



Newsletter June 2017

The Friends of Urrbrae House

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Hi, my name is Allan. Most of you will know me as the jovial barman at most Friends of Urrbrae House functions, but there is more to the lure of Urrbrae House than a swig of sherry at a pre-concert soiree.



I started volunteering at "The House" about 5 years ago, joining a team of lovely ladies as a flower arranger (a job I am still passionately involved in), but Urrbrae has a way of getting under your skin and before I knew it I was also a Sunday tour guide. After I became a member of the Friends of Urrbrae House, I put myself forward to join the Friends' Committee to assist with fundraising.

Later, after learning of my experience in hospitality, Lynette asked me if I would like to join the small team of Urrbrae House casual staff who cover after hours' events. In addition to being able to provide first aid if needed, my varied duties have seen me arriving at 7.00am to open the house and light the fire in the Main Hall in readiness for a University meeting, through to "standing guard" in the rose garden to warn conference visitors of swarming bees that had unexpectedly taken up residence in the rose garden.

Functions at Urrbrae House are many and varied. Some events are organised by Lynette and her University colleagues while others are organised by the Friends. In May, History Month attractions included an Open House day where a cheery band of staff and wonderful volunteers dressed in period costumes greeted and chatted to vast numbers of curious visitors. A very successful Photo Scavenger Hunt held on a sunny Sunday afternoon saw teams of young and not so young visitors scouring the grounds and the house in search of the many objects listed on a clue sheet.

Our Friends of Urrbrae House Annual General Meeting last month played host to a wonderful and most informative talk by Mary Jose on the fascinating subject of fabric and textile restoration. This prompted many of us to go home and get out Granny's old tapestry to see what could be done with it.

Our most recent event on a cold and bleak Sunday afternoon had the acappella choir, Adelaide Allsorts Harmony Chorus, providing a ray of sunshine in the warm welcoming ballroom. Toes were tapping to the familiar tunes, and their finale of "Fly me to the moon" (unrecognisable at the beginning without the bossa nova beat) was superbly interpreted by the group.

It was this event that prompted me to write this article for our newsletter, because as I was sitting at the top of the stairs listening to the performance I felt how blessed we are to have this magnificent house for all to enjoy, thank you Peter Waite!

Let me say in closing that it is a joy and privilege to be involved with a great team of volunteers and staff at "The House" and thank all of the Friends for their continuing support.

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Friends of Urrbrae House – Annual General Meeting 2017

The 25th Annual General Meeting which was held on Monday 22nd May 2017 at 6.00pm in the Drawing Room was preceded by refreshments. Fifteen members and eight guests attended.

In her President's Report, Joy Middleton highlighted the continuing success of the Twilight Concerts and acknowledged the invaluable assistance of Minas Berberyan in arranging the excellent programs and Peggy Rowe for taking the bookings. Joy considered that the socialising before the performances in the Main Hall could be likened to the Hunt Club gatherings hosted by Peter and Matilda Waite.

In the Treasurer's Report, favorable comment was made on the level of donations by members in addition to their annual subscription. Two projects completed during the year that are giving great pleasure to all are the installation of the Chandeliers in the ballroom and repair of the chiming clock in the Main Hall.

The committee elected for the year ahead is as follows:

President, Bill Wallace

Vice President, Joy Middleton

Secretary, Ramute Stankevicius

Treasurer, Vada Osborn

Newsletter Editor, Sandra Morrison

General committee members: Louise Green, Hetty Cater, Margaret Neate, Anne Rabone and Allan Woodman.

Ex Officio Lynette Zeitz (Manager, Urrbrae House Historic Precinct).



*Joy Middleton, Guest Speaker Mary Jose
and Allan Woodman*

The guest speaker was Mary Jose (Fabric of Life) who spoke on 'Textile Conservation: saving treasures from the past'.

In introducing the speaker, Bill Wallace referred to the lifelong passion of Mary for the art of textile conservation and the worldwide recognition by several notable museums for her expertise.



Mary illustrated her talk with pictures showing the before and after effect of projects she had been involved with in Adelaide and overseas and described the very careful approach required in cleaning and washing of delicate textiles with repair as necessary. Her advice on proper storage of such valuable historic items was of general interest to the audience.

There was special interest in projects Mary had undertaken for Urrbrae House which include restoration of the original curtains in the Drawing Room and repair of the fabric and furnishings on the two 'squatters' chairs. Her recent restoration of the tapestry historic tapestry by Susan Dutch, as featured in our January newsletter, is well on the way to be returned to Urrbrae House for display.

Mary Jose is standing next to the Drawing Room curtains that she conserved some years ago.

Allan Woodman expressed thanks to Mary for her very interesting talk and presented her with a bottle of 'Tapestry' wine.

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Manager's Musings

Urrbrae House and Gardens - *South Aussie with Cosi*

As mentioned in the last newsletter, Andrew Costello ("Cosi") and his team visited the Waite Campus in October 2016 to film a segment for his *South Aussie with Cosi* program. The segment aired on Channel 9 on 28 April 2017 and Urrbrae House and the gardens were featured in the opening sequence. If you missed the segment on TV you can view it online at <http://www.thewaite.org/south-aussie-with-cosi>

Peter Waite Day

On Friday 12 May the Waite Research Institute hosted Peter Waite Day in the Urrbrae House gardens. Held each year on the Friday closest to Peter Waite's Birthday (May 9), the afternoon is an opportunity for people from across the campus organisations to come together over a few drinks and celebrate being part of the Waite community.

This year saw 12 teams competing for the annual Peter Waite Bocce Trophy. The final was played out in fading light with the "Building 20 Bullies" unable to overcome the "Fertiliser Mafia" from the School of Agriculture, Food and Wine Soils group, who successfully defended their title from 2016.

Queen's Birthday Honours

Our heartiest congratulations to Emeritus Professor Geoff Fincher and Dr Brian Richards on being made Officers (AO) of the Order of Australia in the Queen's Birthday Honours List. Geoff has been recognised for his distinguished service to science and education while Brian was recognised for his distinguished service to geotechnical engineering and soil science. Geoff and Brian have been long-time supporters of Urrbrae House and the Waite Arboretum, and Brian continues to volunteer with the Waite Arboretum and Urrbrae House gardens.

South Australia's History Festival and other events in May

May is always a hectic month for those of us who work and volunteer in museums and historic sites. Facilitating 17 events at Urrbrae House during May in addition to running our regular Schools' Program certainly kept us busy.

We were delighted with attendances at all of our "History Month" events. The historic Waite Campus tour booked out quickly and many on the tour commented that they had previously been unaware of the rich heritage of campus.



Louise and Anne



At our "The Door is Open at Urrbrae House" event on 7 May we welcomed some 300 visitors through our doors in three hours. Visitors really appreciated being able to chat individually to volunteers and staff, and I think all of us involved in the event felt we had talked ourselves out by the end of the afternoon.

Lynette, Allan and Lyn at "the Door is Open at Urrbrae House event"

As Allan has already mentioned, the Photo Scavenger Hunt on 22 May proved to be a great way to encourage families to explore the house and grounds. About 170 people came along during the afternoon and many parents asked when we were going to do another scavenger hunt because they really appreciated the fact that this was a free family-friendly event.



“Old trees, New Landscapes: Developing Ornamental Eucalypts”

Those who attended Dr Kate Delaporte’s talk on “Old trees, New Landscapes: Developing Ornamental Eucalypts” learnt a great deal about the challenging history of developing new tree varieties that will appeal to the nursery industry and consumers while benefitting the Urban Forest. It seems that nirvana for an ornamental eucalypt breeder is to be able to create a red lemon-scented flowering gum tree!



Guest speaker and Acting Curator of the Waite Arboretum, Dr Kate Delaporte with the Director of University Collections, Mirna Heruc, at Kate’s talk on the history of developing ornamental eucalypts.

The University of Adelaide’s Council

The University of Adelaide’s Council held its May meeting at Urrbrae House on the 30th. Councillors enjoyed an informal lunch in the Main Hall which provided them with an opportunity to meet some of the staff and students from the Waite Campus before the formal Council session was held in the Ballroom.

South Australian Agricultural, Food and Wine Showcase

On 17 May we welcomed attendees of the South Australian Agricultural, Food and Wine Showcase (organized by the Adelaide Convention Bureau) to Urrbrae House for a networking lunch and presentations by industry leaders about the state’s world leading research themes and innovations led by the Waite Research Institute. I was delighted to be able to share our history with visitors from diverse agricultural industries across the globe.

Research Funding Success at the Waite

We were delighted to learn earlier this month that Professor Vladimir Jiranek from the School of Agriculture, Food and Wine on the Waite Campus had been awarded \$4.46 million for the Australian Research Council (ARC) Training Centre for Innovative Wine Production to develop new technologies and efficiencies to lift competitiveness and the sustainability of the wine industry. Congratulations to Vlad and his team.

What's What at Waite

This year the Waite Research Institute has organized a series of monthly informal facilities tours for the Waite community. The purpose of the free tours is to cultivate informal engagement among Waite people from all partner organisations and improve awareness of facilities, services and research across the Waite, while having some fun and meeting others from the Waite Campus community. Kate Delaporte, as Acting Curator of the Waite Arboretum, and I provided tours of the Arboretum and Urrbrae House in May and June as part of the series. Future tours will be listed on the Waite webpage at <http://www.thewaite.org>

SALA Exhibition 2017

Urrbrae House will be hosting an art exhibition "Nature of My Skin" by Jutta Fiebig as part of the South Australian Living Artists (SALA) from 13-27 August 2017. Jutta's beautiful and often delicate artworks explore aspects of trees as landscapes and nature portraits. Her work includes expressionist, watercolour and multi-media paintings. The exhibition will be launched by long-standing Friend of Urrbrae House and the Member for Waite, Martin Hamilton-Smith MP on Sunday, 13 August at 2.30pm. While the exhibition is on, Urrbrae House will have extended opening hours and will be open to visitors every day except Friday from 11am to 4pm.

Lynette Zeitz
Manager, Urrbrae House Historic Precinct

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State Library of South Australia has recently digitised Edwin Hodder's
*The history of South Australia from its foundation to the year of its jubilee : with a
chronological summary of all the principal events of interest up to date*
(London : Sampson Low, Marston, 1893).

You can now access the work in two volumes online at in the SLSA
catalogue: <http://www.catalog.slsa.sa.gov.au:80/record=b1290169~S9>

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Social media

Urrbrae House now has both a Facebook page and an Instagram account.

Lynette regularly posts to both of those sites about happenings during the week and puts up some "Throwback Thursdays" where she occasionally shares lovely photographs from the archives.

So if you haven't done so already, you might like to "Follow" Urrbrae House on Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/urrbraehouse> and/or "Like" Urrbrae House on Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/urrbraehouse>

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The Twilight Concert in the ballroom of Urrbrae House Monday, 1 May 2017, was another successful night.

Beethoven's Cello III

Janis Laurs – cello

Michael Ierace – piano

'Beethoven is not into trivia' said Janis Laurs, when introducing the sonata for piano and cello, No. 5 in D major, op. 102, which he performed with the pianist Michael Ierace at Urrbrae House on Monday, 1 May, 2017.

Though trivia was not of interest to Beethoven, he was able to have fun, which we enjoyed in some of the 12 variations on the theme 'Ein Madchen oder Weibchen' from Mozart's opera The Magic Flute. These variations date from 1796, before Beethoven's life was darkened by deafness as well as by financial and family difficulties. The sonata No.1 in F major, Op. 5 no. 1, was also written in 1796.

The distinguished British cellist Steven Isserlis has said that to play Beethoven's five cello sonatas is to trace his life story. We can glimpse what this means by hearing, as we did at Urrbrae House, first the early F major sonata, and later the final D major sonata, No. 5, op.102, which was written in 1815. When writing the first sonata in 1796, Beethoven was carving out a career for himself as a virtuoso pianist, which is reflected in this composition by its many bravura passages for the piano, with the cello as obbligato. This sonata, along with its fellow in G minor, Op. 5 No. 2, were lightweight and popular, being recognisably classical, with just enough novelty in the form of sudden dynamic changes and unforeseen accents, to excite the audience.

The D major sonata, on the other hand, was written in 1815, at the beginning of what is generally termed Beethoven's "late" period of creative life. By then Beethoven was 45 and almost totally deaf. The deafness meant he had had to give up performing as a source of income. He had suffered a number of ill-fated romantic attractions and remained unattached. His brother Carl had tuberculosis and was in Ludwig's care through 1815, dying in November of that year. Carl left a young son, Karl, who became the subject of a prolonged custody battle between his mother and Ludwig, involving costly litigation. Despite these setbacks Beethoven at about that time began what has become known as his third or final period of creativity. Someone has written that the two cello sonatas, Op. 102, were the gateway to this new world.

In the D major sonata we no longer hear the relatively gentle *sforzandi* of the 1796 sonatas, which so pleasantly surprised us. Now Beethoven takes us into unknown territory with his uncompromising pounding of the accents. This sonata is the only one of the five with a fully developed slow movement, and this movement embarks on emotional exploration which hints at the greater depths which Beethoven was to reach in following works such as the great *Hammerklavier* piano sonata and the late string quartets.



For me the final fugue of this work brings goosebumps of excitement. It is like a wonderful, intricate, filigree net enclosing the whole work in joyful celebration, leading us, ready or not, into total satisfaction and rest.

Thank you, Michael and Janis.

P.S. The fortepiano for which Beethoven wrote the cello sonatas lacked the volume and resonance of present-day pianos such as the Urrbrae House Yamaha. Since the days of fortepianos there has always been a question of appropriate balance between the instruments. With a modern piano one must not expect to hear the sounds heard in 1815.

Margaret Neate

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The Friends of Urrbrae House welcome these new members:

Christine and Lothar Bender

Erica Boyle

Susan and Brian Dutch

Sylvia Fanning

Pauline Green

Sarah and Michael Livingston

Margaret Nichols

Mair and Dario Priori

Elizabeth and Mark Sheppard

Tonia Twomey

Andrew Walters

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Portrush Road – why the name?

The Mail (Adelaide) p14: Saturday 28 July 1928.

F. Acraman, Thorngate, writes: — In the interesting article dealing with Birksgate the home of Mr and Mrs. T. E. Barr Smith, it was stated that Portrush Road was so named because there was a rush along it to the Port when a ship was sighted in the early days.

That is not correct. Portrush Road was named by my grandfather, Mr. Nathaniel A. Knox, after Portrush, in the north of Ireland (near the Giants Causeway), where he had his home before he came to South Australia. He returned, to Portrush subsequently.

My grandfather owned land near Greenhill Road, which he had subdivided many years ago, and named Knoxville using his surname as a prefix (now Glenside). He then named Portrush Road for the reason given above while family names* were used in Bevington road, Sydney Street, and other thoroughfares.

*Nathaniel had a brother named William Bevington and a sister named Sydney.