a founding member of the Friends and for a very long time, its Secretary.

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South Australia's History Advocate

The History Trust of South Australia appointed Dr Kiera Lindsey as History Advocate during the year, fulfilling a commitment by the Labor Government to fill the position, formerly known as the State Historian, after a gap of some years.

TROVE Funding

During the year the National Library of Australia had a significant funding scare with the Federal Government threatening to reduce funding the TROVE. There was a ground swell of horror at the suggestion and funding was restored and slightly increased. The Friends wrote to all South Australian Federal politicians advocating for the continuation of funding for TROVE.

Jack Cross Fellowships

The Jack Cross Fellowships were launched in early 2022 and was again advertised, largely through the History Council's eNewsletter. In 2023 the Fellowships were awarded to: Dr Nicole Davis, then a PhD candidate but now a doctoral graduate of University of Melbourne, for her work on the history of Adelaide Arcade and Gays Arcade; and Dr Robyn Dunlop, doctoral graduate of University of Newcastle who is revisiting the work of Hans Mincham (1912–2007).

FSAA Newsletter and Committee

The Friends continue to produce an informative newsletter and I want to acknowledge the contribution of Heidi Ing as Editor. I also wish to acknowledge the commitment of my fellow committee members, Sandra Kearney (Treasurer/Membership Officer), Johanne Taylor (Secretary), and Amanda Wells. The Committee needs new committee members—it is not a large time commitment, but a worthwhile contribution to advancing access to South Australian historical records. During the year Prof Wilf Prest resigned from the Committee and Sandra Kearney has foreshadowed that she will not be standing for re-election. Both have made a significant contribution over the years to the deliberations of the Committee of the Friends.

Andrew Peake
25 Oct 2023

FSAA Annual General Meeting 2023



The Annual General Meeting of The Friends of South Australia's Archives was held on Wednesday, 25 October 2023 at 6 pm in the Hurtle Room of the Box Factory Community Centre. Present for the meeting were Peter Crush, Andrew Peake, Sandra Kearney, Heidi Ing, Johanne Taylor, Kathleen Patitsas, Roger Andre, Bernie O'Neil, Margrette Kleinig, Christopher Kleinig, and Amanda Wells (online), with apologies from Kate Pulford.

Minutes of the previous AGM were circulated and accepted. Andrew Peake provided the President Report for the year 2022–2023 (see pages 1-2 of this newsletter). Reports from the 2023 Jack Cross Fellowship recipients were tabled and read (see page 3). The Treasurer, Sandra Kearney, reported on the financial year (see page 5) and Heidi Ing provided the AGM presentation for 2023 on the topic of 'Citizen Historians and the Archives' (see page 5).

Election of Office Bearers

Bernie O'Neil took the chair for the election of the President. Andrew Peake was nominated to continue as President by Heidi Ing, seconded by Sandra Kearney, and duly elected. Amanda Wells was nominated to succeed Sandra Kearney in the amalgamated roles of Membership Officer and Treasurer. Johanne Taylor was nominated and elected to continue Secretary, Heidi Ing as Newsletter Editor, Andrew Peake as Public Officer, and Graham Jaunay as Auditor. We welcome Kate Pulford who has agreed to join the Friends' committee in 2024.

2023 Jack Cross Fellowship Recipients

In 2022, to commemorate the life of its longest-serving President, Jack Cross, the Friends of South Australia's Archives initiated two small annual Fellowships of \$250 each. These Fellowships are awarded annually to support researchers of South Australian history to pursue research in archives, with a focus on the use of South Australian resources. In this, the second year of the Jack Cross Fellowship, we again received applications involving impressive research projects. The FSAA Committee were pleased to award the Jack Cross Fellowships for 2023 to Robyn Dunlop and Nicole Davis, who have provided the following reports for publication.

Robyn Dunlop on the Work of Hans Mincham (1912–2007)

The 2023 Jack Cross Fellowship contributed towards a fruitful experience accessing archival material in the State Library of South Australia (SLSA). The material I accessed enabled me to complete a journal article and has pointed to future directions for research. I live in New South Wales, so the funds went to travel expenses for a trip to the SLSA to view Hans Mincham's archival material.

In the mid-20th century, Mincham wrote a history of the Flinders Ranges as well as educational books on geological and environmental 'prehistory' and contemporary issues of conservation. He was influenced by Hans Heysen's paintings of the Flinders from the 1920s and 1930s, which depicted geological features of a landscape empty of people. The trip to the archives revealed Mincham's close contacts with settler-colonial families and their descendants, and an oral history interview hinted at the role of his wife (Claire Mincham née Boyle). An article on Heysen and Mincham's representations of the Flinders region and Aboriginal history has been accepted by the *Journal of Australian Studies*. Claire Mincham's own experiences as an outback nurse in the mid-north of the state brought to light the significant Afghan community in the region, as well as a medical lens to the place, and they point to the future direction of my on-going interest in the history of this area. I thank the Friends very much for this opportunity.



Nicole Davis on Nineteenth-Century Australian Arcades

The shopping arcades were a significant component of the leisure and commercial life of the nineteenth-century Australian city. In Adelaide, an adjoining complex of two arcades was constructed in the mid-1880s: the Adelaide Arcade and Gay's Arcade. These still exist today and have become an iconic part of Adelaide's urban environment. My research into Adelaide's twin arcades, made possible by the generosity of the FSAA, began to scope the resources available in some of the Adelaide archives, which will allow me to further explore the histories of this site and those who were connected with it – architects and owners, shopkeepers and workers, shoppers, and other visitors – during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as well as its businesses and the goods and services traded within.

Although this was intended as a scoping visit, it was a very fruitful and yielded a rich range of material. I spent a week in Adelaide, visiting State Library South Australia, the City Archives, the Architecture Museum at University of South Australia, and special collections at University of Adelaide. During my visit, I was able to digitise a large amount of primary manuscript and published material relating to the long history of the sites, including original plans, images, letters, and other sources not available online. I also accessed a wide range of publications from the twentieth century to today that revealed the importance of this heritage site to Adelaide, its history, and

present day placemaking. Although time did not permit my visit to State Records South Australia, I have determined to return in 2024 to examine their small collection of related records, as well as to delve further into the City Archives, which has a large amount of material but requires some intensive investigation and sifting through indexes and boxes to find the relevant information. Also, the National Trust of South Australia, while they did not have any records of relevance, suggested that I visit the South Australian Heritage Council, which will also be in the plan for next visit.

Two other valuable contributions arose from the work. The first was the ability to (finally!) visit the arcades in-person for the first time since the very beginning of my thesis. I closely observed the architectural details, the changes made to the site over the years, and some of the similarities with one of Melbourne's (sadly demolished) arcades, the Eastern on Bourke Street. Experiencing the site in person provided a more complex understanding of its place in the city and also allowed me to view the museum, which has printed material and objects related to the arcade, the latter often very difficult to find or identify. It was also great to see what shops are there today and notice the people enjoying the building. Secondly, I met library and archives staff that were wholly generous with their time, expertise, and knowledge of the city. They picked out material and publications for me to view that I hadn't already identified and which were really valuable to the research. It was also really fantastic to immerse myself for almost a week in the lovely city that is Adelaide!

From here, I intend to further explore this topic and analyse the large amount of material that I collected while in Adelaide, which will contribute to my book on Australia's arcades, as well as an online exhibition and website project that I hope to produce in the next year. The research conducted in Adelaide will also likely will provide evidence to support a larger application for funding to delve further into the history of the arcades and the next phase of research to be conducted in 2024. I am greatly appreciative of the Friends of South Australia's Archives for the Jack Cross Fellowship and will keep you up to date with further work on my research.



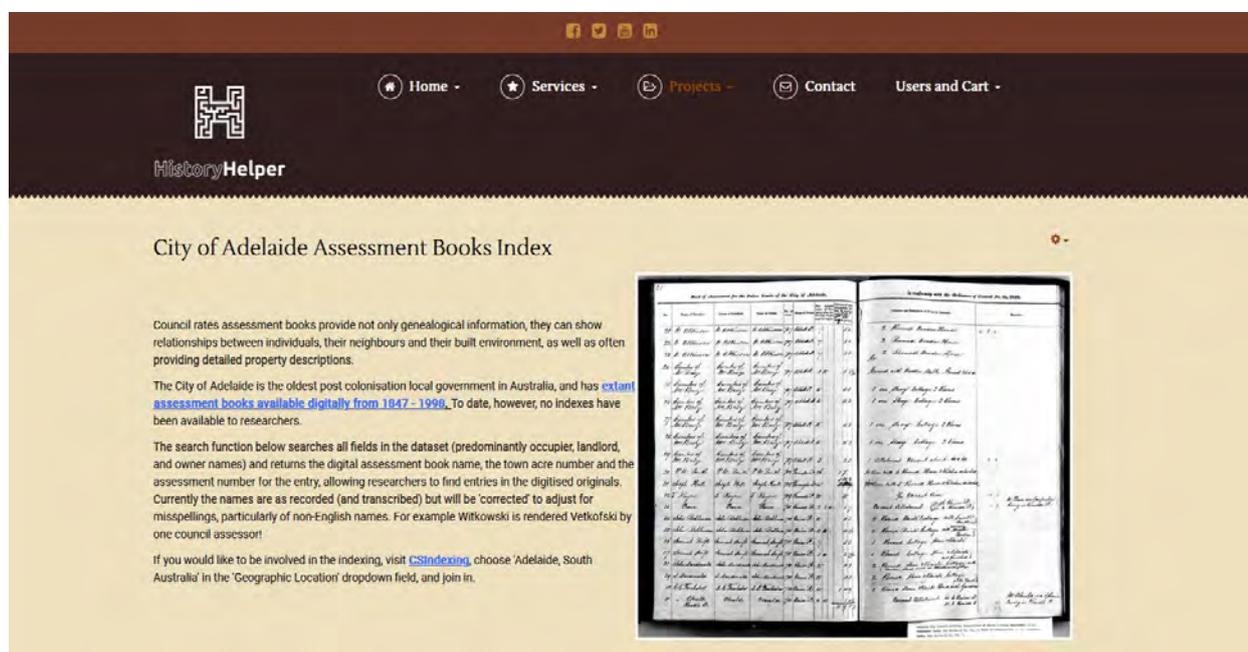
The above images of the Adelaide Arcade were taken by Nicole Davis during her visit to Adelaide.

AGM Annual Address: Citizen Historians and the Archive

The address at this year's AGM was provided by Heidi Ing who took the opportunity to celebrate the contributions of South Australia's citizen historians. The presentation began by highlighting the efforts of the Friends' President, Andrew Peake, who, as well as producing many publications of interest to local and family historians, has released five editions of his *Sources for South Australian History*, which was first published in 1977. Andrew Peake is also a founding member of the South Australian Genealogy & Heraldry Society (SAGHS), an organisation whose volunteers have produced valuable print resources and an online database which continues to expand at an astonishing rate. This database is the result of many decades of volunteer effort to locate, preserve, index, and transcribe a wide array of records. Transcription of historical records is time-consuming and meticulous work, especially when information is handwritten, and an colossal number of volunteer hours have been dedicated to deciphering South Australian documents.

This AGM address highlighted the valuable contributions of individual South Australians such as Reg Butler, Chris Durrant, Graham Jaunay, Dulcie Love and Diane Cummins. Those in the room were then encouraged to discuss the work of other citizen historians, and the different ways in which their extraordinary efforts have been preserved. While some citizen historians have created ongoing access to their resources through websites, cultural institutions, or membership societies, there is always concern that the results of tremendous, focused effort may not be maintained. It is a priority of the Friends of South Australia's Archives to encourage and assist the keepers of public and private archives within South Australia, and members who attended the Friends' AGM voiced their support for this objective.

The digitisation and online presentation of archival material increasingly allows people to interact with archives from the comfort of their own homes. Volunteers with a passion for history, and for making archival material more findable, can index and transcribe at any time day or night, whenever their schedule allows. The infrastructure to support online transcription of digitised records is complex to establish and difficult to maintain, so this facility is generally not available to small archives. We are grateful for the National Library of Australia's vast number of 'Voluntroves' (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/help/become-voluntrove>), the National Archives of Australia's 'archIVE' transcription community (<https://transcribe.naa.gov.au/>), and the global contributors who index and transcribe on FamilySearch (www.familysearch.org/en/info/volunteer). Heidi Ing highlighted a commendable transcription project initiated by Ben Hollister of History Helper, who is coordinating the transcription of City of Adelaide Assessment Books through CSI: Crowd Sourced Indexing (<https://historyhelper.com.au/index.php/projects/city-of-adelaide-assessment-books-index>). If you value the pursuits of citizen historians or would like to contribute to the accessibility of South Australia's archival resources, you might consider volunteering through one of these online transcription communities.



City of Adelaide Assessment Books Index

Council rates assessment books provide not only genealogical information, they can show relationships between individuals, their neighbours and their built environment, as well as often providing detailed property descriptions.

The City of Adelaide is the oldest post colonisation local government in Australia, and has [extant assessment books available digitally from 1847 - 1998](#). To date, however, no indexes have been available to researchers.

The search function below searches all fields in the dataset (predominantly occupier, landlord, and owner names) and returns the digital assessment book name, the town acre number and the assessment number for the entry, allowing researchers to find entries in the digitised originals. Currently the names are as recorded (and transcribed) but will be 'corrected' to adjust for misspellings, particularly of non-English names. For example Witkowski is rendered Vetkofski by one council assessor!

If you would like to be involved in the indexing, visit [CSI indexing](#), choose 'Adelaide, South Australia' in the 'Geographic Location' dropdown field, and join in.

Friends of South Australia's Archives Inc: Financial Statement 2023

Statement of Income and Expenditure for Year Ended 30 June 2023

Opening Balance		4202.19
Income		
	Subscriptions 2022–2023	520.00
Expenditure		
	Hire of meeting rooms	137.50
	Reissue of lost cheque	22.00
	Jack Cross Fellowship Awards	500.00
		<u>695.00</u>
Closing Balance		4062.69
Reconciliation (Bank Statement)		
	Balance brought forward 1 July 2022	4202.19
	Balance end of year 30 June 2023	4062.69
	Unpresented cheque	<u>250.00</u>
Balance available		4,312.69

Graham Jaunay

Hon Auditor

16 September 2022

Sandra Kearney

Treasurer

17 September 2023

National Archives of Australia Consultative Forum

A meeting of the NAA South Australia Consultive Forum took place on Tuesday, 12 September 2023 with Heidi Ing representing the Friends of South Australia's Archives. The group met in the Jervois Room in the Mortlock Wing of the State Library of South Australia, with some additional participants attending online via Teams. South Australia is fortunate to be the home base of Simon Froude, the Director-General of NAA, and Simon was able to attend this meeting in person, along with the State Manager Nick Gleghorn and Assistant Manager Emily Richardson.

Congratulations to Parliamentary Librarian Steven Fox

The Friends congratulates Steven Fox, who has won the position of Parliamentary Librarian. Steven Fox has left his appointment as Assistant-Director General (Collections Management) at NAA, and Celia Blake is currently acting in this role. NAA have commenced the recruitment process.

Belongings of Captain Matthew Flinders

Artifacts related to Captain Matthew Flinders and held by descendent of his family since his death in 1814, were purchased at auction in 2021 by philanthropist Barbara Mason, who generously donated them to the NAA. The age and fragility of these records mean that they are not likely to be available for general access in the NAA Research Centre, but Director-General Simon Froude reported that 'curated viewings may be possible'. This material is currently being preserved, after which it will be digitised and made available to view online.



Defend the Past, Protect the Future

As part of the 'Defend the Past, Protect the Future' project, the NAA is proactively preserving, describing, and digitising at-risk records. Simon Froude reported that the Canberra Digitisation Hub is increasing in its efficiency, and digitisation progress is further along than was originally planned. It is expected that over 500,000 items will be digitised by the time this project ends in 2025, including South Australian records which have been transferred to Canberra.

NAA Transformation Branch

The NAA has established a fifth branch, the 'Transformation Branch', which will be responsible for transformative digital projects. Responsibilities will include managing the funding recently provided through the Federal Budget and meeting the requirements of the 'Defend the Past, Protect the Future' project. This branch will: oversee the 'development and execution of National Archives' transformation program; undertake research and innovation in digital archival management, special corporate projects and capability development; and ensure National Archives can achieve its vision and objectives through effective reform www.naa.gov.au/about-us/who-we-are/organisational-structure.

Consolidation of NAA records in Canberra

All South Australian records which had been held in Victoria and Queensland have been relocated and are now centralised in the Canberra repository. This still leaves a large group of South Australian records which remain stored in New South Wales. The 2023-2024 financial year will provide a break from relocations of large collections, so the focus can be digitisation, storage, and organisation of records. Approximately 4 km of records have been relocated from South Australia to Canberra, 1.1 km of records from Tasmania and 1 km from Northern Territory. Plans and consultations are now underway for relocation of records out of Victoria and Queensland. These are much larger moves, with over 50 km records currently stored in Victoria and 38 km in Queensland. Nick Gleghorn reported that the consultative process undertaken in South Australia will inform these large moves.

Potential Review of Legislation

Since formation, the Friends of South Australia's Archives have had a particular focus on the legislation that governs archives. One of the main catalysts for the formation of the FSAA was the State Records Bill proposed in 1995 and passed as the State Records Act 1997, and the FSAA would welcome a review of this state legislation. At a federal level, archives are overseen by the Archives Act 1983, and Simon Froude suggested that the NAA are working with the Office of Arts to review the current legislation 'with hope that this will progress over the next year'. The current Archives Act 1983 is available at www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A02796.

New Archival Collections

'Papers of Scott Hicks' at State Library of South Australia

Summary: "Records of the life and work of Australian filmmaker Scott Hicks, comprising papers relating Hicks' work on a number of feature films and documentaries including original script drafts and development, correspondence, production files, publicity and marketing files, press cuttings, props, and production audio-visual including screentests, rushes, cutting copies, and theatrical release prints."

<https://catalog.slsa.sa.gov.au:443/record=b3179974~S1>

'Additional Records of Robert Hannaford' at State Library of South Australia

Summary: "A compilation of Robert Hannaford's oeuvre comprising artwork providing an insight into the motivation and outcomes of a dedicated artist working transversely through the 20th & 21st centuries. The majority of works are unresolved paintings that have not been exhibited and provide context to show the working methods of the artist." <https://catalog.slsa.sa.gov.au:443/record=b3533332~S1>

'The Samstag Legacy Archive' at University of South Australia

Abstract: "The collection comprises research materials, including correspondence, research notes, published materials, and papers from various archives and organisations, collected and created for the Samstag Legacy Project and the publication of the book *The Samstag Legacy: An Artist's Bequest*."

<https://guides.library.unisa.edu.au/specialandarchivalcollections/samstag>



State Records' Strategic Plan 2023-2026

The State Records of South Australia released a draft Strategic Plan in 2022 and conducted external consultation until December of that year. The new plan has been released and can be viewed here:

www.archives.sa.gov.au/documents/State-Records-of-South-Australia-Strategic-Plan-2023-2026.pdf



The Executive Committee

President:	Andrew Peake (agpeake@gmail.com)
Secretary:	Johanne Taylor (taylorjohanne@hotmail.com)
Treasurer:	Amanda Wells (amanda.wells10@uon.edu.au)
Membership:	Amanda Wells (amanda.wells10@uon.edu.au)
Newsletter Editor:	Heidi Ing (heidi.ing@flinders.edu.au)
Committee:	Kate Pulford (kpulford@pac.edu.au)
Public Officer:	Andrew Peake (agpeake@gmail.com)

Contact the Friends

Email: Andrew Peake (agpeake@gmail.com)

Postal: Friends of South Australia's Archives,
14 Tudor Street, Dulwich, 5065, South Australia

Newsletter Contributions

Contributions to the Newsletter are most welcome. The Newsletter Editor can be contacted through Heidi Ing, email: heidi.ing@flinders.edu.au.

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George Cockburn Henderson (1870-1944), Professor of History, Adelaide University (1902-1923) was largely responsible for the establishment of South Australia's first archival office in 1920.