

The Friends of Urrbrae House

Urrbrae House, University of Adelaide, Waite Campus, PMB#1 GLEN OSMOND, SA 5064. Tel 83037497

Editor Vicki Cheshire

Dates for your Diary

March 15th
Twilight Concert
(5.30 for 6pm)

April 19th Vivente
Twilight Concert
(5.30 for 6pm)

May 2nd Elder
Conservatorium
Student Concert
(3.30pm)

May 6th Manager's
Morning Tea
(10.30am)

May 10th
AGM

May 17th
Twilight Concert

History Week Events
See page 2

August 28th
Supper Dance

October 6th
Games Day - Fun in 1901

See also page 6 for extra events.

President's Notes

Our committee was greatly saddened by the sudden death of Graham Campbell, our Secretary. Graham was at our Christmas Party assisting with the drink service and then only six days later had a heart attack from which he did not recover. As you will see from a tribute to Graham, later in this Newsletter, he spent the early part of his career at the Waite Agricultural Research Institute and completed it at the Roseworthy Campus.

We are grateful to Joy Middleton for taking on the position of Acting Secretary.

Included with this newsletter is an invitation to contribute your membership subscriptions for 2010 (If you joined as a Friend late in 2009 your subscription made then will cover 2010). Our Treasurer appreciates it very much when memberships are renewed early in the year.

Our very successful twilight concert series will continue in 2010 with details of the first concert included with this Newsletter. We are delighted to open our program for the year with a return performance on March 15 by the Vivente String Quartet. Minas and Erna Berberyan who are part of this group assist us with the choice of artists for the Friends Of Urrbrae House Concerts. These concerts alternate with one presented by Vivente Music, with eight concerts in all throughout the year.

It is important that if you want to attend these concerts you ensure a seat by booking early.

We look forward to your continuing financial support and interest in all our activities. There is much restoration work still to be undertaken in Urrbrae House.

Bill Wallace

Wanted: Auditor

An auditor is required on an annual basis to check the financial accounts of the Friends of Urrbrae House. This is a voluntary position.

Please contact the treasurer, Lyn MacKay by the end of FEBRUARY if you can help.

Ph 0412 559 626

Manager's Musings

The sound of drills and hammering I am pleased to say that the conversion of the former photocopying room as a new Reception Office is now underway as is the major building conservation work to address issues relating to falling damp. Amanda and I are certainly looking forward to not needing to use buckets in the Main Hall this winter.

As I mentioned at the Christmas Party, there were unforeseen delays in the commencement of this work which means that the work will not be completed by mid-February as originally scheduled. Therefore, continued disruptions to the normal activities of Urrbrae House are expected over the next couple of months. However, Barrie Montgomery from Built Environs, who is now co-ordinating the building work, is working hard to minimise the impact on our already booked events such as the upcoming Basketry SA exhibition which is being held in Urrbrae House at the end of February as part of the Fringe program.

SA History Week I am currently organising three Community Engagement activities at Urrbrae House for this year's SA History Week which runs from 21-30 May. Bookings are required for all events.

- a) **Sunday, 23 May, 2.30pm-4.00pm:** *"Afternoon tea with Mr. and Mrs. Waite in 1892"*. Visitors will have the opportunity to step back into the world of 1892 and be shown around the house as guests of the Waites. They will encounter characters around the household and share afternoon tea with the Waites in the Dining Room. Numbers are limited to 22. Cost: \$10 adults, \$7 for children. The event is not suitable for children under the age of 7.

This afternoon will be run with assistance from volunteers who are part of our Schools' Program.

- b) **Monday, 24 May, 5.00pm for 5.30pm start:** *"The Waite Agricultural Research Institute: Realising Waite's Vision"*. At this twilight talk Yvonne Routledge will be speaking about the impact of Arnold Richardson, the first Director of the Institute, on the early development of the Institute while I will discuss the history of "The Waite" in the last 50 years. Refreshments will be served before the talk which will commence at 5.30pm. There is no charge for the talk.
- c) **Sunday, 30 May, 2.00pm:** *"Free Guided Tour of Urrbrae House"*. There is no charge for the tour but gold coin donations will be appreciated.

For bookings please contact Amanda Jackson on 83037497.

Lynette Zeitz



The former photocopying room ready for new plaster



Left: Repairs made to the badly cracked eastern ceiling



Right: The new kitchen floor

Graham Campbell

18 August 1939 – 15 December 2009

Graham or 'Graz' as he was known to his family and friends was educated at Scotch College. In 1958 he was appointed as a Laboratory Assistant at the Waite Agricultural Research Institute. Working in the Department of Plant Pathology he progressed to the level of Laboratory Manager before taking up a position with the Australian Mineral and Development Laboratories (AMDEL) in 1969. While working at the Waite he was a valuable member of the Institute cricket team where as wicket keeper he was renowned for the sharpness and humour of his sledging.



After working at AMDEL for seven years, Graham joined the Department of Mines and Energy enjoying life as a real 'public servant' and advising the Minister. In 1981 and with a desire to put the 'public' back into service, Graham transferred to the Department's energy and new technologies and energy conservation advisory section. There Graham learned the science to reinforce his command that we turn the lights off. The position also enabled him to play to his strengths - public speaking and fixing stuff (including the information boards and demonstration models he'd constructed but which were demolished frequently by excitable school children).

In 1990 Graham was appointed to a position at Roseworthy Agricultural College where as Administrative Officer he supported Maurie Zobel the Administrative Secretary. After the merger of Roseworthy with the University of Adelaide in 1991, Graham was put in charge of the Undergraduate Teaching Facilities at the Roseworthy Campus, in liaison with a similar unit on the Waite Campus.

Chris Jeffrey who worked with Graham in the laboratories at Roseworthy, commented on how he was a pleasure to work with, giving you encouragement and space to grow your skills, but be there to advise and back you up if you needed it.

Graham played an invaluable role at Roseworthy following its merger with the University of Adelaide where in addition to being Secretary to the Campus Committee he was at the forefront of organizing open days and other special events. He played Santa at the Christmas Party where he gave out special trophies to staff for their efforts through out the year. Graham's role was important to the campus community in a period of change, restructure and reorganization.

Graham was a valued club member of the Burnside Lacrosse Club. From the time his son David took up junior lacrosse in 1977 and for the 33 years following, Graham served as Chairman, President, Secretary, Honorary Auditor, Team Manager and Scorer for the club.

After his retirement in 2001 Graham continued a full program of Volunteer activities including his involvement with Rostrum where he now assisted with the Voice of Youth competitions. He was also as a guide at the zoo.

In 2007 Graham was elected as Secretary to the Committee of the Friends of Urrbrae House a position he held until his untimely death. As well as his role as Secretary, Graham was a willing helper at functions of the Friends group which ranged from serving drinks to organizing a 'potato and spoon' race at a recent Games Day for children. He also wrote entertaining reviews of our Twilight Concerts.

Graham had had an influence on the lives of many people as was indicated by the huge attendance at his funeral on 22nd December. Not only did people enjoy his company but valued his carefully considered opinions and wisdom.

We extend our sympathy to Graham's wife Pam, daughter Fiona and her husband Graham, son David and his wife Jacinta and their children.

Bill Wallace

Urrbrae House Bell System reactivated

Bernard Arnold and Deane Kemp have been undertaking a restoration of the bell system of Urrbrae House. Bernard who is an Honorary Life Member of the Friends of Urrbrae House previously oversaw the restoration of the refrigeration system by Ray White in 1996. In 2005, Deane (Lucid Consulting Engineers) prepared a detailed report on the heritage aspects of the electrical systems in Urrbrae House.

The project is being undertaken in consultation and with advice from Kate Mc Dougall who has oversight over the Heritage Buildings of the University and Lynette Zeitz, Manager of the Urrbrae House Historic Precinct. Craig Brown from Property Services has provided very helpful assistance.

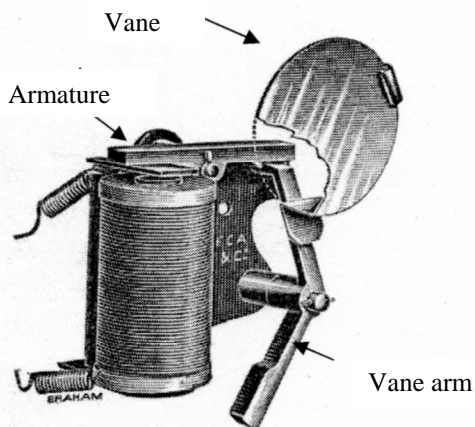
The Friends of Urrbrae House will cover the expenses involved in the project and greatly appreciate the extensive and voluntary commitment of Bernard and Deane. Bernard has provided a progress report on the project.

Bill Wallace



The Urrbrae House Annunciator Board (aka Bell Indicator Board).

Annunciator systems evolved in large houses to summon servants to the various rooms. Originally, these systems were entirely mechanical through levers and rods. In the late 19th century electric systems became available and the Urrbrae House system is typical of the early variety.



Mechanical Throw-Back movement

The annunciator in Urrbrae House is located just outside the Servants' Pantry. When a servant was to be summoned and a call button pressed, the bell on the indicator board sounded and the corresponding "flag" dropped to appear in a window in the glass front, showing which room required attention. In responding, the servant reset the "flag" by pushing a rod on the side of the board. The system could have accommodated up to 24 call stations but there were fewer than this in Urrbrae House. A call button on each end of the dining room table also connected with the system. In the absence of the original wiring to the dining room table Deane Kemp has modified two modern wireless bell pushes to transmit the call signal from the dining table to the annunciator.

There is also a large bell located in the foyer. This was to call the gentry to the dining room. It is operated from a bell-push next to the servants' dining room door.

The annunciator was powered by eight 1.5v Leclanché cells. Georges Leclanché invented and patented this battery in 1866. It contained a conducting solution of ammonium chloride, a cathode of carbon, a depolarizer of manganese dioxide, and an anode of zinc. The chemistry of this cell was later successfully adapted to manufacture of dry cells.



As part of the restoration project the annunciator has been thoroughly cleaned, corrosion removed and repairs undertaken as necessary. Nearly all indicator vanes were missing and 22 were replaced in brass.

The battery cells have been cleaned and will be displayed in a new cabinet in the Servery Area adjacent to the annunciator so that the overall system can be demonstrated to visitors. An alternative 12V DC power supply will be used to support the annunciator.

The annunciator, like the Urrbrae House refrigeration system suffered from being advanced technology when installed and was not of mass production standard and had many flaws. Historically however the board is of great significance and none like it has been found by searching the internet.

Whilst some of Peter Waite's innovations were not altogether practical and perhaps more in line with his motto—*fac et spera*, do and hope, unavoidable ammonia gas leakage in a basement location suggesting that perhaps this installation was not used extensively—the Urrbrae House Annunciator System was still in occasional use when the house was occupied by Waite Institute Director, Professor Prescott, in the period 1938 to 1955.

Another interesting aspect of some of Peter Waite's innovations is the element of economy. The refrigeration compressor appears to have been a damaged marine bargain, and the annunciator board appears to have been made locally at minimum cost and quality rather than being imported from England. Perhaps 'do and hope' but being careful with money at the same time.

Peter Waite was also an innovator in his pastoral pursuits—the introduction of dam-sinking by steam machinery and a more efficient barbed-wire design being some of his contributions. It is not surprising therefore to note that he was a subscriber to 'The Scientific American' from 1876 to 1898.

Bernard Arnold

Profile Interview: Janet Miller

Janet has been a volunteer at Urrbrae House since 2005. Before moving here from UK she did some internet research regarding local volunteering activities and Urrbrae House was one that occurred through the University of Adelaide. After speaking to Yvonne Routledge, Janet's experience as a school teacher became invaluable in aiding both Yvonne and Peggy Rowe with setting up the Schools' program.



Keen to be a part of the program in all its facets, Janet has played the part as laundry-maid, housekeeper, and governess. Her rapport with the children has been an inspiration to us all and her internet research skills have become legendary.

As a dedicated Friends of Urrbrae House Committee member Janet has helped at twilight concerts and many other events. She took on the role as Newsletter editor in 2008 from Gillian Robertson.

Janet's commitment to children inspired her to organise the first Games day "Fun in 1901" in 2008, this proved to be very successful and is continuing as an annual event in the second week of the September school holidays. It is a great avenue for children and families to experience games of yesteryear, allowing adults to 'teach' the children how to play the old fashioned way!

I asked Janet what her memories of the house would be - she said this would be the friendliness of the staff and volunteers and the 'stately manor' feel of the house. She said it was a privilege to walk through that grand entrance and help wherever needed, she particularly enjoyed sitting at the dining table during meetings and Book Club.

Janet and her husband Martin are relocating to the Sunshine Coast in Queensland, and we wish them well in their new life.

Vicki Cheshire.....

Friends of the Waite Arboretum

The Friends of the Waite Arboretum was founded in 1995 to foster interest in the care and use of the Arboretum and to raise funds for its development and promotion. The role of the group also includes the gardens of Urrbrae House.

Our current membership is around 130 and we are supported by a large group of volunteers. Our Patron is Sophie Thomson, presenter on ABC's Gardening Australia and writer for the Gardening Australia Magazine as well as local papers.

If you have not had a tour of the Arboretum you could join one of the free tours on the first Sunday of each month at 11am (meet at the front of Urrbrae House).

You would also be welcome at the following forthcoming functions which the Friends of the Waite Arboretum will be presenting in Urrbrae House:

Basketry SA exhibition; *Warp on the Wild Side*: Feb 26th – March 8th, 11am – 4 pm daily.

David Lawry (Treenet) will speak on *Avenues of Honour* on Monday April 12th at 8pm.

Talk by Sophie Thomson: Sunday May 16th, 2pm.

Classical Guitar Concert by Aleksandr Tsiboulski and Jacob Cordova: Wednesday 18th August (evening).

Beryl Martin Exhibition: 10th – 17th October 11am – 4 pm daily.

Twilight talk by Meliesa Judge, Liquid Metal Studios followed by a walk to look at her sculptures in the gardens and Arboretum: Friday 19th November at 6 pm.

For more information on the arboretum see: www.waite.adelaide.edu.au/arboretum

Bryan Milligan (President)



Did you know that Urrbrae House has a Book Club which generally meets at lunchtime on the last Monday of the month? New members are welcome for this year. Books are provided from Burnside Library, and discussions are informal. Please contact Lynette Zeitz if you are interested 8303 7425.

You may now view this newsletter online at:
<http://www.waite.adelaide.edu.au/urrbraehouse/friends/>

**We welcome the following
who have joined as Friends
since November 2009:**

Helen Burzacott
Samantha and Peter Croser
Robert Doddridge
Simon Harvey
Sally Owen
Creina Papps

Advance Notice:

**The Friends of Urrbrae House AGM.
Monday 10th May 2010**

An invitation will be sent to members closer to the date.