



JUNE 2021

Friends' Newsletter

*A Quarterly Newsletter Publication of The Friends of the State
Library of South Australia*

A note from the President

Angela Bannon

Ave atque vale - Hail and farewell

It is with a heavy heart that we acknowledge the passing of Elizabeth Hambly. An Honours French graduate, she worked as the head of a school library and a French teacher for many years. Since joining the Friends on retirement, she has been on the Australiana Publications sub-committee, the Program standing committee, and was a guide at the State Library. We will miss her gentle humour, her kindly advice, and her wise observations. She is deeply mourned by her husband of 56 years, Peter, and her family.

Leah Cronin, the familiar and welcoming face of our Friends' office, is leaving to take up a position with Cancer Care. She has been with us for over three years, and we wish her well in her future work. She has contributed in a positive way, and her friendly smile has been a valuable asset to the Friends and the Library.

We are very pleased to welcome Jayne French as our new Executive Assistant. When you're next in the city, do pop into the Friends' Rooms and introduce yourself. Jayne brings with her a wealth of experience in various spheres and a strong love of books and libraries! We look forward to getting to know each other and working together.

The Friends have made a contribution to the acquisition of a number of uncoloured Gould lithographs depicting Australian birds. The purchase of these was arranged by our Library many months ago, but due to the Covid situation they could not be accessed in London. Now they have arrived and will make a significant addition to our collection of Australiana prints.

South Australia's History Festival has absorbed our time and energy over the past month or so – in a good way! There are reports elsewhere in this newsletter and many thanks must go to the dozens of our volunteers who helped at the events, working to raise both funds and our profile! Now to think about what we can do at next year's History Festival...

We are still happy to receive donations of quality books in reasonable condition for our Bookshop in the Friends' rooms. A Board member can pick them up from your home if you live in the city or the inner suburbs.

Happy reading,
Angela

Friends

STATE LIBRARY
South Australia

Friends of the State Library of SA - GPO Box 419 Adelaide SA 5001

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Books, books, books

Throughout the month of May, the Friends of the State Library held a special book sale to help celebrate History Month. The array of books available was impressive. We had a special collection of items from the Friends book-binding group, which attracted much interest and admiration for their work. In addition, there was a large group of collectibles and antiquarian books, as well as our Australiana Publications with many hand-bound editions.

With the extended opening hours we needed many Friends from our membership group to offer their time and expertise to cover all of the shifts involved. Several took on multiple shifts to ensure that someone was always in attendance.

One woman spent about half an hour looking through the shelves and found a book she had read many years ago and had laughed all the way through it. It cost her \$2 and it made her day.

Others spent \$100 on an antiquarian book and thought it a great purchase.

I enjoyed my chats with our visitors, helping them to find books or talking about favourite authors.

Many people had come from Melbourne to visit the Clarice Beckett exhibition at the Art Gallery and took the opportunity to visit the State Library and to visit us.

Fund-raising is vital to the Friends and a substantial amount was raised for our on-going work in supporting the State Library of SA.

Thanks are extended to the committee members who spent many hours organising the thousands of books, pricing and sorting those for our special sale.

Thanks also to the committee members and Friends who willingly volunteered to fill the many shifts over the four weeks of this event. Well done to all involved.

Organisations like ours survive and thrive due to the generosity and commitment of volunteers.

- *Allison Murchie*

NEW Friends opening hours

Monday - Friday

10am - 2pm

Extended State Library hours

coming soon on Mondays,

Tuesdays and Sundays

Gift of Gould Plates



The Friends latest gift to the State Library has been a selection of seven uncoloured plates for John Gould's celebrated *Birds of Australia, 1840-1848*, sourced by Library staff from the London rare book and print dealer, Henry Sotheran Limited, established in 1761. In particular, Sara Stodart undertook a great deal of research to identify plates of birds specific to South Australia or found here, demonstrating the work of Edward Lear, Elizabeth Gould and John Gould himself. Amongst the seven birds depicted in fine lithographic detail are our rare Hooded Plover (or Hooded Dotterel), the Fairy Penguin and the Red-backed Parrot. These unpublished Gould plates reflect a step in the publishing process between the artwork and the final product and enhance the status of our State Library's nationally-recognised Gould collection.



Books in my Life by Stephen Scammell

Do we choose books which reflect our lives or vice versa? Stephen's presentation could be either. From 'Legal Tomes' to true adventure in *Midnight Express*, through the modern history of Turkey and several travel autobiographies, his unusual career changes produced incredible activities: tourism organisation in Turkey, elephant conservation in Zimbabwe and yachting promotion, before returning to Australia via General Motors Holden employment. Then Queensland tourism development preceded 25 years in mining companies.

Stephen's altruistic commitment to humanity, possibly stimulated by his daughter-in-law's career in neurosurgery plus reading *The Century of the Surgeon*, *The Body – A Guide for Occupants*, and Henry Marsh's *Do No Harm* and *Admissions: A Life in Brain Surgery*, is obvious by his initiation of a worldwide training program to upskill GPs in skin cancer detection and treatment.

Africa features strongly in his reading list. *King Leopold's Ghost* and *Dark Star Safari* expose the civil rights abuses of colonial and modern years and *Shake Hands with the Devil* is a heart wrenching read for anyone. Back in South Australia, Stephen champions, from their biographies, *A Most Surprising Man - The Life of Victor Marra Newland*, and Sir George Hubert Wilkins' *The Last Explorer*. Stephen is the inaugural Chair of the Wilkins Foundation. I believe his last-mentioned book, *Against All Odds*, documenting the rescue of the boys and their coach trapped in a Thailand cave, is a 'must-read' for all Australians.

One selection amuses me - Hemingway's *The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber*. Was it chosen to fill in time on a long flight, or for its obscure ending? That would appeal to Stephen's legal mind.

Thank you, Stephen, for sharing your vast and various life experiences over considerable decades. How did you achieve so much, as well as raise a family?

- *Barbara Fraser*

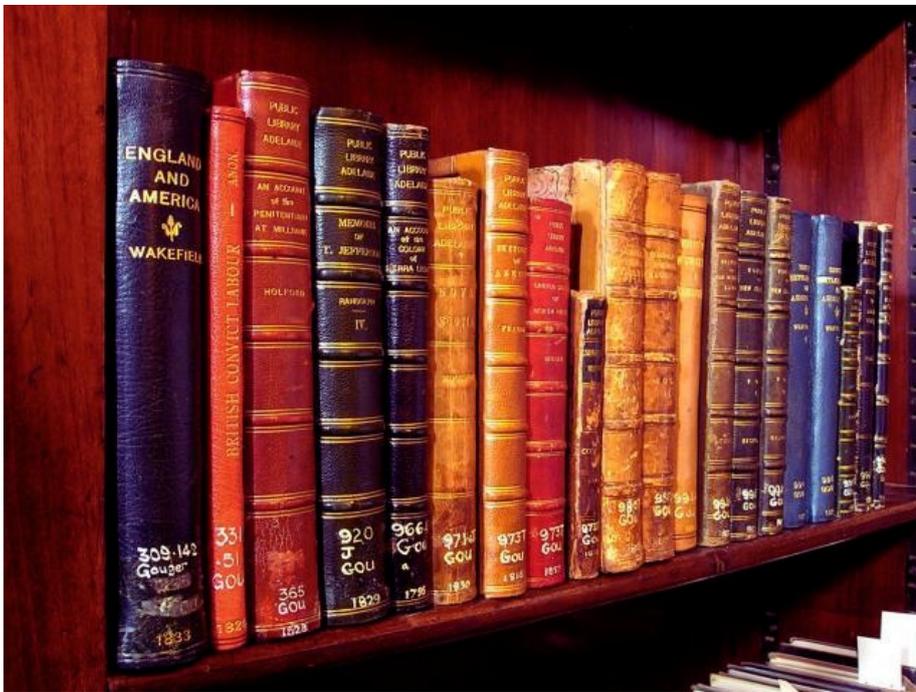
Welcome and Farewell

We *welcome* into Membership:

Brett Thompson
Ian Cody & family
Margaret Scheil
Nicole Starbuck
Wendy Wright

We *farewell* the following Members of the Friends:

Elizabeth Hambly
John McEntee



Books in my Life by Mandy Macky

Just as Mandy's Grade 2 teacher had held her rapt attention when reading Tolkien's 'Hobbit' to the class, so too did Mandy captivate her audience when she outlined some of the many highs, lows and changes experienced over her last 30 years as franchise owner and manager of Dymocks' bookstore.

Here are a few highlights:

- Most memorable, and something that could definitely not happen today, was when more than a hundred young people had a sleepover in the store. This was to enable them to be present at the worldwide, synchronised launching of one of the titles in J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series.

- \$200,000 per year was lost to book theft; in pockets and bags, up sleeves, under tops and down socks.
- Difficulties of competing against online providers such as Booktopia, with its \$200 million profit in 2020.
- Science Fiction dominance is now giving way to an upsurge in Fantasy.

Mandy concluded by mentioning some of her own recent reading favourites:

- *The soul of a woman* by Isabel Allende
- *The cat's table* by Michael Ondaatje
- *The tiger's wife* by Tea Obreht
- *Rules for visiting* by Jessica Kane
- *Burial Rites* by Hannah Kent
- *Insomniac City* by Bill Hayes
- *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse* by Charlie Mackey.

- Annette Chalmers

2021 Events

POP-UP BOOK SALE

Weekdays only

Monday to Friday from 10am-2pm

July 2021 –

A TUESDAY TALK – Wisden
SPEAKER: Bernard Whimpress
Tuesday, 6 July 2021 at 11am-12pm

LIVE AND LEARN –

Marvellous Maps, Charts Our History and Tells Our Story
SPEAKER: Carolyn Spooner
Tuesday, 20 July 2021 at 11am-12pm

August 2021 –

A TUESDAY TALK – Books in my Life
SPEAKER: The Campbells of Anlaby, Janet and Sue Scarfe
Tuesday, 3 August 2021 at 11am-12pm

VISIT - North Adelaide Baptist Church, Tynte St with an historian and organist present
Thursday, 26 August 2021 at 11am

September 2021 –

A TUESDAY TALK – Books in my Life
SPEAKER: Robert Bloomfield
Tuesday, 7 September 2021 at 11am-12pm

VISIT –

Adelaide Oval Sculptures Tour - conducted by Bernard Whimpress
Thursday, 23 September 2021 at 11am

Please refer to our website for updates and future events.



A literary stroll around Adelaide

On Wednesday, 21 April 2021, an overcast but dry day, eighteen of us set out on foot, led by our hard-working tour guide, Graeme Fanning of Down-to-Earth Tours. Having assembled in the Institute Building courtyard, our first stop was in the Mortlock to view what is now called the Gouger Collection. SA's first Colonial Secretary brought with him a trunkful of books; the remainder of this collection has been widely dispersed, but one aim of the Friends is to replace missing items to complete the original trunkful.

We next met by Robbie Burns' statue, to hear about the still-very-active Caledonian Society, about Wakefield himself, Catherine Spence and our first published South Australian authors, Robert and Mary Thomas. We then strolled along North Terrace, up King William Street and along Grenfell Street, with frequent pauses for the fruits of Graeme's research. We heard about the locations of now-defunct publishers, Rigbys and Wiggs, but also of the local activities of CJ Dennis and Nancy Cato and our more contemporary literary luminaries like Max Fatchen and Max Harris, along with Mary Martin's Bookshop, once situated on the first floor of the Da Costa Building.

Our tour ended back on North Terrace outside the Mitchell Building, the genesis of Adelaide University. We had spent a very pleasant 2 hours being alerted to details of our cultural heritage which we can so easily gloss over or fail to appreciate as we drive about.

We were very grateful and appreciative of Graeme Fanning's learning and preparation for our tour and hope he will be able to conduct similar ones for other groups in the future. Anyone wishing to learn of other tours, please contact Graeme at <https://down-to-earth-tours.com>.

- *Trevor Grant*

From the Executive Assistant

Jayne French

Hello I am Jayne, your new Friends' Executive Assistant!

Welcome also to our new Treasurer, Brett Thompson.

With Winter upon us, the Friends' room is feeling lovely and warm and you will be surrounded by books to peruse and purchase, so please feel free to come in and say hello. We are now open 5 days, Monday to Friday 10am to 2pm. As you will see on the previous pages, our program is full with exciting events and tours for July to September so get your tickets very soon!

We look forward to seeing you at these events, either as a helper or an attendee.

Thank you again for your ongoing support of the Friends.

