

# THE FRIENDS OF THE OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE

Founded 2/3/1990

Patrons: Lady Dunstan and Mrs. Betty Lewis

## NEWSLETTER NO. 9

October 1990

President: Mrs. Dianne Cordes  
Vice President: Mr. Allan Biggs  
Treasurer: Mrs. Pam Tamblyn  
Hon. Secretary: Mrs. Ev Campbell  
Social Convenor: Mrs. Dianne Cordes  
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Special Group Convenor: Mrs. Betty Tucker  
Souvenir Co-Ordinator: Mrs. Jean Kahlbaum  
Newsletter Editor: Mrs. Ev Campbell  
Publicity Officer: Mrs. Judy Gaszner  
Display Co-Ordinator: Mr. Hugh Campbell  
Committee Members: Mrs. Norma Muggleton Mrs. Loris Henderson Mr. David Henderson

## OBJECTIVES

1. To promote, support and provide service to The Old Government House, in any way which has the approval of the Director of National Parks.
2. To foster interest among the members and public of South Australia, in the history of the House and adjacent buildings.
3. To raise funds which may be used for the administration of the group and for any other specific purpose which has the approval of the Director of National Parks.

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**A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT**

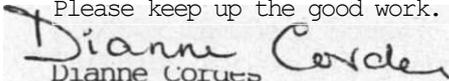
I must acknowledge the great contribution of my predecessor, Helen Petersen. I hope I can maintain the standard set by her. There are some major efforts being done by people within our group - thanks to our leaders and general membership.

In the year ahead there are some exciting challenges, and social events.

The 1991 State Forum of Friends Groups will be in September, hosted by us. We will need the support of every member. The sun dial will be unveiled during the Forum.

7/10/90

Please keep up the good work.

  
Dianne Corles  
President

**AND FROM THE EDITOR**

In the following pages you will read about our achievements over the past two and a half years, and I am sure you will agree that they have been noteworthy.

We have some more interesting plans too, mainly in connection with Name Day, and there is an article from Pam Tamblin further on telling you all about this. At the last Executive meeting it was decided that we should commemorate this day on 2nd March each year, the anniversary of our first meeting in 1983. Next year we will have a Twilight Tea on the terrace of Old Government House, and present the House with a Victorian dining room clock, as well as the multi-display screen which has been planned for some time.

Our membership is growing steadily, and we welcome new members. We now have 56 Rostered Members and 52 Associate Members - 108 in all.

The National Parks Centenary Year in 1991 will be a busy and exciting year. Apart from our group hosting the Forum, there will be many events in which we will enjoy participating. I am particularly looking forward to the Belair Park Music Festival in March and the Heritage Picnic in November. It promises to be an unforgettable day for family and friends.

The Executive Committee thank you for your continuing support.

  
Ev Campbell Hon.  
Secretary

1. 7/10/90

**THE MOST VALUABLE ANTIQUES ARE OLD FRIENDS**

FRIENDS OF THE OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE  
**ACHIEVEMENTS DURING FIRST TWO YEARS OF OPERATION**

Report provided by Hugh Campbell, retired Special Projects Officer

Projects carried out by members

Coach House refurbished for use as a reception and trading area  
Bookmark pamphlets desired for distribution to vehicles entering the park  
Information fans produced for visitors viewing Old Government House  
Four display racks made for display of Victorian gowns  
Notice board and donation box  
Woodbox in Coach House  
Curtains for Security and Cleaning rooms  
Introduction of Coach souvenir sales.

Restoration of items by members

Items sent out for restoration

Shoulder yoke Two vases repaired Period frock restored Shield  
back chair Child's boots

Piano  
Bust of Alexandria Two  
books  
Boiler in Servants' Cottage rust-proofed

Items purchased for Old Government House

Two holland blinds for Servants' Quarters  
Large galvanised iron bulk wood-box  
Three antique vases  
One period style outside lamp for Coach House  
Eight fluorescent lights for Coach House Outside door mats  
Storage cupboard Glass shelf for display cabinet Six folding  
chairs  
9" skirting for Coach House  
Aluminium gutter guard for Coach House  
Vacuum Cleaner

Major Projects financed by Friends

**The overall cost of these projects was in excess of \$14,000.**

Electric power, etc. to Coach House Verandah on Coach  
House Brick floor on new verandah Brick pedestal and sun  
dial

In addition to the above achievements of which we are all justifiably proud, the high degree of professionalism displayed by the members who are responsible for the group's administration and the small band who deal with special groups and projects is highly commendable.

Just as important to the smooth running of the Old Government House are the members who so willingly undertake weekend duty, the weekly cleaning, and those who work tirelessly in a fund-raising capacity.

The overall achievements of the Friends of Old Government House in their first two years of operation can only be described as outstanding.

#### DONATIONS MADE TO THE OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE, 1989-1990

Further to Hugh's report, Pam Tamblyn has reported on some interesting donations which have been made to the OGH over the past twelve months for inclusion in our collection. Many of the items have an interesting history.

1. A knitted cotton quilt, the work of Harriet Penelope Catt of Clare. Each square of it was knitted from corner to corner and a frill around the bottom had to be removed, because if it was left on it, the quilt was too heavy to handle during washing. Provided by Mrs. J. Arthur.
2. A cotton nightdress, with embroidery, and belonging to Jessie Bloomfield, was donated by Mrs. L. Nicholas.
3. Two books - an 1868 edition of Charles Dickens, and the Works of Thackeray, came from Mr. R. Gayler.
4. Two cotton, embroidered nightgowns were given by the Marion Red Cross.
5. A spindle-back chair, renovation needed, donated by Miss D.J. Milne of Fullarton. The chair will be used for visitors in the Coach House.
6. A most interesting gown, and one that presented a challenge for us to restore, was donated by Mrs. J. Turner. This beautiful plum silk dress appears to date from the mid-1840's. The hand-made lace on it needed extensive renovation and, following a visit to the State Conservation Centre by Pam Tamblyn, Norma Muggleton and Libby Stubbs, for advice, Libby and Judith Stewart undertook the restoration work. The broken waist band was repaired and black net was laid under the existing lace on the bodice and sleeves, and what remained of the delicate pattern was couched to it, while at the same time giving the appearance of lace where none now exists.  
  
What a lovely job Libby and Judith did! We were able to display the three piece dress complete with one of Betty Byrne's floral arrangements at the 1989 October Lace Exhibition and it was a credit to all those involved in its restoration and presentation.
7. A fine collection of wares and items of furniture from Lady Dunstan at Government House, Adelaide, has been the most recent addition. These will surely enhance the collection and display at Old Government House. We will leave details about them and their restoration for a future newsletter.

**I hope that you all found the reports from Hugh and Pam as exciting as I did. Isn't it wonderful to be part of the history of the Old Government House.** Ed.

#### OBITUARY

Colin Byrne, a Friend of Old Government House, since its inception, passed away after a short illness on 3rd September. Colin's contribution to the Old Government House was valued and resulted in Betty and Colin being presented with the National Parks and Wildlife Service Outstanding Volunteers of the Year Award in 1988. A quiet and gentle man, Colin will be missed by all who knew him. Our deepest sympathy is extended to Betty and her family.

FASHIONABLE ANTHEM

or

**THE FOLLIES OF THE CRINOLINE**

To be sung to - "God Save the Queen"

1. Long live our Gracious Queen,  
Who won't wear crinoline!  
Long live the Queen.  
May her example spread,  
Broad skirts be narrowed,  
Long trains be shortened,  
Long live the Queen!

3. May dresses flaunting wide,  
Fine figures cease to hide;  
Let feet be seen.  
Girls, to good taste return,  
Paris flash modes unlearn,  
No more catch fire and burn -  
Thanks to the Queen.

O scorn of storm arise,  
Scattering French follies,  
And make them pall.  
Confound these hoops and things.  
Frustrate those horrid springs,  
And india-rubber rings;  
Deuce take them all!



From the Adelaide Observer, 28th 2.

Thanks to Pam Tamblyn for this.

THE FIRST TIN CANISTER AND CAN OPENERS

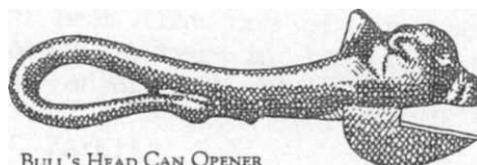
Peter Durand, an Englishman, took out the patent for tinned iron or steel cans in 1810 and by 1814 a firm named Donkin and Hall was supplying tinned meat in these cans to the Royal Navy.

At first the process was not clearly understood and the bacteria was not always totally destroyed. This resulted in tins exploding and occasionally people being poisoned. It was in the 1860's that Louis Pasteur discovered the facts about bacteria and from that time canning became a safe, reliable process.

During the restoration of Old Government House in 1976 I found some old cans, bottles, etc. under the floor of the bay window area. The cans must have been quite early ones as the lids had been soldered on by hand.

Until 1875 when the first can opener was invented, canned foods carried the helpful instruction that a chisel and hammer were the best tools for opening them. The first can openers, made from cast iron and steel with a carved bull's head on one end, were most appropriate as one was supplied with every can of bully beef. The can opener on the windowsill in the kitchen of the Servants' Cottage is also made of cast iron with a steel cutting edge.

Hugh Campbell



It is hard to believe that most of the customs we now enjoy as part of our yuletide festivities were introduced as recently as the middle of the last century. Many of these Christmas traditions originated in Germany.

Christmas Tree There is a romantic story that gives Martin Luther credit for the introduction of the first Christmas Tree early in the last Century. While out walking one Christmas Eve, so the story goes, he was so moved by the night stars glistening through the snow covered trees that he rushed home to recreate the effect for his family with candles and a small fir tree. Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's consort, after experiencing the delights of a decorated Christmas tree in Germany, took the idea to England where it became very popular.

Traditional decorations for a Christmas tree consisted of fruit, nuts, gingerbread, candies, paper strips and lighted candles. The tree was usually topped by a small angel. Later in the century, miniature wooden toys, animals, soldiers, birds, dolphins, etc. were used as decorations, and the angel on top had miraculously turned into a fairy.

Christmas Cards John Harsley of the Royal Academy was commissioned to design the first Christmas card in 1843 and one thousand of these were printed and coloured. They were an instant success but were expensive and had a very limited distribution. However, by the 1860's the use of cards was much more wide-spread and reaching a wider section of the community.

The first Christmas cards to arrive in Australia were imported from England but in 1881 John Sands, an early Australian printer, conducted a competition offering a fifty guinea prize for the design of Christmas cards. Hundreds of entries were received and judges awarded top honours to those depicting native animals and bush picnic scenes. As most of these cards would have been destined for England, Australian bush scenes would have been appropriate and very different and novel for friends and relatives still living in England.

The Christmas Cracker A man named Tom Smith in 1860 was responsible for the first Christmas cracker which became immensely popular as well as an instant commercial success. Unlike our present-day bon-bons, the early crackers contained a variety of small favours such as love messages, charms, small toys, jokes, candies and trinkets. Even when I was a child crackers were still quite generous, containing most of these items.

The Christmas Garland Traditional Christmas garlands were made from green branches interwoven with coloured strips of paper and decorated with ribbons, berries and candles. They could be hung over the mantelpiece or in archways, depending on the design.

Unfortunately, most of us have allowed commercialism to rob us of the creative pleasures experienced by great grandmama when she lovingly made these Christmas garlands for the pleasure of her family.

Hugh Campbell

\*\* CONGRATULATIONS \*\*

We were very proud to hear that one of our Lace Making members, Mrs. Kaye Williamson, was an award winner in the lace making section at the 1990 Royal Adelaide Show, for an article she had made in Tenerife Lace.

CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU, KAYE!!

### NAME DAY

Following the Friends' decision to take up the practice of celebrating a 'Name Day', the search started to find a suitable date for us to commemorate some early event connected with the Old Government House.

For this, I followed two lines of investigation - to find the completion date of the original building or to find as early a reference as possible to its occupation by the first Vice-Regal couple to use it, Sir Richard and Lady MacDonnell. What followed gave not only a revelation about certain aspects of the birth of the building, but also a merry chase right across Southern Australia in the steps of the Governor and his wife. Some of the following may be familiar to you but, although the exact date of the completion of Old Government House and its occupation by Governor and Lady MacDonnell still remain a mystery, the following snippets shed an interesting light on some of our early history and its makers!

In the Public Works List published by the Observer on 23rd July, 1859, works not completed to date included the Cottage on Government Farm (largely now Belair Park), for which a budget of ^1000 had been allocated. No mention of it was made in the Public Works List published in January 1860, so we can assume that work was still under way. There is a reference to Governor MacDonnell being at the Government Farm late in February 1800, but he was probably not accommodated in the Cottage on that occasion. Work should have been completed on it, and it should have been ready for occupation by August 1860, as there are reports in the Observer of 1st and 4th September, 1860 which show a

further allocation of 600 to complete the Cottage had been made in the May-June session of Parliament. A large quantity of seasoned timber had been requisitioned by Mr. Farr, the contractor, and he was demanding payment.

There was great concern, both within Parliament and outside, about the steeply increasing costs of public works. Several had also required further additional finance, including the Governor's new cottage. Parliamentary reports of 1st September, 1860 reveal that, although several Members of Parliament agreed that "suitable accommodation befitting the representative of Royalty" should not be subject to "cheese-paring", others thought that the cost of the Cottage at Government Farm (£1146 PLUS £600 extra) was outrageous, when quite a large dwelling was provided for the Collector of Customs at Blanchetown for £38. The newspapers added their fuel to the fire, one stating on 4th September, 1860 that "we must ascertain how far the principle of responsibility applies to the Ministers of State and whether their accountability is real and effective - or a sham".

No more information is available until January 1861, when the Observer, on the 19th, prefaced an attempted summary of public works undertaken during 1860, with the bald statement, "No detailed account of the public works of this colony is available (from the Government) from July 1860. The information we are about to communicate has never yet been published, so whatever blame may be due, does not attach to us" (Editors of the Observer). The only records available "are from imperfect contemporary records, which from time to time we have ourselves been able to compile. We presume that the Government does not intend that this state of affairs should continue." The Register also advised its readers to look carefully at the Government expenditure (of 1860) and judge for themselves "whether the moneys paid out have been squandered or judiciously employed". (12/1/1861). A brief statement of completed works, including the Cottage on Government Farm, followed in both newspapers, but it appears the Government reacted to public response over the budget blow-out of June 1860 by simply keeping any of its reports under wraps. Neither did it take the hints from the press to rectify the situation, so we are left with no details on the completion date of the Cottage.

As the parliamentary avenue of investigation seemed to have closed, I then turned to the movements of Governor MacDonnell over the summers- of 1859-60 and 1860-61. What an active person he was! - travelling widely across Southern Australia and taking a keen interest in all aspects of the developing colony.

He had spent three months at the close of 1859 on an exploration trip of the northern parts of S.A., tracing recent journeys of explorers like Stuart and surveyors like Babbage. He fancied he was something of an explorer himself (not unjustified in this case) and consequently, during January 1860 had a public running battle with the surveyor, Babbage, over the exact size and location of the recently discovered Lake Torrens. The opinions of the Governor, an impressive-looking man, 6'4" tall and given to straight talking; were avidly received by the public and the keen debate which followed was well reported.

In between all this, he was variously on Kangaroo Island; in Adelaide, -chairing meetings of different organisations, sending dispatches from Government House; and presumably avoiding the Adelaide Hills, which at the end of the month suffered bushfires. Meanwhile, Lady MacDonnell had gone to Melbourne. A report of 1st March, 1860 reveals that the Governor had been at the Government Farm suffering from "a sudden attack of indisposition", recovering sufficiently however to be rumored to have gone to the Snowy River diggings later in March. He was, in fact, in Melbourne to accompany Lady MacDonnell back to Adelaide on the "Havilah". The very popular couple was welcomed at Port Adelaide on 31st March with a large official reception by local dignitaries and the Volunteer Rifles.

There are several references to the Governor through 1860, presiding over meetings and sessions of Parliament and attending balls, dinners and reviews of the Volunteers. As a change of governorship was due, there was some emphasis from October 1860 onwards on the choice of a suitable successor to Sir Richard and much speculation over his future, rumored in some circles to be as the next Governor of New South Wales. The colony had eagerly followed his career, and the candidates who were mooted to succeed him had very high expectations to reach, as both he and Lady MacDonnell were so popular - she being a lady of superlative feminine characteristics, if the press is to be believed.

There appears to be no report of their whereabouts for Christmas 1860, but the Port Adelaide Regatta was held on 31st December, and as the Governor was its patron, was sure to have been present. He was still in Adelaide early in January 1861, as on January 7th he presided over a meeting of the Volunteer Force (that band of men who had persistently cast such a close eye over his wife! ) to form a new Rifle Association. He and Lady MacDonnell "left town" on January 8th for an extended tour of the Mt. Gambier district, where there had been widespread recent Government land sales and their journey incorporated a visit to the surrounding pastoral country as well.

I think we can assume though by January 1861, that the Vice-Regal couple : would have spent (at least) a short time at the Government Farm, in the Cottage that had been the subject of so much expense and public debate; although, as yet, even though their activities in South Australia are well documented, I can find no published record of them being there in the months after its completion.

*Dene Cordes at Railway Dam in Belair National park. The dam supplied water to Blackwood for the steam trains and was the site where the park's founding curator, William Sanders, drowned in 1912.*

### Public service medal for Dene

Belair resident Dene Cordes was one of three SA recipients of the new Queen's Birthday Honor List award, the Public Service Medal.

Mr Cordes is the longest serving administrative/executive staff member with National Parks and Wildlife.

The award recognises his work as the department's first community liaison officer.

With 22 years of service he has surpassed the record of the department's founding secretary and curator, the late William Sanders.

Mr Cordes works as a link person between the department and community groups,

volunteers and other government departments.

He said he accepted the award on behalf of the people who volunteered their help to parks and wildlife.

"It is a lucky person who can claim to look forward to going to work every day because I enjoy my job so much," Mr Cordes said,

"I become very annoyed when public servants are ridiculed and belittled, as often occurs, because those whom I work with in the Department of Environment and Planning all work hard and are rapt in their jobs.

"The hours and inconveniences are all taken as part of a

worthwhile contribution we make for our State," he said.

Mr Cordes started his career with National Parks and Wildlife in 1968 as an accountant.

In 1985 he won a Churchill Fellowship to study national parks community support in the USA, Canada, Europe and the United Kingdom.

National Parks celebrates its centenary next year and Mr Cordes has been involved organising projects and activities as a member of the Centenary Steering Committee.

Belair National Park was the 10th national park declared in the world.

CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE FRIENDS OF THE OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE, DENE.  
YOUR HONOUR WAS WELL DESERVED.

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My sincere thanks to all contributors to the 1990 Friends of Old Government House Newsletter. Ed.

Having flown into Salt Lake City, Utah, the previous night, we stayed at the Carlton Hotel. We were up early, to be collected by Dorothy and Marvin Wallin, two friends of the Director-General of Environment and Planning in Adelaide, Ted Phipps. The Wallins had lived in Adelaide for 3 years some years before. They took us to the famous Mormon Tabernacle Temple where its choir of 300 singers were performing and being televised. Then we went walking through Temple Square with its beautiful gardens, museums, the World Headquarters for Genealogical Research. I met the Director of a very large Volunteer Program. We were given a number of gifts to take to Australia.

Dorothy and Marvin took us to the Little America Hotel as their guests for lunch. Never before or since, anywhere in the world, have we seen such an abundance and variety of foods in a huge, high class hotel with hundreds of people having lunch there. We shall never forget that meal.

We were taken driving into the snow-clad mountains where we were treated to huge icecreams.

Next morning Dianne and I hired a 4 wheel-drive and set off, north through the States of Utah, Idaho, Wyoming. For lunch we asked for a plate of chips - we got some crunchy packet potato chips, not the hot ones we expected. We arrived at Yellowstone National Park, the first such park in the world, dedicated in 1872. It must rate as amongst the best in every way. It has deer, moose, Bison, Mountain Sheep, birds, squirrels, elk, black and brown bears. There are fresh rivers, pine forests, gorges, waterfalls, snow peaks, rapids, history, huge lakes and the highlight is a 25 mile long valley of geysers - there is a constant steam, bubbling mud, hot water geysers shooting up.

Ranger Steve Sarles was expecting us and took us to the internationally famous Old Faithful Village in the park. Old Faithful Geyser erupts every hour, for 3 minutes - oh, what a spectacle! Thousands of people come to see it. Castle Geyser keeps erupting continually. The Honey Pot Geyser goes straight up in the air, and lasts 20 minutes, once per year. Well, it went up just as we walked past it. Steve took us through the Geyser Board Walks, up to the top of Old Faithful Hotel roof for a view, and through the Visitor Centre and Park Theatre. We drove 25 miles through the scenic park until we arrived at our motel at Gardiner, on the eastern edge of the park. Best motel we had on our travels. Bought some tea at a local store and were tired out.

We had been on the move day and night for one month. Weariness overtook us now and next morning we were due at National Parks Headquarters at 8 a.m. but we overslept and got there 3/4 hour late, to our disgust. The people at Yellowstone were marvellous. Park Ranger Greg Kroll (disabled) took care of us and Liaison Officer, Amy Vanderbilt, got us coffee. We interviewed the Park Historian, the Director of the Yellowstone Park Friends Group. Here we learned more about Friends of Parks than anywhere. The Board Room was made available for our morning of research and interviews.

Amy and a Seasonal Ranger (here we also got the idea of Seasonal Rangers), took us for a picnic lunch and a half day tour of the park - majestic scenery, high ridges in Bear Country, Visitor Centres, the Canyon, etc., She got us back to our motel at 6 p.m. and Greg Kroll was there half an hour later to take us out to dinner at a country restaurant 3 miles away. A splendid evening again.

Next day we were back at Park Headquarters then went through the huge Park Museums. Ranger Kroll then accompanied us on more park work, then took us to Lake Yellowstone, a Concessionaire village, then bade us a sad farewell. We drove ourselves south, out of the park, via roads with snow banked up to 6 feet on each side.

We left the park where we learnt so much, enjoyed warm hospitality of people to whom we still write. The world's oldest National Park and we would vote it "The Best". Our four wheel drive trip of over 300 miles had been one we shall never ever forget.

Dene and Dianne Cordes

### **THE 1990 ANNUAL HISTORIC WEEKEND**

This year, the Friends went north for their weekend away. Twenty five of us started off early on Saturday morning, heading for Crystal Brook and morning tea. It didn't turn out as easy as that though!! The Army, in its wisdom, chose the same weekend as we did to transport hundreds of soldiers to Port Augusta for the Annual Army Exercise. So we all had to weave our way in and out of khaki four-wheel drives, somewhat frustrating, and morning tea was rather later than planned.

After welcome refreshments from the Crystal Brook Bakery, we made our way to Bowman Park station (two related families got lost in that three kilometer well-signed trip - no sense of direction, that lot!!). We found the Fauna Park and Reptile Display and historic ruins fascinating and we could have spent much more time there. (In fact, two of our members have returned since for a more leisurely visit.) Thank you to the Friends of Bowmans Park.

Next to Port Pirie to spend an hour or so at "Carnbrae", 'the house where time stands still'. This early 1900's home, with its priceless German stained glass windows and doors with their hand-painted scenes formerly belonged to the Moyle family (of Moyle's cordials). We were all intrigued with the valuable collections of bric-a-brac and furniture, the kitchen utensils, dolls and personal treasures from long ago. A view from the steep tower on the house gives sweeping views over Port Pirie right up to the Flinders Ranges.

Memories came flooding back for Reg and Beryl Campbell when they met the hostess who used to play for the dances at Tarcowie during their 'single' days. Before we left, Reg and Beryl were given a small private recital which delighted them.

To finish a grand day, we all met again at the Acacia Ridge Hotel at Port Augusta for dinner and there was lots of table hopping and talking done.

Next morning, we visited the Wadlata Outback Centre, a major cultural and visitor attraction at Port Augusta. There, we had a unique learning experience when we became involved in the Outback from ancient times through to the first inhabitants, the early European explorers, white settlement, pastoralism, stockmen, mining until eventually we came to the hi-tech age. Well worth a visit!

The last part of our trip and maybe the highlight was a visit to Telowie Gorge where we were taken for a guided scenic walk into the very beautiful gorge and then entertained for a superb country afternoon tea by the Friends of Telowie Gorge. How lovely it was.

Many thanks to Norma Muggleton for her research, and to Dianne for convening another 'not to be missed' historic weekend away.

Ev Campbell

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#### Some Maritime Museums

In my time I have developed quite an interest in matters maritime, and that leads to my having visited a number of marine museums. The first was in the state in which I grew up, and my interest was aroused from well before it came into being. It came about this way.

My father was on the literary staff of the West Australian Newspapers, and, in the 'thirties one of their number, Malcolm J. L. Uren, already famous for his numerous mentions in Dr Thomas Woods' book *Cobbers* led a team of colleagues to the Abrolhos Islands, off Geraldton, armed with copies of the records of the dramatic wreck and mutiny of the Dutch East India-man *Batavia*, some other memories and a lot of inspiration, leading to the publication of Uren's book *Sailorman's Ghosts*. My sister and I scored autographed first editions that Christmas. I was particularly affected by the story of one victim having been cut down in flight by a sabre-wielding mutineer, and hastily buried in a shallow grave, illustrated by a staff artist, I think Clem Ambler, who'd been on the expedition.

Years later, after the War, another expedition of "West" staffers, led this time by an enthusiastic scuba diver, Hugh Edwards, and prompted by the researches of the authoress Henrietta Drake-Brockman (who's daughter, incidentally was a fellow student of Professor Fred Alexander, and took her degree with me) and backed by the Army, managed to find the actual wreck, as chronicled in his book *Islands of Angry Ghosts*. This indirectly led to the founding of the Fremantle Maritime Museum. The link with the previous paragraph is that, amongst other artifacts, the grave referred to in the previous paragraph was found, and, has been carefully conveyed to the Museum in Finnerty Street, where it can now be seen. A rather less traumatic display is a model which very cleverly displays the wreck site, as first seen by Edward's party, showing just how difficult it is to identify such a site. Of course there's much else to see besides: ship models, typical luggage, cabin arrangements and sailors' gear and workmanship. But perhaps the main *raison d'être* is the work of the museum as a centre of excellence in the field of marine archeology.

This role was enhanced, about the time I left W.A. by the development of an annex in the old Commissariat Building at the seaside end of Fremantle. This I was able to visit in 1985, when I was in Perth as a member of an ANZAAS convention, when the chemical and archeological sections arranged a visit to that part of the museum, and, more importantly, the laboratory that it houses. That annex contains the bulk of the starboard stern quarter of the hull which has been recovered, and with it the stone ballast which *Batavia* carried, which turned out to be the carved stonework for a gateway to Batavia Castle and which has been erected over the aforesaid stern timbers.

As the base for these two expeditions, as well as several others, Geraldton was a natural for its own small marine museum. This it formed using as its start one of *Batavia's* cannon (possibly the first recovered), and a small experimental exploration submarine. It was from its bookshop that I bought Hugh Edward's book. Another small

though growing effort that I've visited was that at Brisbane, centred on the frigate *Diamentina*, which was in dry dock under development and un accessible to the public. That area was at the southern end of a wide space that later was occupied by Exdo. and I know not how it developed. Whyalla is also developing its own marine museum based on the frigate built at and named for the town.

Finally, back at home, our own Port Adelaide Maritime Museum is well worth a visit. As with our own small effort, it largely depends on volunteers, and, with its "living museum" concept, embracing a whole precinct is unusual in this country, if not unique. Perhaps we could get together on a social occasion some time - what about it, Dianne?

### Some Overseas Maritime Museums

Last time I wrote about a number of marine museums scattered around Australia, so now I can add some detail gained when overseas some few years ago. I naturally took opportunities to follow up this interest. In the U.K., of course the first priority lay with the National Maritime museum at Greenwich, well-known to marine historians around the English speaking world as a source of documents - ship plans, logs and the like - but also containing in its public galleries material ranging from paintings (ships, battles and portraits) to whole ships, such as an 18th century royal barge to a small paddle steamer. How they got the last into its two storied gallery I'll never know. A part of this museum, though physically separate, is the old tea-clipper *Cutty Sark*. This has been lovingly, and accurately, restored and re-rigged, until you get the feeling that it only remains to put a crew aboard, bend the sails on and fill the dry-dock in which she sits, to be able to sail her out into the Thames and thus away . . .

In York there exists a well presented historical display called the Jorvik Museum, from the name of the town when it was a Viking capital. However the fame is such that I couldn't get near it in the limited time I had, so I turned to an offshoot, the "Long Ships" museum. This was in an old and disused church, with a reconstruction of a Viking Long Boat occupying the nave, and various artifact galleries in the aisles. The narthex contained the entrance, gift shop and a small repeating video about the construction and use of the long ships.

At the other end of the country is the naval depot of Portsmouth which contains a historical area forming a public museum. This is dominated by H.M.S. *Victory*, which, though dry-docked, is still in commission as the flag ship of the appropriate command. Visitors are guided by young ratings, who present their descriptions in a slightly amusingly regimented manner. The other main attraction is the recently raised remains of *Mary Rose*, from the Fleet of Henry VIII. This occupies another dry dock, which has been roofed over by canvas maintained in place balloon fashion by air pressure inside, the air being greatly humidified to preserve the timbers of the vessel. However, that is not the end - in addition to a gallery devoted to *Mary Rose* items, there are two large buildings given over to displays, though unfortunately only one was open when I visited - lack of volunteers. However, that was the one that interested me the more, containing a particularly effective diorama of the battle of Trafalgar as seen from the stern gallery of a frigate sailing away from the action.

In the New World the first museum I visited was the South Street area in New York. This is a street precinct, like ours in Port Adelaide, given over to the museum. The vessels it harbours range from a former lightship through the ship *Wavsrree* (any relationship to the Sydney suburb of that name?) to the four-poster (four masted barque?) *Peking*, one of the Laird "Flying P" line of the early years of this century (Pamir, Passat, Peking, Pommern etc). Unfortunately, the standard of restoration was somewhat disappointing.

In San Francisco, on the other hand, there is a splendid open air museum on the Bay, near the famous Fisherman's Jetty complex. This includes a ship, the name of which I can't recall, but her restoration, as was that of the three-mast schooner *C.S. Thayer* was superb. A visit to the Captain's quarters was to see luxury, in the form of varnished wooden panelling, providing a master bedroom, dining room, and even an impressive bathroom. The Mate's quarters in the *Thayer* was a strong contrast, much like the skippers cabin in the trading ketch displayed in the Port Adelaide maritime museum. Also on display was one of the old ferries that served the Marin county residents long after the Golden Gate Bridge was opened. This was characterised by its enormous beam engine, the beam of which stood out above the shelter deck. Its lower decks contained an antique car museum.

In Honolulu, there was another museum, a rather sad one, as part of the Pearl Harbour naval depot. The main part of that is the battleship *USS Arizona* lying where she was sunk on an even keel after December 7 1941, with most of her company entombed in her, and only part of the barbette of what in the Royal Navy would be "B" turret ( the second from the bow) showing above the water. A concrete bridge has been built over her midships section with a sheltered landing stage at one end and a memorial chapel over the other. Crowds of visitors are taken out by workboat, after being given a briefing by "one who was there" in a theatre at the visitors centre. There is such a demand that one has to wait more than an hour after buying the tickets, so, in that time I discovered for myself another part of the naval museum, the submarine *USS Bluefin*, maintained by a team of volunteers. This particularly

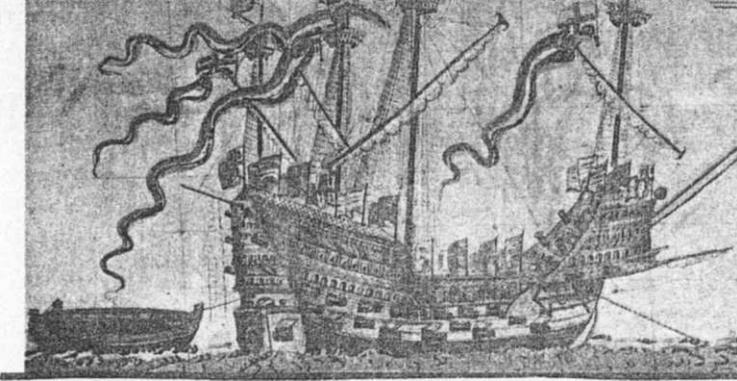
attracted me as at the end of the war I was occupied with a joint services medical team in x-raying members of all forces including, at six-monthly intervals the crews of all the submarines based on Fremantle. I was unable to discover if I dealt with any of her people.

<sup>1</sup> Sailing vessel with three, or (unusually) four masts, all with square sails.

<sup>2</sup> Sailing vessel with three, four or (rarely) more masts, the aftermost of which carries fore-and aft sails only.

Allan Biggs

## MARY ROSE



Built in Portsmouth  
1509/11 - sunk in  
action against the  
French July 19th 1545.  
together with over  
1000 artefacts on  
Portsmouth Naval

Open every day  
(except Christmas  
Day) March - October  
10.30 - 17.30  
November - February  
10.30 - 17.00