

Newsletter May 2012



The Friends of Urrbrae House

Urrbrae House, University of Adelaide, Waite Campus, PMB#1 GLEN OSMOND, SA 5064. Tel 8303 7497

Editor Vicki Cheshire

The Friends of Urrbrae House 20th Annual General Meeting 30th May 2012 Guest Speaker Valmai Hankel

This free event is a great opportunity to visit Urrbrae House on the 20th anniversary of the Friends of Urrbrae House, and hear guest speaker, Valmai Hankel. Renowned wine writer, horse breeder and President of the Friends of the State Library, Valmai is also an intrepid outback traveller.

Dates for your Diary

May 21st Vivente Concert (5.30 for 6)

May 24th Manager's Morning Tea 10.30

May 30th FOUH AGM all welcome

(5.30 for 6)

June 18th Twilight Concert (5.30 for 6)

Frederick the Great – Musician, Warrior & King

July 16th Fireside Stories (5.30 for 6)

July 29th Onkaparinga Harmony Concert
(3pm)

August 16th Art Wine and Cheese 2 - 5

August 20th Vivente Concert (5.30 for 6)

August 30th Manager's Morning Tea 10.30

September 10th Twilight Concert

(5.30 for 6)

Oct 3rd Teddy Bears' Picnic

Oct 22nd Vivente Concert

Nov 15th Manager's Morning Tea 10.30

5.30pm Light refreshments

6.00pm **VERY SHORT** business meeting
to be followed by

**Valmai Hankel : "SAND AND PAPER:
exploration and travels in the outback"**

7.15 Close

For catering purposes please RSVP by 25th May to Peggy Rowe
on 82771426 or peggy.rowe@bigpond.com

We look forward to seeing you there.



Valmai Hankel from the Stock Journal, 28 June 2009

Notice from the Editor and Secretary

Future editions of this newsletter will be emailed to those who have indicated they would like it in this format. If you haven't done so already, please contact the secretary Peggy Rowe (details above). Thank you to all who can receive emails, you save us time and postage costs. Those still on the postal list will receive their newsletter as usual.

President's Report

I am sad to report the death of another long term member of the Friends and former committee member, Jean Waterhouse. In addition to serving on the committee Jean was also a volunteer at Urrbrae House. Jean was a member of the Collection Management Group who met every week to document the scientific collection of objects, photographs and archives relating to the history of the Waite Institute.

Jean also played a role in identifying people featured in a photograph taken at a gathering in the house, hosted by the then Director of the Waite, James Prescott. Jean worked at the Waite as a laboratory assistant in the 1940s; she attended the event and remembered it well. The photo will be framed and displayed in the ball room and the Friends have made a contribution to the cost.

The Friends have also purchased a water colour by James Ashton of a scene in Victor Harbor in memory of the late Emeritus Professor John Prescott. There have been a number of water colours on loan and displayed in the dining room but some have now been returned. This is a similar work which will be formally owned by the house.

Our Annual General Meeting is coming up on Wednesday May 30th which includes a talk by the very popular speaker, Valmai Hankel. Members have all received a flyer with details and are encouraged to bring guests. Please RSVP as we will be serving drinks and nibbles before the meeting.

Two very interesting events are coming up which feature former Waite staff. On July 16th committee member Hugh McClelland will be entertaining us with fireside stories. Later in the year on August 18th our art, cheese and wine event will feature woodwork displays by Tom White and Malcolm Oades. Watch your mail box for flyers on these events.

Finally, enjoy the many events across the State organised for History month and I look forward to seeing you at our winter events with a roaring fire in the main hall.

Yvonne Routledge. President, Friends of Urrbrae House

Fundraiser

The FOUH are promoting a cakeless cake sale. For those who can remember the ad from the 70's and 80's for "the drink you're having when you're not having a drink", we are likewise raising funds by 'not having a cake stall'. It's a fun way to have a fundraiser, and there is no baking involved! *Please see the flier enclosed.*



A major project being considered for some time now is the refurbishment of a downstairs room to be decorated in the style of a bedroom in the 1890's Victorian era. FOUH are supporting this venture and your donation would be much appreciated. Please phone Vicki Cheshire 8370 0032 for information.

F.O.W.C.R. talk and A.G.M.

FOWCR are please to invite you to an illustrated talk by Andrew Compton, one of Adelaide's most knowledgeable and experienced people working in revegetation and bushcare. He will draw on his lifetime working experiences and share his practical skills developed in the ecological restoration of his own patch of grassy woodland at Mt Barker. The talk will be preceeded by a brief AGM.

Wednesday 23rd May 7.30 – 9.30 Please contact Jennifer Gardner 8313 7405

A Night to Remember

RMS Titanic, the White Star liner on its maiden voyage from Southampton to New York struck an iceberg and sank to the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean on 15 April, 1912. Carrying 2223 souls, 1514 perished.

At 46,000 tons the ship was the largest and most luxurious ever built at the time and with a series of watertight compartments was said to be virtually unsinkable. With 5 compartments flooded it sank within 4 hours of the collision. It had only enough lifeboats for half of the full complement of passengers and crew.

Legends arose about the tragedy not least being the last hours of the 8 man ship's Orchestra all of whom died. Moving from

the First Class Lounge to the Boat Deck under the leadership of Wallace Hartley the Orchestra played on 'for the solace of the passengers' as the ship started to sink from the bow. It is said that the last piece it played was "Nearer, My God to Thee".

On 26 March, The Vivente Ensemble under the leadership of Minas Berberyman [violin] movingly commemorated the role of the Titanic Orchestra by playing selections from the "White Star Line Songbook" in the Ballroom of Urrbrae House. Pieces included Elgar's 'Pomp and Circumstance March', Scott Joplin's 'The Easy Winners', Sullivan's 'Three Little Maids', Souza's 'Stars and Stripes Forever', Strauss' 'Blue Danube Waltz' and concluded with 'Nearer, My God to Thee'.

The musical arrangements were made by Minas who was joined by his wife Erna [violin], Michael Robertson [viola], Cameron Waters [cello] and Harley Gray [bass]. It was indeed a night to remember.

In a connection with the tragedy, the designs of the Staterooms of the Titanic were by the Company of Aldam Heaton who advised on the interior decoration of Urrbrae House.



Erna Berberyman, Minas Berberyman, Michael Robertson, Cameron Waters, Harley Gray.



Hugh McClelland



Would you like to join the **Urrbrae House Book Club?**

Meetings are held at 1pm on the fourth Monday of the month, for an hour.
It is a great way to keep your 'popular reading' updated!

Books are provided from Burnside Library at a minimal yearly fee, are given to you at the meeting and returned for you – How convenient!

New members are most welcome.

Discussions are informal, and often surprising!

Transport can be arranged.

For information please contact Lynette Zeitz 8303 7425

Velvet Motion

Dean Newcomb, Principal Clarinet, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra opened a concert in Urrbrae House on 30 April with a solo performance of a suite by French composer Andre Jolivet [1905-74]. This relatively unknown composer to Australian audiences was fully devoted to French culture and musical thought and wrote a wide range of chamber music, vocal music, ballets, concertos and sacred music. Noted for his attention to acoustic atonality Dean's rendition demonstrated his understanding and full technical command of this demanding music.



Dean Newcomb, Janet Anderson, Emma Perkins, Michael Robertson, David Sharp.

In complete contrast, Dean was then joined by fellow ASO members Janet Anderson and Emma Perkins [violins], ASO viola player Michael Robertson and cellist, David Sharp. David at 16 had been the youngest ever member of the Auckland Symphony Orchestra. The group gave a stunning and disciplined performance of the Clarinet Quintet in B flat major by the Romantic German composer Carl Maria von Weber [1786-1826]. This prolific composer was noted for his subtle orchestration and colourful combination of sounds often based on German folklore and songs. Possibly his best known piece is the Invitation to the Dance scored for piano and subsequently orchestrated by Berlioz [violins], ASO viola player Michael Robertson and cellist, David Sharp. David at 16 had been the youngest ever member of the Auckland Symphony Orchestra. The group gave a stunning and disciplined performance of the Clarinet Quintet in B flat major by the Romantic Berlioz.

Led by Dean the ensemble brought to life this marvellous 4 movement quintet - considerably enhanced by the acoustics of the Ballroom, Urrbrae House.

The concert was arranged by Vivente Music.

Hugh McClelland

Gift of £10,000 For Chemical Research - A Friend's Example

This was the heading on an item in The Register (Adelaide) on July 19 1927. The item continued:

Mr John Melrose, of Uloomoo, has given £10,000, to be devoted to the building of a chemical laboratory at the Waite Research Institute.

In a covering letter, Mr. Melrose said: *"My old friend Peter Waite evidently saw that in the near future applied science would be more necessary than in the past. I want to help along the good start he gave"*.

This was followed by an item in the same paper on 21 July 1927 in which Dr Richardson, the first Director of the Institute, expressed his appreciation.

Naturally Dr. Richardson, who has charge of the institute, was delighted with the announcement. In the course of a chat with a representative of The Register on Wednesday, he said: — *'The magnificent gift of Mr. Melrose for laboratory purposes at the Waite Institute, will be of immense help in the development of the*



research work in progress in agriculture and allied subjects at the institute. This generous donation will enable the first group of buildings to be erected, and will greatly facilitate the investigations in progress.

The staff of the institute who, from the inception, have been working in temporary laboratories, fitted up in the coach house and stables, highly appreciate Mr. Melrose's public-spirited action, and earnestly hope that the results of its combined efforts will completely justify his generosity. The buildings that will be erected with the funds provided, will bear his name, and will be a perpetual reminder to the staff of the kindly assistance which the donor has given to help forward the cause of agriculture research, which was initiated in such a noble manner by his friend, the late Mr. Peter Waite'.

The item continued:



'Rufus' writes: — As was only to be expected, there was a general expression of gratitude by people in the city and country on Wednesday for Mr. John Melrose's splendid gift of £10,000 to the Waite Institute for research work. John Melrose is a man of big horizons and high ideals. He is one of those pastoralists who, like Barr Smith and Peter Waite, has had great faith in South Australia, and having prospered as a result of that faith and commendable enterprise, feels it a duty and a privilege to do something worthwhile in return for his country. If Peter Waite were alive, I can imagine him, a man of few words, in his simple direct way saying, 'Well done, John'.

Sir John Melrose (1860 -1938) like Peter Waite was a very successful pastoralist at the Uloomoo and Booboorowie stations in the mid-north of South Australia. He experimented with the use of different sheep breeds importing the first Dorset sheep to

Australia in 1895 with the aim of producing the best fat lambs for the English market.

About 1898 he began to go loose his eyesight, taught himself braille and made a frame to enable him to write his own cheques. He wore small, round, metal-rimmed spectacles and developed heightened hearing and touch. The latter he used to assess his stud sheep and their wool. By 1901 he had lost all sight but still managed his property, with his daughter Margaret Lily as constant companion. He contributed articles to stock journals typewritten with his own hand.

In April 1929 the Melrose laboratory was opened and in the same year the family of the late John Darling made a gift of £10,000 for a laboratory for soil research. When this building was opened in September 1930 it linked with the Melrose laboratory to form the central core of the distinctive Waite Building.

Contributed by Bill Wallace in appreciation of having worked in the Melrose laboratory between 1966 – 2005.



Events to look forward to:

May 21st Twilight Vivente Concert "Kreisleriana" with Natsuko Yoshimoto (Concertmaster of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra) on violin and Kristian Chong on piano. Refreshments served prior to the concert. Seats are limited. Bookings to viventemusic@yahoo.com.au or phone 82966851 / 0401021065

May 23rd (7.30) FOWCR Illustrated talk by Andrew Compton and AGM

May 24th Manager's Morning Tea 10.30 in the beautiful dining room, a chance to catch up on events and ongoing activities at Urrbrae House. Join us for an informal discussion; transport can be arranged. Please phone Lynette Zeitz 8303 7425

May 30th F.O.U.H. Annual General Meeting 5.30 for 6 All are welcome. A short meeting followed by a very entertaining talk by Valmai Hankel: "SAND AND PAPER: exploration and travels in the outback" for bookings please contact Peggy Rowe on 82771426 or peggy.rowe@bigpond.com

June 18th Twilight Concert 5.30 for 6 **Frederick the Great – Musician, Warrior & King.** Period instrument performers, Ensemble Galante will delight and enthrall playing music by composers of the Prussian Court, including JS Bach, CPE Bach, and King Frederick. This will be held in the ballroom, so *please note* that this is downstairs and there is **NO DISABILITY ACCESS**, attendees must be able to manage stairs. Please contact Peggy Rowe on 82771426 or peggy.rowe@bigpond.com

July 29th Onkaparinga Harmony Concert 3pm (flier sent closer to the date).

August 16th Art Wine and Cheese featuring woodwork displays by Tom White and Malcolm Oades (flier sent close to the date).

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

We welcome the following members who have recently joined as Friends:

Prof Allen Kerr
Keith and Sue Langley