

SA Australiana Study Group 64th Meeting, 1 April 2021

We recommend readers to the Australiana Society website
<https://www.australiana.org.au/> and encourage membership.

Attendance: 9

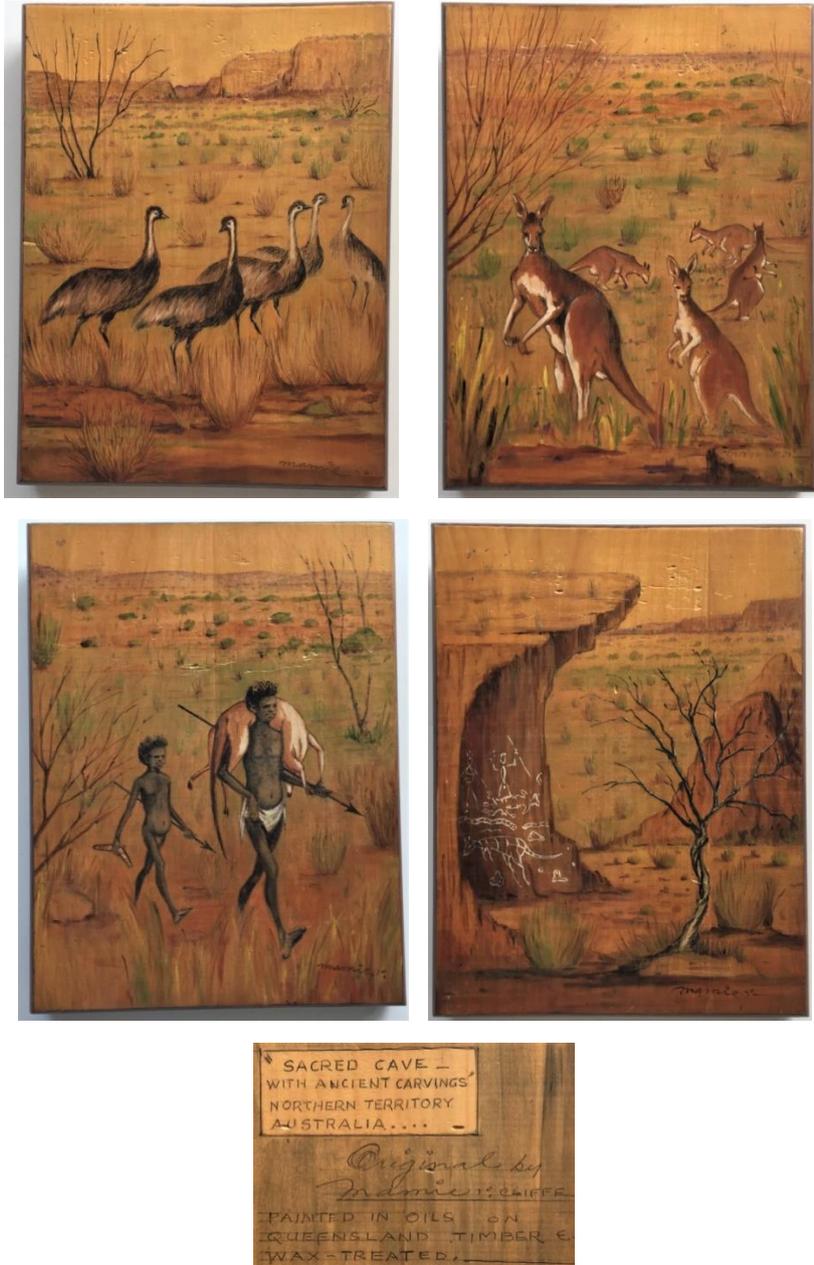


Ancient Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Apollo & Hercules Lodge presentation silver medallion, Adelaide, 1848, by C. E. Firnhaber. 10.0 x 9.2 cm.

The unmarked medallion is inscribed: *Presented / as a token of respect / for past services / to P.G. W^M PYBUS JUN^R / by the Brothers of the / APOLLO & HERCULES LODGE / OF THE ANCIENT / Independent Order of / ODD FELLOWS / Gilles Arcade Adelaide / S^O AUSTRALIA / 31 May 1848.*

The recipient William Pybus (c1820-1885) had arrived in S.A. on the *Orissa* in 1840 with his parents and siblings. His father, also William, started a foundry at the west end of Hindley Street, advertising as a machinist, lock and gunsmith, and bellhanger before adopting the name of Victoria Iron Brass and Bell Foundry. The business passed to William the younger in 1848, and supplied water to the city of Adelaide, as well as erecting the first gas works and swimming baths in the city. Castings and machinery were produced in wide variety, with the business employing up to 50 hands.

The Lodge was established in late 1847 but it was about a year later that the “proper dispensation” from the parent Lodge in Canterbury arrived in Adelaide. To celebrate the event the Apollo & Hercules members exhibited their insignia to the press, one of which was “... a collar of the Order, with a star of pure silver, richly chased [sic], and containing a valuable testimonial, beautifully engraved...” The newspaper also recorded that the maker of the insignia “...is Mr Firnhaber, a German colonist settled in North Adelaide, and the engraver is Mr Dean, a country settler...” Mr Dean/Deane was at that time living at Mount Barker. A later and similar medal for the lodge, presented to Henry Ayliffe in 1855, and marked by Firnhaber is in the collection of the Art Gallery of S.A.



Four Northern Territory scenes by Mamie Cliffe.

‘Emu Country’, ‘Red Kangaroo Country’,

‘Proud Hunters’, ‘Sacred Cave with ancient carvings’, c mid-20th century

Painted in oils on Queensland timber & wax treated, each panel measures 25x19x2 cm.

The four panels appear to be generic images of the Northern Territory. The carved rock art was not practiced in the centre but the other scenes depict central Australia.

The artist, Irene Mary Cliffe, known as Mamie Cliffe, married Arthur Henry Cliffe, a telephone mechanic of Sydney, sometime prior to his military enlistment in December 1915. He died at the War Veteran's Home, Narrabeen, Sydney in 1971, aged 88. Mamie’s death was recorded in the *The Age* (a Melbourne newspaper) on the 27th March 1983. It would appear she lived into her late 80s or 90s.

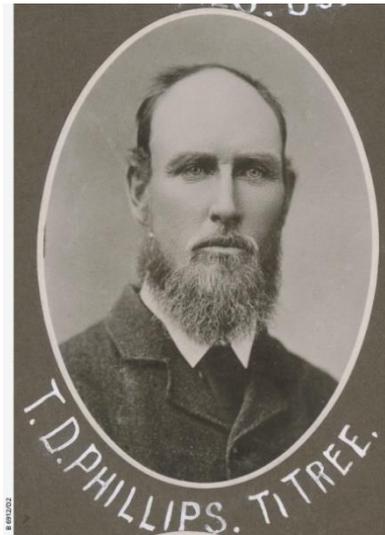
The panels whilst generic show a level of competency that reflect that the artist had some formal art training, however her name is not recorded in on-line Australian artist records.



**Woodcut “Marigolds”, by John Hall Thorpe, England, c1922. Image 23.0 x 29.0 cm.
In moulded cedar frame. 47.1 x 52.0 cm.**

John Hall Thorpe (1874-1947) was an Australian artist who achieved considerable success for his colourful woodblock prints during the nineteen twenties and thirties. Initially apprenticed as a woodblock engraver at the *Sydney Mail*, he became a staff artist there, and was a member of the Society of Artists in Sydney. As artists were being supplanted by photo-journalism, he left for England in 1900, where he continued studying to develop his art, and in particular his approach to coloured woodblock prints. Hall Thorpe’s work was shown at the Royal Academy in 1906 in company with other Australian artists such as Hayley Lever, George Lambert, Albert Tucker and Arthur Streeton.

Having achieved a measure of success and acceptance with his colourful and bold prints, he cemented it by controlling the whole production and publishing process through his studio and gallery in London. Into the nineteen twenties the relative simplicity and cheerfulness of his work gained wide acceptance for its freshness and colour, and he prospered from sales in the United States as well as Britain. Parallels have been drawn between his work and the decorative style of the Vienna Secession. Later in his career Hall Thorpe’s popularity waned, becoming labelled “decorative” and passé, but has more recently gained reacceptance for its clean colourful freshness.



Hardwood traditional Aboriginal boomerang. Length 64.5 cm.

Photographic portrait of Thomas D Phillips, c1885.

Part of the S.A. Northern Pioneers mosaic, courtesy SLSA, ref. B 6912/D2.

The boomerang was collected in the late 19th century by Thomas Phillips (1841-1903), a station manager for the Angas family at Wirrialpa and Teatree Stations to the east of Blinman in the Flinders Ranges of South Australia. Born at the “Old Port” of Port Adelaide in 1841, Thomas at the age of about eighteen was employed by J H Angas at the Collingrove property in the Barossa, before being transferred to the northern stations, where he spent the remainder of his working life. The boomerang still retains traces of ochre, and has been identified as “...a classic hunting boomerang from the region north of the MacDonnell Ranges.”

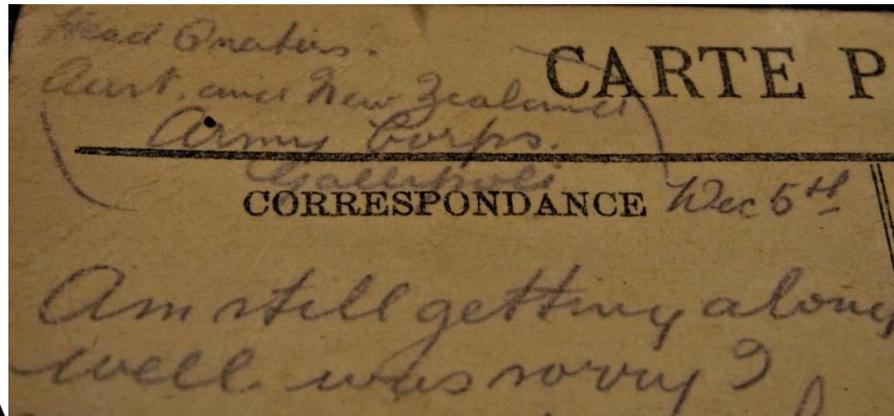


Souvenir Aboriginal boomerang, dated 1945. Length 30 cm.

The hardwood boomerang was collected by sapper ‘Ned’ Roberts in Alice Springs in 1945, while serving on the military transport route between SA and Darwin during WW2. He recorded that it had been made at one of the Aboriginal town camps on the Todd River at Alice Springs.



Propaganda postcard with Britannia urging ANZAC soldiers onward as they trample across a Turkish flag.



A Humorous advertising postcard with Christmas wishes for 1917, the two soldiers advertising their rations of Fray Bentos canned corn beef and H&P biscuits, while dreaming of plum pudding for Christmas in the year ahead.

B Detail of postcard carrying the marks of a field Post Office and the military censor, and dated for Gallipoli, December 5th (1915).

The above are from a small group of WW1 postcards, some humorous and others propaganda, sent to family in SA by members of the military on active service. The contents of the cards show how the writers tried to reassure those at home, downplaying the privations, but also showing their interest in the novelty of their situation. This is shown in some of the quoted fragments following:

On canal defence: ... my word Elsie the mail is our greatest pleasure out here. We are like a lot of school kiddies when the mail is being given out... we have been most of the time on the canal. We like it there because we have plenty of swimming. We are about 10 miles out from it now. Water is very scarce out here, about 1½ pints a day to clean teeth, shave and wash. So you see washing clothes is out of the question. Love from Fred.

On active service, no stamp available, field post office Aug. 15 Heliopolis: *The interior of this mosque is wonderful, tiled with blue tiles... This is only the small dome, the large one has no support, except at the edge, and it is as good as the day erected. The entrance in the distance is the bazaar, the place of noise, color and bad smells...*

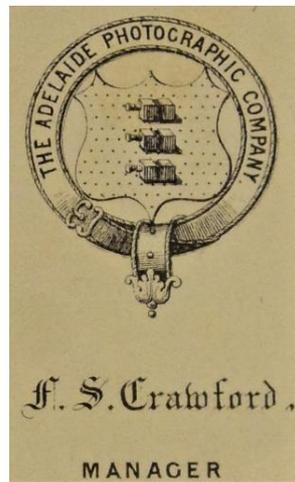
From Gallipoli, Dec. 5th 1915: *We have had our first snow, it was lovely to gaze at, but oh my, it was cold...*

On active service, postmarked Gizira, Cairo, 1915: *Have arrived at our hospital, it is a wonderful place, 1000 beds, was previously a sultan's palace. Am in love with Cairo, have been sightseeing for a week, and start work tomorrow. Went out to the pyramids yesterday. Everything is so picturesque here, in spite of all the dirt...*



Walking stick with silver ferrule and Burra malachite top. Length 35.3 cm.

The ferrule is engraved with the initials **KWR** for a former owner and marked "SILVER". The finial is of fine gem quality Burra malachite, originally cemented into position, but later re-fixed by driving a wood screw through to retain it. It was used by the father of the current owner on his walks around the eastern side of the city of Adelaide.



"Testimonial presented to Lady Don by the citizens of Adelaide", 1865, photograph (carte de visite format). Adelaide Photographic Company. 9 x 6 cm

Lady Don, nee Emily Saunders (late 1820s-1875), was born into a family that ran the Adelphi Theatre in London's West End. It was known for its melodramas - "Adelphi Screamer" - and adaptations of Dickens. It makes a cameo appearance in 'Pickwick Papers'. Emily became a well-known actress and singer there. In 1857 she married the six and a half

foot baronet, Sir William Don - an amateur thespian while at Eton - who, having lost the family fortune 'startled his relatives' by taking to the stage.

Sir William enjoyed success in the United States where he played in farces as the English gentleman and as a woman. Together they toured Australia (1860-62) until Sir William died of a heart attack in Hobart aged just 37. Lady Don toured Australia again (1864-66) and was widely regarded as the best female entertainer to have visited the colony. One newspaper described her voice as verging on the operatic but she was just as happy - depending on the audience - singing a racy version of "My Johnny was a Shoemaker", which attracted double encores. A 600 ounce Ballarat gold nugget was named after her, plus a ship, racehorse and a Victorian fire appliance.

Lady Don spent two months in Adelaide playing to packed houses. On her imminent departure a subscription was organised and Lady Don was presented with a Julius Schomburgk (1812-1893) inkwell, retailed by J.M. Wendt. Measuring 11 inches high by 16 long it was made of silver, malachite and gold, mounted on a blackwood base and covered with a glass dome. The grass trees served as inkwell covers and the emu egg, lined with red velvet and with a black swan finial, was a jewellery case. It was valued at 100 guineas. The photograph was taken in Adelaide and then engraved by Samuel Calvert for the "Illustrated Melbourne Post".

Returning to England (via NZ and California) Lady Don's popularity failed to match that she had enjoyed in the colonies and by the time of her death - ten years later, and in her late forties - she was reduced to performing minor roles in music halls.



Boxed set of electroplated teaspoons and tea strainer on base, by Pitcher Products Ltd, Melbourne, 1950s. Box 14.6 x 29.4 cm. Manufacturer's marks on spoon stems.

Together with a similar boxed set shown to us, these were produced by Pitcher Products Ltd, a company set up in Melbourne in 1949, which traded as goldsmiths, silversmiths,

jewellers, manufacturers etc. An advertisement in May 1951 seeking a metal polisher showed that they were then operating at Moray Street, South Melbourne. Later that year a report in the Alexandra Standard newspaper mentioned that the company had sought permission to make a die of the Alexandra coat of arms so that they could produce enamel badges to attach to electroplated items for sale as souvenirs.

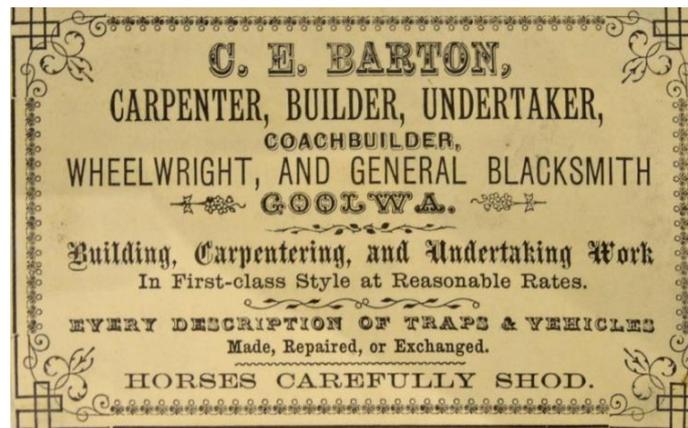
Information on the later years of Pitcher is scanty, although in March 1984 mention is found of the company being “wound up voluntarily”. However that may have gone, a current listing has been seen for Pitcher Products of St Kilda, providing badges and badge making equipment, trophy sales and engraving. It seems likely that Pitcher failed in the face of mounting import challenges and tariff changes, and was reborn as an importer.



**Two stacks of Pitcher Products souvenir electroplated tea strainers, marked as shown.
Melbourne 1950s-1970s. Average length 10.9 cm.**



Detail of some of the enamelled badges by Pitcher Products Ltd, Melbourne.



"C. E. Barton, Carpenter, Builder, Undertaker", business card with photograph, c1881, attributed to James Prosser, photographer, Goolwa, and "Southern Argus", printers, Strathalbyn SA. 10 x 7 cm.

An early South Australian use of the photograph as an aid to advertising - here promoting a wrought iron and timber verandah bench, and, by default, the blacksmithing and carpentry abilities of C. E. Barton, Goolwa. The gum leaves and the painted outdoor backdrop complete the imagined Australian garden setting.

Joseph and Ellen Barton were married in 1850 after an unexpected pregnancy and emigrated to South Australia with twin boys. Joseph became a carpenter and builder based at Goolwa (1855) and built the Point McLeay Church (1859) and a boat to travel there. In 1865 they returned to England with their youngest children but instead of returning to South Australia, emigrated to America. The 16 year old twins - Charlie and Joe - left behind in Goolwa, continued in their father's trade and eventually established a workshop that included coachbuilding and blacksmithing. In 1881 Charlie took over the business entirely and begun advertising in the "Southern Argus" newspaper. The wording and format is nearly identical to the printing on the back of the card and provides an attribution to the date and printer. At about this time the wandering photographer, James Prosser, had a short-lived studio at Goolwa.

At some point the Barton workshop was relocated to Port Elliot as "Barton's Steam Works" and concentrated on carriage and buggy building and was employing 16 people. A branch business was established at Yankalilla. Returning from a visit to relatives in America in 1905, Charlie proclaimed that 'There are cars broken-down all over America - they'll never put us out of business'. The Pt Elliot workshop continued until 1924 and the Yankalilla business became a General Motors dealership.



Aboriginal mother and child doll.

Wood and textile, maker unknown, c late 20th century, height 26 cm.

The feet have been stapled to the legs by using a pressure gun. The hair and the lead are made of wool. The clothing is made from cotton.

This was doll was handmade and possibly by two people. The faces only have eyes - was this just for simplicity in design or a symbolic gesture? The item was recently acquired from a Brisbane dealer.



WWII Woven cellophane butterfly belt.

The belt has no buckle. 3 x 70 cm approx.

While we do not know the maker of the above example, the Australian War Memorial website reveals how they were made. Below are two composite stories:

Milne Bay Hospital, New Guinea during 1942-43, a soldier suffering from a tropical ulcer and was not allowed to walk. Red Cross workers suggested that he take up the craft of weaving cellophane as a form of occupational therapy. The cellophane from cigarette packs was collected and folded, then woven together, using his cigarette packets and those of other soldiers. The belts were made by weaving folded pieces of cellophane, with an underlay of preserved butterfly wings.

While serving with the 12 Garrison Battalion in the Myrtleford / Bright area of Victoria, in charge of Italian prisoners of war. One of the Italians is said to have taught the Australian soldier to weave cellophane cigarette wrappers as a handicraft; the AWM example did not include butterfly wings.

The AWM has eighteen examples in its collection, and the most made by one person is Frederick Edwin Vince, who made five. Vince was born at Summertown, in the Adelaide Hills in 1914, was working as a gardener in the family business when war broke out, and served in New Guinea. The above example was acquired in Adelaide.



Vale

The founder of the iconic Vili's pies, Vilmos (Vili as he was affectionately known) Milisits died, aged 72 on the 26th March 2021. He was born in Hungary in 1948 and the Milisits family moved to Australia as refugees in 1956, escaping political unrest in Hungary. At the age of 14 he left school to work at a cake shop in Burnside before starting his own venture in Manchester Street in Mile End, where the original 'Cafe de Vilis' is now. Both he and his wife Rosemary were awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia in 2005, for their contributions to charity. He always said he was born in Hungary and was Australian by choice.

To acknowledge his passing the study group attendees shared a taste of Little Vili's gourmet mixed party pastries, with Beerenberg (since 1839) Australian tomato sauce.

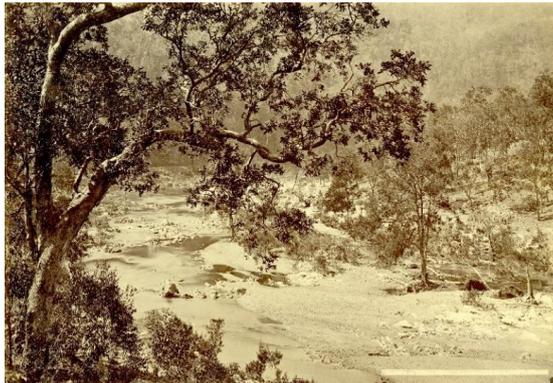
EVENTS



'THIS IS US'

The National Museum of Australia commissioned the Grigoryan Brothers to compose and play music of their reactions on seeing 18 objects in the museum's collection, to celebrate the NMA's 20th year in 2021.

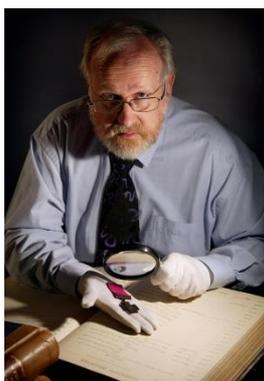
The concert venue in SA was Ukaria, near Mount Barker, and they were held over the last weekend of March. The eighteen items were, a convict love token, a haematite, a telescope, a dot painting, a locket (see above), a 1946 Holden, Fred Hollows' optical kit, an Aboriginal 'Boys Home' gate, a Bradman bat, a thylacine (skinned) a transitional spear head, a hand made musical instrument, a Tampa lifebuoy, a mourning dress, Flinder's anchor, a fruit picking apron, a sign from the Aboriginal tent embassy and a bike from Rottnest Island. At the event a number of these objects were displayed, and the recently released CD was available for sale, titled THIS IS US. The CD is highly recommended.



**The Adelaide Society of Collectors April 2021 Guest speaker, Ken Orchard
'John William Lindt, Master Photographer.'**

In 2020 Ken contributed to *Pride of Place: Exploring the Grimwade Collection*, (Miegunyah Press & the University of Melbourne), which features some of Lindt's most memorable photographs. Ken will talk about his role in assisting Grafton Regional Gallery develop its important Lindt holdings, and discuss his ongoing exploration of Lindt's creative development. When 8 pm 22 April. For further information contact:

Theadelaidesocietyofcollectors@bigpond.com



The David Roche Foundation Museum Bookings for house tours and talks essential: visit their website <https://www.rochefoundation.com.au/> For exhibition gallery viewing hours see the DRFM website for open times.

Thursday 20 May 6PM: *James Cook; A historical numismatic perspective*, a talk by Peter Lane, the Honorary Numismatist, Art Gallery of South Australia, and Board member of the Australiana Society.



The Red Gum Bookcase: South Australia's Earliest Piece of Furniture

Free Talk: Thursday 13 May, 6-7pm. Clare Library, 33 Old North Rd, Clare.
Presented by Clare & Gilbert Valleys Library Service

In September 2017, a colossal red gum bookcase inspired a classic ‘whodunnit’ investigation. Justin Gare, Artlab Senior Objects Conservator, unravels the mystery and reveals the twists and turns which led to the identification of South Australia’s oldest and most significant surviving piece of furniture. The 180-year-old bookcase, an extraordinary achievement by a cabinet maker in the fledgeling colony, encompasses the collective optimism and eventual despair of Adelaide’s boom and bust in the late 1840s. Bookings required by phone or email.



A MAGNIFICENT BARONIAL BREAKFRONT BOOKCASE IN FOUR PARTS

c. 1905
Pengelley Furniture Adelaide, woodwright Carl Christian Meinzolt
(b. 1861, arrived Adelaide 1894, d. 1928, Sydney)
Donated to the South Australian Museum by Dr Andrew Thomas AO
under the Commonwealth Government's Cultural Gifts Program 2015
English oak, glass, metal

This impressive bookcase is a testament to the skill of its German maker, Carl C. Meinzolt, who was active in Adelaide from his arrival in 1894 until 1908. The inclusion of an earthy proverb, in this instance, ‘Learn to live ... Live to learn’, is common to his surviving work. The fusion of symbolic decorative elements includes, amongst other things, theatrical masks (representing fun, entertainment) flowers (purity, rebirth), phantasmagorical beasts such as griffins (light and enlightenment), and owls (reading, learning, and wisdom). It was designed to hold and display books, the source of wisdom, learning, entertainment and history. The bookcase was commissioned by Mr S.T. Thomas, as a gift on the occasion of his wedding to the only daughter of Frederick George Waterhouse, the Museum’s first Curator. The bookcase has been passed down through the family to Dr Andrew Thomas AO, Waterhouse’s great, great grandson and the patron of the Museum who donated it to the Museum in 2015.

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Wonders of the South Australian Museum

The South Australian Museum is celebrating its 165th anniversary and it commissioned Nat Williams to curate its anniversary exhibition – he chose 165 objects including the above bookcase.

The free exhibition runs to the 8th August 2021.

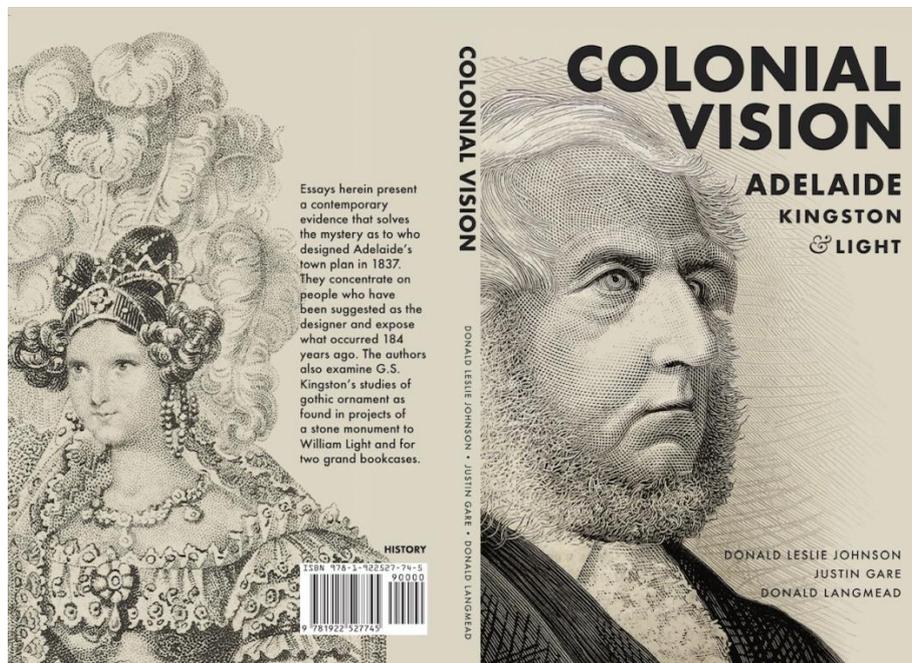


Plan of Adelaide, 1837 (Courtesy History Trust of South Australia)

Rethinking the Adelaide Plan, Presented by Migration Museum

Monday 24 May, 2-4pm at the Hetzel Lecture Theatre, State Library of South Australia, North Tce, Adelaide. Per Person: \$10.00 Bookings essential go to. [Rethinking the Adelaide Plan - South Australia's History Festival](#)

The plan of the City of Adelaide is celebrated by many as one of the special and distinctive aspects of our state's capital. A hand-drawn version dated 1837 in the Migration Museum's collection is signed by Robert Thomas. But who designed it? And what did the imposition of a colonial plan on Tarndanya mean for the Kaurna people? This panel discussion will feature a range of speakers and perspectives, with time for questions and audience contributions.



Book launch at the conclusion of the talk, ***Colonial Vision Adelaide Kingston & Light***, by, J Gare DL Johnson & D Langmead

Published by Justin Gare jgare@internode.on.net (The Peter Walker Fine Art writer awardee)



The Silver Society of Australia – holds informal meetings in Adelaide about every three months. For further information contact: info@silversociety.com.au



South Australia's History Festival MAY 2021

South Australia's History Festival is an annual state-wide event exploring South Australia's history.

Held throughout May each year, the History Festival explores the state's places and spaces, stories, collections and ideas that make us who we are.

For Events go to the Festival's website: [About - South Australia's History Festival](#)