

SALISBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC. NEWSLETTER

Celebrating over 40 years of "keeping alive the history of Salisbury"



SEPTEMBER 2024



Salisbury & District Historical Society Inc.
3 Ann St Salisbury

Museum Open— 2pm-4pm on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month
Water Wheel Open—2pm-4pm on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month
These times may vary due to long weekends and school holidays.
The Museum and Water Wheel visits can be arranged at other times,
please contact the President on 0450191792

*We acknowledging the Kurna people, the Traditional Owners of the land
on which we live today
We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging*

Upcoming 2024 Program

Sunday, 8th September-12noon

3 Ann St Salisbury

Picnic on the lawn

Wednesday, 16th October-7.00pm

3 Ann St Salisbury

A.G.M. and Show and Tell

Sunday, 1st December-12:30pm

Christmas Lunch-TBA



*Our Water Wheel & Folk Museums
are open on Sundays 2-4pm on*

- . Sept 22nd,*
- . Oct 20th*
- . Nov 3rd, 17th.*

Report from the President – Simon Hales

Greetings; I trust you have been able to keep warm and away from the winter colds.

I'd like to start by acknowledging those members who kindly volunteer to man our Museum and Water Wheel each month. During the winter months, it can be quiet a cold task and isn't always over run with visitors, but occasionally it's well worth the effort.

Since our last Newsletter we have had two general meetings.

On the 17th of July we had a daytime meeting; I believe that it was well received. As a result, the committee will try to include at least one daytime meeting in next year's program.

On the first meeting on the 19th of June we heard from Bob Samson talk about the National Railway Museum being the largest undercover railway museum in Australia and some pictures of Salisbury's railway network.

Our second meeting on the 17th of July was a well presented talk by Don Loffler.

Mr Loffler spoke about the early days of Holden Cars in Australia and why they came to be in Australia. Following the talk a great social lunch was had at the Salisbury Hotel.

Just a reminder that our financial year ended at the end of August so our next meeting in October, will be our AGM along with a 'Show & Tell'. This also means member's subscriptions are now due and we appreciate and look forward to your ongoing support. Hope to see you all at the AGM on 16th October as important topics will be discussed.

Editor's Stop Press Bunyip Friday 4th January 1918

"A sensational blaze took place on Saturday evening .. When a large haystack of between 350 and 400 tons burst into fire. The stack stood within a few chains from the Salisbury Railway Station and several dwellings are in close proximity. Fire-fighters speedily gathered on the scene, but could do nothing except turn their attention to the residents homes lest they ignited through the heat. The stack was made from last and the previous year's hay, and was badly infested with rats. As the fire gained in volume, the rodents ran in every direction and this was an opportunity for boys and dogs that could not be missed. The fire burnt fiercely throughout the night, and watchmen are still stationed about the heap which is constantly bursting into flame, although several days have lapsed. With a heavy wind to spring up there is still danger to the residents. The hay was the property of Messrs Norman & Co.. Nothing is known as to the origin of the fire."

Our Historical Society volunteers roster to open the Folk Museum and the Water Wheel Museum on a monthly basis.

If any one would like to become involved in this activity we invite you to contact us on "salisburyhistory706@gmail.com" or the President on 0450191792

EARLY ELIZABETH

The development of modern industry began as South Australia climbed from the traumatic Depression years. It had been the State hardest hit by unemployment, with the state almost totally dependent on primary industry. Premier Thomas Playford began planning and working to industrialise South Australia in 1938. To help with the success of this was the Government establishment of the Housing Trust. This was to provide housing close to factories and businesses.

Mr Playford's attention was first drawn to the Salisbury area as a possible area for development, which he put forward to the Commonwealth Government. Farmland north-west of Salisbury and the little village of Penfield were then taken over by the Commonwealth Government who began setting up a munitions factory in 1940. The final deciding factor in the choice of this area was the availability of water from the Barossa Reservoir pipeline.



In 1949 the S.A. Housing Trust began development of the new Subdivision of Salisbury North, and by the mid 1950s the first houses were being occupied. In March of 1950 The Trust produced a report into land requirements for a ten year building program, it pointed out they would need to build 26,000 rental homes during the next ten years.

On May 4th 1950 the Premier, Thomas Playford announced that The Housing Trust had purchased over 3,000 acres of farmland between Salisbury and Smithfield for the establishment of a new town. Land was purchased from some well known local families such as Fatchen, Harvey, Burdett, Judd and Guerin, who are still remembered today by the road names throughout Elizabeth.

On the 2nd June 1950 the Housing Trust members met with the chairman and councillors of Salisbury and Munno Para to discuss tentative plans for the development of a new town. From three possibilities the choice was made on a self-contained satellite town. The location north of Adelaide had all requirements, plenty of land available, transport, rail and road ran through the site, water from the South Para dam

passed close by and a sewerage treatment works at Bolivar that had been built earlier. Other factors that were important was that some industry had already been established in the area and also its nearness to the port.

The pioneering families left their crops and homes to the surveyors and builders marking the beginning of a great change for the whole district. The quiet rural life was ending and the spread of suburbs and factories and the eventual site of the satellite city became inevitable.



The Housing Trust was responsible for the layout and detailed planning of the new city, factory areas were set aside completely separate from the residences. Playing fields were allocated so every child was within walking distance to kick a football or fly a kite.

Another major decision was from the Electricity Trust to put their cables underground, one of the few places in South Australia without stobie poles and overhead wires.



The first houses were commenced at Elizabeth South in August 1954, and by November 1955 150 had been completed. The Housing Trust wanted to call the town Playford but Mr Playford was totally opposed to this, so he was asked to choose a name. After some thought he arrived at the name of 'Elizabeth', obtaining permission from the

Queen to use her name. November 16th was inauguration day, a crowd on the corner of Ridley Road and Goodman Road, named after the first chairman of S.A. Housing Trust, waited to hear Mr Playford announce the name of the 'New Town' as it had been called up until now. It received a mixed reaction, but Mr Playford thought that migrants coming from England to a strange new land would feel welcomed by a city with a familiar and reassuring name. The Royal theme continued later with Windsor Green, Philip Highway and Prince Charles Walk.

On November the 17th the day after the inauguration Mr Cartlegde, Chairman of the Housing Trust, welcomed 78 families to Elizabeth and handed them their keys. The Pinnegar family were the first Housing Trust tenants. The transformation from dusty plains to tree lined streets was achieved by the planting of many native trees and by also providing free trees and shrubs to the new residents to help establish their gardens.



By the end of June 1956, 362 houses had been let and 35 sold. There was also a group of six shops on Goodman Road to serve the residents. It was announced that during the year General Motors Holden had purchased 230 acres, the building of the GMH factory commenced in

May 1958 and within 12 months the first production parts were being made. Industrial development was going ahead.

The Trust placed a great deal of importance on the Town Centre as the heart of the city. The first stage was opened on 17th November 1960 by Premier Sir Thomas Playford. It further developed in a series of stages over the years. The new pedestrian walkway shopping centres a fore runner of the malls of today.

The Elizabeth Public Library was opened on 4th December 1957 by Sir Thomas Playford, which had been financed by the Salisbury District Council, and subsidised by the government. It was the first free library in the state other than the Adelaide Public Library.



The Housing trust made available 20 acres of land to build The Lyell McEwin Hospital which was opened on 22nd April 1959 at Elizabeth Vale, with 45 beds. The first Matron was Mrs Margaret Banwell who had been in charge of the now superseded Salisbury and District Hospital.

The town grew very quickly and by the end of 1960 Elizabeths' population had grown to 15,350 and it was the biggest town in the state apart from Adelaide.



On 21st February 1963 Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh visited Elizabeth. They were welcomed by the chairman of the Housing Trust Mr J.P. Cartledge and the Queen unveiled Mr G Smedley's fountain sculpture, and turned on a gold tap to start the flow of water. She also inspected the dancing figures by Hubert Yencesse, a gift

from the people of Hemel Hempstead England, presented to Elizabeth. Her Majesty then went to Ridley Reserve to greet some 17,000 school children and her last duty was to visit the General Motors Holden plant.

Initially the area was part of the Salisbury District Council, in August 1963 the council name was changed to District Council of Salisbury and Elizabeth. However in February 1964 the Governor issued a proclamation declaring municipality status and separate local government for Elizabeth as from 1st July 1964. The last combined council meeting was on 23rd June 1964. Salisbury Council was granted City status as from 6th July 1964 and the City of Elizabeth was granted in November 1964.

Submitted by Jennifer Paine

from the book: Elizabeth the Garden City, by Margaret Galbreath and Gillian Pearson

(refer to additional historic photos on Page 8)



Sturton Primitive Methodist Church

John Jeffries migrated from Brewham Somerset England to Ontario, Canada. His son John Henry Jeffries migrated from New Brunswick, Canada and took up land in the Gawler Plains Penfield area in 1850. Over the years the original Jeffries farm was divided between their four sons who each built homesteads.



In 1856 the Jeffries and Ridley families erected a chapel known as “Sturton” which was associated with the Primitive Methodist Church.



The Primitive Methodist District in 1857 made Salisbury the head of the circuit which included Sturton.

By 1865 the Sturton Church had remained closed for three or four years, so the Primitive Methodist District meeting gave instruction to approach Mr Jefferies with the intention of purchasing the church building. Mr Jefferies made a liberal offer of 100 pounds which was accepted.

The Sturton Church was then reopened in April 1865. The maximum number of members on the roll was 15 in 1883. The Church remained the property of the Salisbury Primitive Methodist Circuit until preaching ceased there in September 1892.

The Primitive Methodist Church ceased to exist at the end of 1899 and in January 1900 the Methodist Church was formed from the merging of the Primitive Methodist and the Wesleyan Church.

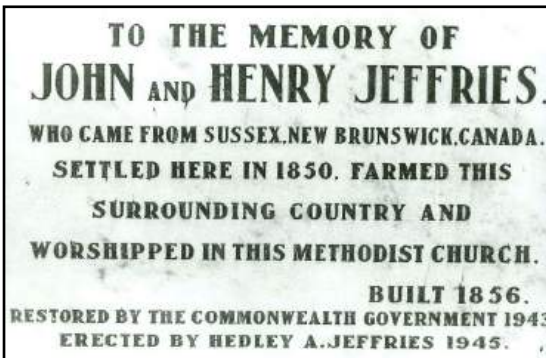
The Sturton Church remained the property of the Salisbury Methodist Circuit and in March 1924 the church, but not the cemetery, was sold back to Mr Griffiths, the adjacent landowner who used it as a barn.



The first burial at the Church Cemetery was that of Fanny, 9 months old daughter of John and Susan Jeffries on 19th April 1855. The last burial was in 1893 but in December 1979 the cemetery was reopened for the interment of Mr Ern Jeffries.

In December 1940 the Commonwealth Government acquired the land, including the church, as part of the explosive's factory development. In 1943 the church building was restored by the government and has been maintained by it ever since.

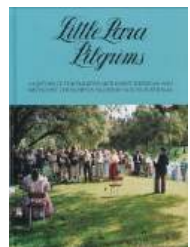
Mr Hedley Jeffries left SA in 1925 but returned in 1945 with a memorial stone for his great grandfather, John Henry Jeffries.



On Sunday, January 28, 1945, Rev F. J. Lommon conducted a special service at the restored Sturton Church when the memorial tablet to John and Henry Jeffries was unveiled by Mrs Winkly, a grand daughter of John Jeffries. A special train from Adelaide to Penfield Platform 2 was provided and more than 300 people attended the service of rededication.

In November 1979 the Sturton Church and the graveyard were recognised by the Australian Heritage Commission and listed in the Register of the National Estate. Occasional weddings have been conducted in the church.

This article was compiled by Des Brown from history of "Sturton" included in the publication *Little Para Pilgrims* by James L. Potter OAM and Trove Newspaper articles. Copies of *Little Para Pilgrims*, the story of Methodist Church in the Salisbury District, can be purchased from the Salisbury & District Historical Soc Folk Museum at 3 Ann St Salisbury.





*Phillip Highway looking south from the now Elizabeth South Hotel in 1956
Elizabeth South homes in the distance (Courtesy Elizabeth Library)*



General Motors Holdsens 1958

One of the factory foundations
being poured, note existing Water
Tower in the background



*Lyell McEwin Hospital and
General Motors
1959
(Courtesy Elizabeth Library)*



*Central Districts Football Club 11th July 1964 Elizabeth Oval
(Courtesy Elizabeth Library)*



Elizabeth South 1958
looking north with
Football Oval and
Elizabeth's first shops in the
centre
The Gawler Railway line
running along the left of
photo



Salisbury & District Historical Society Inc.

PO Box 838, Salisbury, SA, 5108

*The Salisbury & District Historical Society was established in 1981.
The Society was formed to promote the discussion and study of South Australian
and Australian history, particularly within The District of Salisbury.*

*Other tasks include the collection, recording and classification of works, source
material of all kinds relating to the history of the District of Salisbury and to
facilitate access to the collection by the community.*

SDHS Committee 2023-24

President: Simon Hales 0450191792

Vice President:

Secretary: Jennifer Paine

Treasurer:

Salisbury Council Rep: Shiralee Reardon

Committee Members: Terry Sloan, Delwyn Ayling, Dennis Wright, Alice Foster,
Lyn Brooks and Alan Polkinghorne

Editing Team: Jennifer Paine, Lynette Potter, Alice Foster, Raelene and Des Brown

Web-site Mangers: David Murren

Auditor: Anna Gordon

Disclaimer:

Views and opinions expressed in the Salisbury Historical Newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the Salisbury and District Historical Society Inc.

While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the articles printed, responsibility is not accepted for any errors they may contain that are out of our control.

Web-site: - www.salisburyhistory.com.au

E-mail: - salisburyhistory706@gmail.com

Facebook: - www.facebook.com/SDHS706

Photo Gallery: - www.flickr.com/photos/sdhsphotos/

*Our Newsletter is printed courtesy of the Office of the
Hon Zoe Bettison MP, Member for Ramsay*