

JUNE 2026

A BUMPER BURNSIDE BULLETIN: A note from the Editor

The recent decision to not proceed with the production of this year's Annual BHS Journal has meant that we need to find another way of reporting/recording all of our events, meetings, and activities for the year. For this month, this will be covered by the Bulletin which has meant that with 6 pages it is longer than usual. This is particularly so for this June edition as May has been such a busy time for the Society. Please take the time to read this Bulletin and catch up on recent news and information about upcoming events. In particular, check the details of the visit to Parliament House on 8 July, and make your booking ASAP (details on page 2)

A proposal for maintaining appropriate records of Society meetings and activities is outlined on page 5.

NEXT MEETING: Monday 15 June at 7.30pm. We are back in the Community Hall



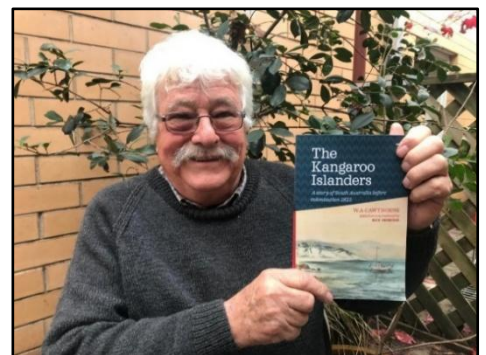
Our June meeting will be something quite different and well worth braving a cold winter's night. But remember the temperature and the atmosphere in the Hall will both be pleasantly warm.

Be prepared for the unexpected when **Robyn Heitmann** presents *The Strange Death of Mr Buchanan*, when YOU are going to help solve a very cold case of suspected murder which occurred in Adelaide in 1839.

Is this Adelaide's earliest unsolved murder? Join Robyn as she invites you to be part of the coronial inquest where she explores the colony's early years and sets out the details of the gruesome discovery. As a member of the coronial jury, it will be up to you to decide who did or didn't do it.

JULY MEETING: Monday 20 July at 7.30pm

Our speaker at the July meeting will be **Rick Hosking** and his topic *Kangaroo Island before Colonisation*. It is not a well-known part of the South Australian story, but more than 700 individuals and dozens of vessels visited Kangaroo Island between 1802 and 1836, when formal colonisation began. They came for seal skins and salt, and some of them to settle on Kangaroo Island and other islands off the mainland. Rick will talk about the sealing industry, and about a remarkable novel written by William Anderson Cawthorne which represents the murder of one of the sealers, a Tasmanian called George Meredith.



As a matter of interest, Kangaroo Island Settlement Day is celebrated annually on 27 July to commemorate the arrival of the *Duke of York* and the first 42 official settlers for South Australia in 1836. The *Lady Mary Pelham* (30 July) and the *John Pirie* (16 August) arrived shortly afterwards. These pioneer settlers established a settlement there at Nepean Bay until they moved under Colonel Light's direction to Holdfast Bay in late 1836.

View of the North side of KI, 1802. William Westall (on the Flinders Expedition) Ministry of Defence London, Art Collection

VISIT TO PARLIAMENT HOUSE: BOOK NOW

Our next outing is on the morning of **Wednesday 8 July** when we will be visiting Parliament House for a guided tour to be followed by lunch at the nearby The Guardsman restaurant. The tour will be hosted by Jack Batty the local member for Bragg. Arrangements are as follows:

9.25am - Arrive at Parliament House. Use of public transport is recommended.

9.30am - Tour commences (tour is free)

12noon - Lunch at own expense at the The Guardsman. Entry from the Adelaide Railway Station concourse.

Bookings are essential and can be made now by phoning 0422 705 916 or at the BHS June meeting. Bookings close on 1 July.

Did you know?

- That The Guardsman Restaurant was originally known as the Overland Dining Hall (1928) and was a popular meeting place and dining area for those travelling on the nightly Express to Melbourne. Its classic 1920's façade facing out to the railway station concourse has been retained.
- That Parliament House was completed in two sections 50 years apart. The western side (House of Assembly) was completed in 1889 (see photo on right) and stood on its own until the Legislative Council to the east was completed in 1939. If you stand across on the other side of North Terrace, you may be able to notice some of the differences.



THE LEGACY OF H E S (SYD) MELBOURNE



Our May meeting was also a History Festival Event and featured an excellent presentation by BHS member Andrew Buxton. Fifty-five attended which included 11 visitors. Due to renovations taking place in our usual meeting place in the Community Hall, the meeting was held in the Burnside Ballroom. (at left)

Thanks to Judy Fander for providing the following report on Andrew's presentation.

Andrew Buxton spoke about his relative, Henry Eoin Sydney Melbourne, Council Engineer at Burnside District Council from 1924 until 1958. Of Scottish background, he exemplified his family tradition of service to the community. From Adelaide High School, he went to the University of Adelaide on a scholarship in 1909. He was called up in 1916 to serve in World War I with the 11th Field Company Australian Engineers. In France, he demonstrated those leadership, empathy, decision-making and creative thinking abilities that later made him an excellent local government Engineer and Town Clerk. A surveyor as well as an engineer, he had a strong interest in implementing town planning and the concept of zoning, which was a new idea. He was an enthusiastic and effective supporter of the movement to acquire parks and green spaces in the city's suburbs. He had a hand in the purchase by the State Government of Hazelwood Park as a Pleasure Resort.

In 1924, Burnside was being further transformed by suburban development by an influx of new residents. Roads were still gravelled or macadam with only a few being tarred. Melbourne invented a cold-mix bitumen and screenings plant to locally process screenings from Stonyfell so local roads could be bituminized more economically. During the years 1918-1938, Burnside experienced considerable growth with the population rising from 18,500 to around 38,000 and dwellings growing from 4,000 to 11,000.



Off the tee at Mount Osmond in the 1940s

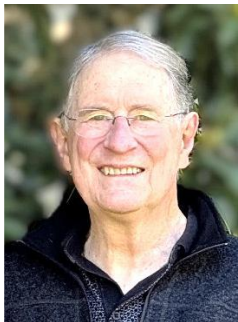
On a restricted budget, the Council was not always able to afford to implement all its plans. Melbourne bought up parcels of land out of his own money, which he thought Burnside needed. He bought Chambers Gully and later donated it to the Council as a site for a new dump. He did, however, receive some compensation for this. After the Council declined his plan to create a public golf course at Mt Osmond to prevent the land from being developed, Melbourne co-opted the support of other like-minded golf lovers and formed a syndicate to purchase the land. They then formed a company and, in 1927, offered shares to the

public. The Club will celebrate its centenary next year.

In 1924, the Council Office was on Burnside Road (now Glynburn). By 1935, Burnside was a Municipality in new Council Chambers on Greenhill Rd (completed 1928) and achieved the status of City in 1943. During the Depression, he was both Engineer and Town Clerk and by 1938, Melbourne was both the Engineer and Manager of the City of Burnside. A tribute plaque to honour his “vision and enterprise” was unveiled by Mayor Bolton in 1962 and is now located in the north-west corner of the Burnside Civic Centre carpark.



PRESIDENT’S REPORT: NEWS FROM THE AGM



The recent AGM introduced a few changes to the membership of the BHS committee. We have two new committee members, although the word “new” is perhaps not entirely appropriate.

Andrew Peake was elected to the committee and, as a foundation member of the Society, he is certainly no newcomer. Andrew has been actively involved throughout the life of the BHS as a presenter at meetings, tour leader, journal contributor, and past secretary.

Roger Harris is a more recent member of the BHS, having joined in 2024, but he has already made valuable contributions to the Society as a journal article writer and is scheduled to present at the October meeting. Roger is a passionate historian and is also a community member of the Burnside Council Heritage Reference Group.

I extend my thanks to outgoing committee members Helen Bills and Cathy Bransbury, both of whom have been active and valued contributors to the committee.

Helen has laid out and contributed to 5 journals. She has also relinquished that role but will continue to market and publicise the society.

Cathy will continue as BHS archivist and will maintain the liaison with the Cultural and Historical Officers and the Local History Room

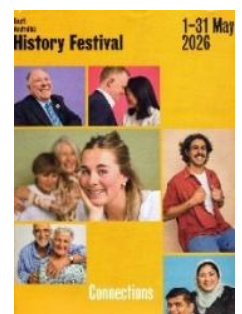
Meanwhile, I remain as President, with Chris Kelly continuing as Secretary, Dave Monceaux as Treasurer, and Judy Fander and Bob Stace as committee members.

I encourage members to thank our outgoing committee members for their contributions and to make a special point of welcoming our incoming committee.

BHS HISTORY FESTIVAL INVOLVEMENT

During the recent History Festival, the BHS presented four events on the official programme. Our May meeting with speaker Andrew Buxton and his topic *Henry Eoin Sydney Melbourne: Surveyor and Engineer Extraordinaire* is reported above on page 2.

The other 3 events are reported below.



Writing Our Stories: A Local Burnside Non-Fiction Writers ‘Reveal’

On 14 May, Judy Fander chaired a discussion with local Burnside authors about their historical passions and their self-published books for an audience of about 40 people. The event, introduced by Hannah Shaw, Historical and Cultural Officer for the Council, was held in the Burnside Library as part of BHS’s History Festival contribution.



The audience were invited to participate, and after the discussion among the panelists, they did so. Several members of the audience revealed they had lived in Burnside for nearly 80 years! Another audience member said he too was researching his ancestor, an MP in the northern electorate of SA, a time when electorates had more than one elected member! One observed that perhaps we had taken more pride in our community in earlier days than we do now.

Distinguished scientist and engineer Don Sinnott enthralled with his stories of radar development and the defense of northern Australia, and his ghost writing of an autobiography for a Sudanese refugee. Polly Dundon promoted the idea that we should take pride in the men and women of Burnside who have made a significant contribution to society in many ways. Her beautiful coffee table books help to spread this message. Andrew Peake OAM, a prolific author of many useful books, told how he had begun to take an interest in history from his childhood. Among his relatives is A H Peake, three times Premier of SA. The subject of two of his recent books were those essential men of their times: the surveyors, whose work guaranteed the future economic success of the colony. The evening ended too soon.

[Report supplied by Judy Fander]

Burnside’s Waterfall Gully Creek: a short historical walk with Colin Harris



On Wednesday 6 May, a group of 18 people, including helpers, met at the rotunda adjacent to the T-junction of Glynburn Road and Waterfall Terrace. Colin Harris, a third generation Burnside resident, was there to greet us, before taking us on a most interesting journey. In the Burnside Historical Society Journal 2025 (available in The Burnside Library), Colin wrote a detailed account titled “Waterfall Gully: Some Childhood Memories”. The walk and talk focussed on a section of Waterfall Gully Creek - Section

269. Elizabeth Warburton’s book “The Paddocks Beneath,” is an excellent source of additional information on this locality.

Waterfall Gully Creek, once called Greenhill Riverlet, and now referred to as First Creek, was an important source of running water for aboriginal inhabitants. River red gums along its banks were habitats for possums – an aboriginal food source. A water source was also a necessity for early settlers. The creek behind the rotunda provided water for bullocks and horses, in particular horses from the nearby tram terminus. River red gums were also valued by early settlers as a source of building material. The supply of running water and discovery of red brick clay led to the existence of an “Industrial Heartland” in the area. Along Glynburn Road the group walked to the sites of a former water mill which was originally a sawmill and later a flour mill. The last remaining wooden cog is on display in the Burnside City Centre foyer. Next was the site of the Cooperage where Colin’s grandfather was employed. We were shown where large water tanks existed, which supplied water to places as far away as Toorak Gardens and Dulwich. Along Waterfall Terrace we visited the former location of the Brick Kiln. To support local residents and workers, several shops were established. Colin recalls a Haberdashery, a Hairdresser, and a Serwell/Hardware Store.



A wonderful two hours were spent with Colin as he wove his childhood memories into his walk. Stories of his idyllic childhood - catching moths, tadpoles and yabbies, skinny dipping in the Mill Pond, playing on top of the water tanks, building tree houses, chatting to the Slavic kiln workers, and roaming freely, enabled many of us to reminisce about our own early years. A very big thank you to Colin for his time, effort, and enthusiasm for Burnside's History.

[Report supplied by Dianne Wilson]

Wheal Watkins 1843 Heritage Mine: Above Ground Tour



BHS provided 2 above-ground surface tours of Wheal Watkins at Glen Osmond on Sunday 3 May for the History Festival. The tours took an hour each, and a total of 30 people visited. Some visitors came from as far as the Barossa Valley, and others from Hallett Cove. They were all very interested in historic mining in SA, the Cornish miners, and Wheal Watkins. There was a lively and interesting discussion. We looked into the lower adit as seen in the photo. We walked up to the upper adit, and to the site of the top of the mineshaft. Everyone seemed to enjoy the tours, and they stayed to talk. It was a most enjoyable day for the organisers – Meredith Ide, Anne and Dave Monceaux - and we look forward to doing it again.

[Report supplied by Dave Monceaux]

AFTER THE JOURNAL: CAN YOU HELP?



With the Annual BHS Journal not being produced this year we need another way, at least in the short term, to record our meetings and outings for this year so that there is an archival record of our activities. **One solution is to find enough volunteer reporters/scribes who can write a summary of each of the speaker presentations for the remaining 6 meetings and 2 outings.** (8 volunteers are needed to minimise the workload) Each report would be about one and a half pages of text in Word, font 12 (we can even accept handwritten reports if needed).



Bob Stace has offered to coordinate the process for this year, format each report, and add suitable images/photos.

A digital copy of a report can then be forwarded to members with their monthly Bulletin and at the end of the year all of the individual reports can simply be combined into one digital copy as a record of the year. This is really a very simplified approach to the one used for the Journal.

But we need to spread the load, and **it won't work unless we can find 8 member volunteers now to undertake the report writing.** If you are interested in helping with this task or need further information, then please see Bob at the June meeting or phone him on 0417 988 775.

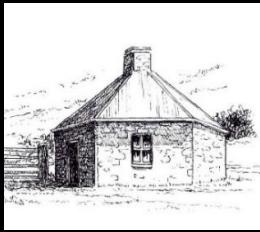
ANNUAL SUBS NOW DUE



All invoices for 2026/27 membership have been either collected, delivered or posted. And whilst to date there has been a good response from members, our Treasurer Dave Monceaux would like to have all subs paid by the end of this month. Apart from a small income from bank interest and donations, our main source of income is your annual subscription, so it's important that this be paid as soon as possible so we can pay our bills!

Membership Fees of \$30 single and \$45 for families living at the same address can be paid in cash at the June Meeting or by EFT to BSB:105 086, Account No. 330 298 840 REF your name, by the end of June.

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



Burnside Historical Society

Active in the Burnside Community for 46 years

JUNE 2026 Meeting

The Strange Death of Mr Buchanan

Monday 15 June @ 7.30pm

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

TOPIC Is this Adelaide's earliest unsolved murder? The Strange Death of Mr Buchanan is a real case Robyn Heitmann uncovered while researching her upcoming novel, *At the Hem of the Empire, a colonial woman's story*. Join her as she invites you to be part of the coronial inquest where she explores the colony's early years and sets out the details of the gruesome discovery. As a member of the coronial jury, it will be up to you to decide who did or didn't do it.



OUR SPEAKER **Robyn Heitmann** was raised in the northern suburbs of Adelaide, South Australia. She left school early, but she eventually found her way to Flinders University, where she enrolled in women's studies while on the side digesting a large portion of Australian history. In the early 90's she won a writing competition worth more than her car, however she went on to train as a teacher. In 2014 she had the very good fortune to spend 4 years in London, where she returned to writing while volunteering at St Paul's Cathedral. In 2022, and in Canberra, she was short-listed in the E.M. Fletcher prize for family stories. Since her children have flown the nest and her cat sadly died, she has returned, without regret, to the city of her birth.



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VISITORS - a \$2 cash donation is appreciated

Further information



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