



# NEWSLETTER

INCORPORATING *MITCHAM MEMORIES*

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**In this issue:**

**Founding of Coromandel Valley**

**Bosley Pottery**

**Heritage Tram Pole**

**and more**

**No. 1/2023**

# 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.

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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. For EFT transfers please include your surname. This avoids any confusion or misunderstanding as to the purpose of the funds when they are received.

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## Chairperson's Message

A belated Happy New Year to you all. An interesting programme of events and activities has been arranged for this year commencing with a guided walk around historic Mitcham Village with MHS Life Member, Glen Woodward on this coming Wednesday. After Easter, our first bus trip for the year to Gawler, the Roseworthy Campus of the University of Adelaide and the tram museum at St Kilda is booked out. We will again host a Mid-Year High Tea on Sunday 2 July – last year's event proved extremely popular and this year's should be the same. Please refer to our events calendar on p.15

History or Heritage or both? In the MHS Constitution, the word "heritage" does not appear, but the word "history" does, especially in the Society's objectives. Yet, are we as much about heritage as we are about history? My answer would be "yes" to that question.

My view is not one based on pedantry, nor on semantics. The two words are not interchangeable, and they have different meanings. The Oxford English Dictionary provides the following definitions for heritage and historical and the two words have quite different meanings. Heritage is about "Valued objects and qualities such as historic buildings and cultural traditions that have been passed down from previous generations." and "Denoting or relating to things of special architectural, historical, or natural value that are preserved for the nation." Historical: "Of or concerning history or past events." The campaign to save the Waite Gatehouse was as much about heritage, as it was about history. Part of that campaign was making the community aware of Peter Waite's munificent and historic gift to the State, and which is now part of the State's scientific, educational and social heritage.

Similarly for Ayers House. Turning it into offices and a function centre would have destroyed the building's heritage.

I believe that the MHS is as much about the history of the City of Mitcham, as it is about what is preserved and passed on to future generations in terms buildings, structures, spaces and culture – that is heritage. That is demonstrated by the reasons for the Society's creation some 44 years ago, when its aims and objectives included “to foster an awareness, preserve and maintain the character of Mitcham Village”. Demonstrated also by the projects that it has supported – no dam in Brownhill Creek, the Kaurna shelter tree project, the Scout Hall, the Tom Price Memorial, the Colonel Light Gardens Centenary Lecture, the Sturtbrae Lecture etc.

The Irish Heritage Council says that “heritage is our inheritance - what the past has conceded to us, what we value in the present and what we choose to preserve for future generations”. Our inheritance includes: the tangible, the natural and the and the intangible.

In helping shape our identity, our heritage becomes part of what we are. Our expression of this identity shows others what we value; it highlights our values and priorities. Heritage is a keystone of our culture that plays an important role in our politics, society, business and world view. It informs, influences and inspires public debate and policy both directly and indirectly. Crucially, maintaining and enhancing our heritage provides a basis for local economic development and innovation in education and business generally. Two of the Society's objectives are as much about history as they are about heritage, that is, “what we value in the present and what we choose to preserve for future generations”, in other words, the inheritance we leave.

Geoff Sauer  
Chairperson

## Please note this trip is FULLY BOOKED

**Bus Trip: Sunday April 16**

**Departs 9.00am, Carpark Council Offices, off Belair Road,  
returns 4.30pm (approx.)**

Featuring visits to Roseworthy Agriculture College and the Tramway Museum, St. Kilda; also morning tea at historic Gawler Railway Station Heritage Café and lunch at the state heritage listed [Kingsford Hotel](#) (est. 1851 as the Globe Inn) in Gawler.

Morning Tea will be at the 110-year-old Gawler Railway Station in the [Heritage Cafe](#). We will then visit the [Roseworthy Campus](#) of the University of Adelaide – Roseworthy Agricultural College was established in 1883 and merged with the university on 1 January 1991. Retired medical scientist, Roseworthy graduate and current Roseworthy Old Collegians' Association President, Richard Turnbull, will conduct a tour for us.

After lunch in Gawler our trip will take us to St Kilda and the [Tramway Museum](#) where there are 26 trams, a horse box, 5 trolley buses, two horse trams that preceded and a diesel bus that replaced the electric trams. The Museum is one of few internationally that can boast having at least one representative example of every tram type to have been in service on a city street system for the life of the system. This visit will be led by Tom Wilson, retired Transport Planner and co-author of [Adelaide's Public Transport System: the First 180 Years](#). There will be an opportunity to ride on one of the vintage trams.

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**NOTE: the second bus trip for 2023 will take place on  
Sunday 22 October**

## **History Festival May 2023**

### **Brownhill Creek Guided Walk**

**Guide: Ron Bellchambers, Community Liaison Officer,  
Brownhill Creek Association.**

A walk in one of South Australia's oldest parks and gain a fascinating insight into the heritage of this historic site. Brownhill Creek Valley played a pivotal role in the lives of the Kurna people for countless generations and also in the European settlement of the South Australia Colony. Hear about contemporary plans to conserve and enhance the environment and heritage of this community asset - visitors will see this work in progress.

Two dates: Sunday 7 May 2023 and Sunday 21 May 2023

Bookings essential at [Eventbrite](#)

**Ellison's Gully (Brownhill Creek) Guided Walk -  
Market gardens, mines, historic water supply and more.....**

**Guide: Councillor Andrew Tilley**

Andrew's family have lived in the area for 5 generations, and his knowledge of the history of the area is unsurpassed. Starting at the old manure pits in Brownhill Creek, this walk includes the scenic beauty of Ellison's Gully, an historic stone bridge and disused silver mine-shafts. See also the 140-year old Mitcham water works that once also supplied Unley and Adelaide.

Two dates: Sunday 14 May 2023 and Sunday 28 May 2023

Bookings essential at [Eventbrite](#)

## The Founding of Coromandel Valley 1837—1895

On 12 January 1837 the ship Coromandel arrived at Glenelg, whereupon a number of sailors ran away and hid in the hills above the area now known as Coromandel Valley. They stayed there until the ship sailed without them in March, then returned to Adelaide to face the music.

The sailors were in luck, however, as the lack of an official to preside over their prosecution meant they were not punished. In late 1837, James Chambers obtained a licence to graze stock over an area in the south of the Valley along a creek (now called Chambers Creek), running from Cherry Gardens to the Sturt River. James spent little if any time on the land which was managed largely by his brother, John.

In 1838 much of the Coromandel Valley area was surveyed and subdivided into sections. The area can best be described as the east and west facing land areas that abut Sturt River where it flows generally in a north-south direction, with Blackwood on the western and Cherry Gardens on the eastern escarpments. In addition, Coromandel Valley includes the Chambers Creek area as it nears and eventually joins the Sturt.

The survey effectively divided the Valley into five distinct areas. The provision of two Aboriginal Reserves broke the Valley into a south, central and north area for settlement and development, with these areas being separated by the Aboriginal Reserves. Between the survey of 1838 and the 1890s, families took up land and settled in the area, undertaking various activities. Facilities to serve the community were developed over this period.

For more see the National Trust South Australia Coromandel Valley and Districts Branch [website](#).



## Coromandelians: South Australian pioneers of the Coromandel

This book by Brian Stace and Bill Othams details the voyage of the barque Coromandel from London in September 1836, with 124 adults and 32 children. Surviving storms and scurvy, the Coromandel arrived at Kangaroo Island on 12 January 1837, just 15 days after Governor Hindmarsh arrived at Holdfast Bay.

It was the first vessel sent out by the Commissioners for Colonization of South Australia to carry predominantly young working class couples, the first on which the number of men and women were almost equal and the first where most of the labourers were free to work for whomever they wanted at whatever wage they could negotiate. The Coromandel also carried South Australia's first Advocate General, first Surgeon General, first banker and first geologist, all of whom were influential and controversial characters in early South Australia.

Deserting crew added early drama as potential bushrangers and then to the workforce of the colony. This collection of biographies of the passengers (and crew turned colonists) analyses their lives, their characters, their successes and failures, their social and geographic mobility and their contribution to the colony, providing insights into the lives of other South Australian pioneers and more.

This hardcover book contains 560 pages. Available through some booksellers at \$80 RRP plus postage (the SA Genealogy and Heraldry Society and the SA Maritime Museum also have copies for sale), it is available from Brian Stace for \$65 plus postage if required (\$16 – but copies can be collected from the Pioneers Association of SA in Leigh St, Adelaide and sometimes he can arrange delivery at no charge)

## Bosley Pottery (Mitcham Potteries)

If you grew up in Lower Mitcham or Hawthorn, you may remember the galvanised iron building on the corner of Grange and Abbotshall Roads (on the northern side of the railway crossing). Until 1964 this building housed a pottery – it is now a Vinnies store.

Staffordshire brothers George and Thomas Bosley arrived in South Australia in 1865 and 1866 respectively. Both brothers were potters and became brickmakers at the Hindmarsh Pottery after their arrival. Not long after, they were employed making terracotta pipes, household utilitarian ware and chimney pots.

By 1886 George Bosley was teaching pottery at the School of Design where he was praised greatly by the master potter there. George Bosley left the Hindmarsh Pottery in 1890 to concentrate on teaching pottery, especially wheelwork and exhibiting when possible until his early death in 1892. In 1931 George Bosley's nephew, Thomas, established his Bosley Ware Pottery in Abbotshall Road, Mitcham. Thomas had become George's stepson when George married his brother's wife.

Thomas Bosley the younger had worked in a pottery and brick yard in Western Australia for twenty years before his return to SA in 1913. He then worked for the Eden Hills Brickyard which closed in 1930 during the Depression. By 1932 Thomas was making artwork pottery for sale and Lady Mayoress, Lady Bonython was a great supporter. The pottery began in a garage, his son Alfred worked in the pottery, and he took on his first employee in 1935. In that same year he began producing centenary souvenirs for the forthcoming South Australian centenary of 1936. By that time, he had six employees, and the business was going well and in 1937 Thomas built a new bungalow across the street from his pottery which naturally had a Bosley green chimney pot, glazed air vent tiles and multi coloured glaze tile decorations.

## Bosley Pottery (Mitcham Potteries)

The Bosley family owned this house until 1977. Unfortunately, Thomas Bosley died in 1945 and the business changed. A company Mitcham Potteries Ltd was formed in 1946 with Ron Bissett in charge and the pottery premises were much expanded. By 1954 the Mitcham Potteries which still used the name of Bosley Ware was making 10,000 bread crocks a year. However, the pottery struggled and ceased producing ornamental wares in 1954. The business closed in 1964.

The Bosley Pottery was known for its distinctive art wares which included a 1936 Centenary of South Australia plaque, magpies, kookaburras, koalas, kangaroos, penguins, gnomes and the famous logo of MacRobertsons Chocolate Freddo Frog. The pottery also produced a wide range of urns, vases and bread crocks often in their distinctive trademark Bosley green or in multi coloured glazes.



## Historic Mitcham Village Guided Walk

12 months ago this event was cancelled due to torrential rain, but Wednesday 15 March 2023 provided a glorious autumn afternoon for a guided walk around historic Mitcham Village with MHS Life Member, Glen Woodward.

Beginning at the old Mitcham Institute on Princes Road, the group heard of the early history of this historic part of Mitcham (and Adelaide) both about the buildings and the people who built and owned them.

Wealthy merchant George Prince's house "Kallawar" (now part of the Scotch College Junior School) adjacent to the Muggs Hill Road ford, the Baptist Church, cottages in Albert Street, the original corner store (now The Ed's Cellars), Harris' greengrocer, Newey's Stables (now a Scout Hall) and The Ed itself.

Opposite High Street is Sutton Gardens named for Charles Sutton a former Mayor of Mitcham. It was originally the site of 'Jerusalem', a large stone house built in 1844 for the Reverend Thomas Playford - namesake and forebear of two South Australian premiers.

At the top of Albert Street is the Old Mitcham Hotel, built in 1869 originally with a single storey, a second was added in 1879. It operated as a licensed hotel until 1909 when its liquor licence was not renewed due to the influence of the Temperance Movement.

The tour concluded at MHS corporate member, The Ed in High Street, Mitcham where members took the opportunity to dine.

The Council has a brochure for a self-guided walking tour around Mitcham Village which you can download [here](#).



**Top:** Corporate MHS members Louise Miller Frost MP (Boothby) and Catherine Hutchesson MP (Waite) came on the tour.

**Bottom:** the Mitcham Institute built in 1870

# Mitcham Historical Society Inc

## Officer Bearers 2022—2023

**Patron:** TBA

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

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

**Treasurer:** John Fraser

**Minutes Secretary:** Alicia Siegel

**Webmaster:** Peter Reeve

### Committee Members

John Wood M 0402 781 601

Peter Basedow: M 0417 809 227

Ian Strout: **(Events)** M 0400 027 117

Sandra Matz M 0414 747 657

Iain Waddell-Smith

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ABN: 52338135115

### MHS Committee meetings 2023

27 March, 24 April, 29 May, 26 June, 31 July, 28 August,

25 September, 30 October, 27 November

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



## Calendar of Events 2023

Mitcham Village Guided Walk: Wednesday 15 March

Bus trip Sunday 16 April (fully booked)

### **History Festival walks:**

Brownhill Creek (7 May, 21 May)

Ellison's Gully Walks (14 May, 28 May)

Visit to Parliament House (Date TBA)

Mid -Year Event: Sunday 2 July

Speaker Event: Tuesday 8 August

AGM: Tuesday 26 September

Bus trip: Sunday 22 October

Christmas Function: Tuesday 5 December

Below: Historic Ellison's Gully



## Heritage listed tram pole

A heritage listed tram pole in Welbourne Street, one of only 6 left in the Adelaide metropolitan area was offered by SA Power Networks to the City of Mitcham—as a functional pole for electricity distribution the pole was no longer serviceable. MHS member, Ron Bellchambers made a deputation to the Council at its meeting on 29 November 2022 about the pole and then after a lengthy debate the Council agreed (*unanimously*):

1. That the City of Mitcham respond in writing to SAPN to advise that Council will store undercover the Heritage Tram Pole on behalf of the community, until a decision is made on its future use/location.
2. That Administration engages with the local community groups / organisations / residents including Mitcham Heritage Research Centre, Mitcham Historical Society and consider feedback in determining the location of the Heritage Tram Pole and bring a report back to Council about future options.

The pole has been removed from Welbourne Street and is now in storage at the Council's Works Depot in Melrose Park. One possible location for the pole after it has been remediated is in Sutton Gardens adjacent to the former tram terminus in Albert Street.

According to the State Heritage Register the pole “displays historical, economic or social themes that are of importance to the local area”.

Note: if the Council had not accepted the pole, it would have been scrapped.



## 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.

## **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,  
Hotel (08) 8373 2700 Cellars (08) 373 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  
(08) 8274 4333

#### **Louise Miller Frost MP**

Federal Member for Boothby  
Shop 2, 670 Anzac Highway  
Glenelg SA,5045  
(08) 8374 0511

#### **Colindale Design**

Bespoke interior design specialising in end-to-end design resolutions for residential and small-scale commercial projects.  
p. (08) 8271 1483 m. 0418 816 403,  
Studio: by appointment only: 21 Albert Street, Mitcham

## **Mitcham Historical Society Inc Corporate Members**

### **Nadia Clancy MP**

State Member for Elder  
212 Belair Road  
Hawthorn SA 5062  
(08) 8374 1939

### **Catherine Hutchesson MP**

State Member for Waite  
1/7-9 Young Street  
Blackwood SA 5051  
(08) 8278 5844

### **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 Contact Sally: m. 0413 293 542

## Can you help: Margaret Fay Fuller?

Horace Vella, a graduate historian, is looking into the life of Ms Margaret Fay Fuller, an entrepreneur turned philanthropist who passed away in 2017.

The project entails research of records and ephemera belonging to Ms Fuller, which now belong to the [Fay Fuller Foundation](#), a philanthropic organisation set up by Fay back in 2003. The study will involve oral interviews with ex-colleagues and acquaintances, and research at archival repositories and other collections deemed crucial to construct a timeline for Fay's eventful life.



Available records indicate that Fay was very connected to Mitcham, and spent the majority of her life living in [Neweys Road](#). Three generations of the Fuller family lived there for some 95 years, and the Fullers had a significant quarrying business in Mitcham.

She was born in Mitcham on the 17 February 1926 and passed away in 2017. Educated at the Mitcham Public School, she had plans to open a retirement village in Mitcham, but this did not materialise. Horace would be grateful for any information about Fay Fuller and the Fuller family.

He says that "Looking into the life events and milestones of Fay will also shed light on the social aspects of life in Adelaide and Mitcham from the mid-1920s onwards", and he hopes to discover further the role of women amongst the challenges and changes experienced throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Horace can be contacted on 0401 959 619 .