



# NEWSLETTER

INCORPORATING *MITCHAM MEMORIES*

ISSN 2652-6018 (online)

**In this issue:**

**Chairperson's Message**

**including Mitcham Village Signage**

**April Bus Trip Report**

**History Festival 2022—Events**

**and more**

**No. 2/2022**

## Publication Notes

### Editorial

The *MHS Newsletter* is a collaborative effort and its purpose is the reporting of activities, publicising the Society's calendar of events, providing stories of historical interest about people, places and events related to the City of Mitcham, and other matters of current interest including from time to time updates from the Brownhill Creek Association.

Letters to the Editor are welcome and can be sent by [email](#).

The *Newsletter* is managed and edited by Geoff Sauer.

### Disclaimer

Views and opinions expressed in the Newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mitcham Historical Society Inc. Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the content, but responsibility is not accepted for any errors or omissions that are beyond the Society's control.

### Privacy

In accordance with the requirements of its Constitution the Society maintains a Register of its members (name, address, telephone number, email address). The information contained in the Register is used only for interactions between the Society and its members. The information is not shared, sold or provided to any third party. Information provided to the Society by email is provided at the sender's risk and the Society will not be held responsible for any unintended use or disclosure.

## Contents

2	Publication Notes
3	Contents
4 &5	Chairperson's Message
6&7	Guided Walk—Ellisons Gully
8 &9	Ellisons Gully—photos
10&11	Office Bearers & Events Calendar (Also Member survey)
12&13	April Bus trip—Auchendarroch House/Strathalbyn
14	2022 History Festival—other events
15	MHS Achievements/ New Members information
17	Mitcham Local History Service
18	Corporate Members

Suggestions for stories or events and activities are always welcome and can be emailed to [mitchamhistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:mitchamhistoricalsociety@gmail.com)

### **The City of Mitcham**

The City of Mitcham is Adelaide's second oldest Council area with the District Council of Mitcham proclaimed on 11 May 1853. In 1891 the first National Park in South Australia, and the second in Australia was proclaimed at Belair.

### **Remittances to the Society**

When making payments to the Society by EFT or by cheque please ensure that you indicate what the payment is for e.g. membership, bus trip, etc. This avoids any confusion or misunderstanding as to the purpose of the funds when they are received.

All Rights Reserved  
E&OE

## Chairperson's Message

The area known as Mitcham Village was first settled in 1840 making it one of the first settlements to be established outside of Adelaide.

At the Society's 2021 Annual General Meeting, Judy Weaver asked how the Mitcham Historical Society Committee communicates with the Mitcham Council with respect to matters of heritage. She said that since the Council's Heritage Committee had been abolished at the end of 2014, there did not seem to have been any provision in Council budgets for the maintenance of signage particularly in the Mitcham Village. Subsequently, John Wood and I met with Judy where she outlined and reiterated her concerns expressed at the AGM and what she thought the Society could do in this regard.

In mid-February I undertook a comprehensive inspection of the interpretative and street signage as well as other items of historical/heritage interest in the Mitcham Village. All of these items reflected a lack of maintenance and many items such as the information screens on the interpretative signage were in need of replacement. Other items such as timber sign stands and frames and seats were in urgent need of oiling. A comprehensive report was provided to the Council and a maintenance programme has begun and a commitment been given to ensure regular inspection and maintenance of these items.

One of the Society's Objects is: ***to foster, create and maintain public awareness of the Mitcham Village and its history*** and without the proper maintenance of the signage and other items, visitors to the Mitcham Village cannot discover and learn of the historical and heritage significance of this part of Adelaide dating from shortly after European settlement. Whilst the historic signage is readable, the signs will be rectified as part of the Council's asset renewal programme for 2022-2023.

Cont'd next page

Chairperson's message cont'd/

Regrettably the Society's guided tour of Mitcham Village on 16 March had to be cancelled at the last minute due to the heavy rain that afternoon. The April bus trip to Auchendarroch House at Mt Barker and then Strathalbyn was a great success (*see separate report in this issue*) and our next event the Mid-Year High Tea in June is "sold out". We are hosting 4 walks as part of the 2022 History Festival – 2 each in Brownhill Creek Recreation Park led by Ron Bellchambers and in Ellison's Gully led by Councillor Andrew Tilley (*see separate report in this issue*).

Members may recall that in late 2020, the Society began speaking with a range of stakeholders about heavy freight vehicles on Cross Road and concerns that these volumes might increase as a result of the North South Connector. These concerns along with reducing HFV volumes on the SE Freeway have been taken over by a new group, [Our Roads SA](#) – the MHS Committee agreed to provide some seed funding to ORSA in the amount of \$250 plus the leftover funds from the "Save the Waite Gatehouse" campaign.

At its last meeting the Committee agreed that member should be canvassed about events, activities, visits they would like to see the Society host or organise. Comments about the timing of activities e.g. morning, afternoon, evening are welcome also. Please see page 11 for how to respond.

Best wishes.

Geoff

## Guided walk: Ellisons Gully, Brownhill Creek History Festival 2022

The Society is hosting four walks as part of the 2022 History Festival—two in Brownhill Creek Recreation Park and two in Ellisons Gully. Councillor Andrew Tilley (*pictured*) led the Ellisons Gully walk on Sunday 15 May with 22



participants. Andrew is a 5th generation resident of the area and is well versed in its history. The walk started at the old manure pits used by the early market gardeners in the area, before proceeding into Ellison's Gully. This area belongs to the Spencer family and has been cleared of the once rampant blackberries. Public access is permitted to this very scenic landscape rich in history. The upper reaches of Brownhill Creek are fed by springs meaning that water is flowing, unlike in the Creek's lower reaches at this time of year. There are some disused silver and galena mine shafts in the gully and many of the attendees took the opportunity to enter one of these. A feature of the area is the 140-year old Mitcham water works that once also supplied Unley and Adelaide. The original catchment area for the works has been uncovered and restored and as you follow the creek much of the original cast iron pipework imported from Scotland can be seen. One more walk in Ellisons Gully remains on Sunday 29 May and you can book [here](#).

The Society is most grateful to Ron Bellchambers and Andrew Tilley, two of the most knowledgeable people in terms of Brownhill Creek its history, development and topography for giving freely and generously of their time to lead these walks.



*^Andrew explains about the Mitcham works piping  
qExposed old cast iron piping*



*More photos next page*



## Ellisons Gully: where else in Australia





can you be in the “bush” 10kms from the CBD?



## **Mitcham Historical Society Inc**

### **Officer Bearers 2021—2022**

**Patron:** Dr John Newton, Principal, Scotch College

**Chairperson:** Geoff Sauer M 0412 125 010

**Deputy Chairperson:** Joanna Wells M 0403 335 862

**Treasurer:** Sandra Matz M 0414 747 657

**Minutes Secretary (& Webmaster):** Peter Reeve

### **Committee Members**

John Wood M 0402 781 601

Peter Basedow: M 0417 809 227

Ian Strout: (Events/Membership) M 0400 027 117

### **Contact Details**

Post: Mitcham Historical Society PO Box 903,  
Mitcham Shopping Centre SA 5062

Email: [mitchamhistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:mitchamhistoricalsociety@gmail.com)

Web: [www.mitchamhistoricalsociety.org.au](http://www.mitchamhistoricalsociety.org.au)

ABN: 52338135115

### **MHS Committee meetings 2022**

Mondays: 27 June, 25 July, 29 August,  
26 September, 31 October, 28 November

If there is an issue you would like to see the Committee consider, please contact the Chairperson. The agenda for meetings is finalised on the Friday immediately prior to a meeting.

## MHS Events Calendar 2022

### **Mid-Year High Tea @ Scotch College**

Sunday 5 June—***sold out***

### **Speaker Event: Tony Kanellos (Director, Carrick Hill)**

Wednesday 3 August. Time: TBA

### **Annual General Meeting: Speaker: Dr John Newton—"1812"**

Tuesday 27 September

### **House Tour: Carrick Hill & Lunch**

Wednesday 12 October

### **Bus Trip**

November: itinerary & date TBA

### **Christmas Function at The Ed**

Tuesday 6 December

### **Bookings: Ian Strout (Event Coordinator) M 0400 027 117**

(Please note that we will be using the Eventbrite platform for bookings for all future events/activities)

### **SURVEY: Future events/activities**

Are there events, activities, lectures, visits, liaison with other historical societies you would like to see the Society host or organise? Comments about the timing of activities e.g. morning, afternoon, evening welcome also. All suggestions welcome by [email](#) or in writing to PO Box 903, Mitcham Shopping Centre SA 5062.

## April 2022 Bus Trip

On Sunday 10 April on a perfect autumn day we headed off up South Eastern freeway to Mt Barker and then onto Strathalbyn. The highlight at Mt Barker was a visit to Auchendarrach House. Where we were greeted by Michelle Berry and Michelle Wallis, CEO of the Wallis Corporation for morning tea in the Kelmscott Oakfield Room.

Michelle Wallis and Michelle Berry guided us through the house where all of the rooms featured William Morris wallpaper and curtains. We toured through the Ballroom featuring William Morris wallpaper “Spring Thicket” pattern, the Barr Smith billiard room featuring “Honeysuckle and Tulips” wallpaper, and the Chrysanthemum dining room featuring “Chrysanthemum” wallpaper. Joanna Barr Smith’s room features “Rose” wallpaper *ca.* 1890 (see opposite page) by Morris.

We were given a comprehensive history of the house from its beginnings in 1860 as the Oakfield Hotel established by Lachlan McFarlane, to the time \*Robert Barr Smith acquired the property in 1878 and then acquisition by the Wallis family in 2000. The visit concluded with a tour of the beautiful gardens. Auchendarroch House is a great tribute to Michelle Wallis and her passion for the restoration of the house and her eye for detail. We then travelled on to Strathalbyn with Dr Anne Herraman’s commentary and her amazing knowledge of the area. Lunch was taken at the historic Commercial Hotel which was established in 1865. After lunch we visited the Strathalbyn Historical Museum where members of the National Trust hosted our tour through the museum. A big thank you to Dr Anne Herraman our expert guide, and our volunteer bus driver Peter Williams.

(reported by Ian Strout)

\*Robert Barr Smith was William Morris’ biggest international customer and South Australia has the largest collection of Morris outside the UK.



**Michelle Wallis and Michelle Berry introduce Auchendarroch House**





## 2022 History Festival Events in the Mitcham area

### Hike for History (host Mercedes College)

Look behind the hedge on Fullarton Road and learn more of the history of Mercedes, including the historic Strathspey House built in 1899, being founded as a boarding school by the Sisters of Mercy in 1954, and gain insights into surrounding landmarks. A comfortable 2.5 kilometre walk on Thursday, 26 May from 8.30am. Coffee and a gift bag included. Participants will enjoy a pre-hike coffee in the beautiful College grounds, once part of Springfield Estate and considered for the residence of the Governor of South Australia.

Cost: \$25 – [book here](#).

### Emmaus History & Archives Group: Sunday 29 May

Hear about the history of the three churches in the parish and more. Two of the churches Holy Cross, Goodwood, and Our Lady of Dolours, Kingswood, feature artworks by of Czech born artist [Voitre Marek \(1919-1999\)](#).

Our Lady of Dolours, Kingswood - Speaker: Dr David Hilliard OAM, MHS member, historian and author of *Catholics in Kingswood: The Catholic Church in the Mitcham District, 1869-1994*. Times: 1.45pm and 3.00pm

Holy Cross, Goodwood - Speaker: Mr Chris Burns, historian and author of *Liturgy, Community, Modernity: Postwar Places of Worship in South Australia, 1945-1990*. Times: 2.15pm and 3.15pm

St Therese, Colonel Light Gardens - Speaker: Dr Christine Garnaut, Architectural and Planning Historian and author of *Colonel Light Gardens: Model Garden Suburb*. Times: 2.45pm and 3.30pm



## MHS Achievements

In addition to the history of the MHS on the previous page, together with the Brownhill Creek Association, the MHS contributed financially and in other ways –

- to the successful No Dam in Brownhill Creek campaign,
- provided funding for the Shelter Tree project and the
- Tom Price Memorial in Brownhill Creek Reserve

and has also

- provided financial support for the restoration of the heritage listed stables now the Scout Hall in Maitland Street, Mitcham,
- together with the Heritage Alliance and the Member for Waite led the campaign to save the Waite Gatehouse,
- hosted a Lecture to mark the Centenary of Colonel Light Gardens in 2021.

For four and half decades and only with the assistance of dedicated volunteers and the support of the community, the MHS has achieved much in preserving Mitcham's history and ensuring that its heritage is an enduring legacy.

## New Members

New members of the MHS are always welcome – if you have friends or acquaintances who are interested in preserving and protecting the history and heritage of the City of Mitcham, please encourage them to contact Ian Strout on 0400 027 117.

**Membership fees:** individual \$30, family \$40, concession/pensioner \$20 (individual) \$30 (family), corporate \$150. Note: Pension/Concession rates apply only for holders of Commonwealth income tested cards: Age Pension, Commonwealth Seniors Health and Veteran's Gold Card and to full-time students at university, school or TAFE.

## Adelaide's Public Transport – The First 180 Years

A book describing the history of public transport – trains, trams, and buses, in the area now served by Adelaide Metro, written primarily by Tom Wilson (a public transport planner with the Department for Infrastructure and Transport's predecessors, 1973-2010), has recently been published by Wakefield Press. The story of public transport in this large area – Gawler to Sellicks Beach and outward to Mount Barker, is long and complex. Hence, at 6,400 pages, it had to be published digitally on a USB stick. The book is set out in such a way that the reader can easily select the chapters that interest them. As well as text it includes thousands of photos, maps and diagrams etc. Reading it will assist in understanding why the system is the way it is, and many of the lessons that can be learnt from that history, so it should help those working in public transport. Available from [Wakefield Press](#).



Did you know that you can discover the history of the hills railway line? Click [here](#) for the brochure.

Mitcham  
Railway Station:

Date ?

## Mitcham Local History Collection

The [Mitcham Local History Collection](#) collects, collates, catalogues and stores information concerning the City of Mitcham to archival standards. The collection consists of historical information about the City of Mitcham, and includes:

Publications, directories, electoral rolls, historical research files, local newspapers, maps, plans, local cemetery records and indexes, Old council minutes, correspondence, reports and indexes, 4000+ photographs including special collections, rate assessments, Council surveys building applications, local school and organisations' records and histories, family histories including letters and diaries, oral histories

The collection can be accessed at the Mitcham Heritage Research Centre, Mitcham Cultural Village, 103 - 105 Princes Road, Mitcham SA 5062, Telephone: 8372 8261, Tuesday—Thursday 9.30am to 4.00pm.



B 37906

## **Mitcham Historical Society Inc**

### **Corporate Members**

MHS gratefully acknowledges the support of its Corporate Members

#### **The Edinburgh Hotel and Cellars**

a famous beer garden, premium wine cellars, and innovative cuisine  
1 -7 High Street, Mitcham, H ph. 8373 2700 C ph. 8373 2753

#### **Scotch College**

“ . . . a culture of wellbeing and educational attainment which is zealously focused, creating a stimulating and relevant learning experience in preparation for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.” Carruth Road, Torrens Park  
ph. 8274 4333

#### **Nicolle Flint**

Nicolle was the Federal Member for Boothby until 21 May 2022 and her Corporate Membership remains extant until 30 June 2022

#### **Colindale Design**

Bespoke interior design specialising in end-to-end design resolutions for residential and small-scale commercial projects.  
p. 8271 1483 m. 0418 816 403,  
Studio: by appointment only: 21 Albert Street, Mitcham

#### **This Fine Day Café**

Café, gallery and gift shop, contemporary works by local artists; including original jewellery, children's gifts and retro ornaments. 13 Welbourne St, Mitcham m. 0413 293 542