

Donovan News

Number 17

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... keeping in touch with clients and other friends ...

Fifteen productive years

Donovan & Associates, 15 years young on 16 December 1995, is a firm with a wealth of experience.

Since its inception, the firm has been responsible for 28 books. It has provided the manuscripts for some of these, overseen the publication of others and, on occasions, acted as publisher. These books have dealt with a broad range of subjects. There have been local and regional histories ranging from a history of Port Wakefield to a history of Alice Springs, the history of a suburban city — West Torrens — through to a two volume history of the Northern Territory. There have been histories of organisations and institutions, such as the Real Estate Institute of South Australia, the South Australian Pastoral Board, the Australian Protective Service and the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital. The list includes histories of transport agencies such as Australian National and the South Australian Highways Department. The firm has recorded the stories of several companies including that of a builder (A.W. Boulderstone), a baker (Buttercup), an energy supplier (South Australian Gas Company) and F.H. Faulding & Co., a pharmaceutical manufacturer.

In addition to these books **Donovan & Associates** has completed numerous other projects. The firm has undertaken some of the earliest, largest and most wide-ranging heritage surveys in South Australia and a national survey of mining: it has undertaken conservation plans for individual buildings and complexes. It has provided management plans for local museums, prepared a marketing plan to promote Blessed Mary MacKillop, an annual report for a philanthropic trust, and a souvenir booklet for a local government.

There are stories associated with every project and each has contributed to broadening the experience of the firm. As a result of this wide experience **Donovan & Associates** brings a wealth of expertise to each new project, which is valuable because, as the firm has found, no two projects are exactly the same.



PROJECT UPDATE

Donovan & Associates has had a busy time since the previous newsletter.

The history of the South Australian Pastoral Board, *'In the Interest of the Country'*, and that of the City of Hindmarsh and Woodville, *Between the Park Lands and the Sea Coast*, were launched during the early part of the year. Additional details are given on p. 3.

The manuscripts for two other books have been completed and are awaiting publication. The history of Quality Bakers Australia is expected to be published in late 1996, while that of the Wakehurst Golf Club will be published in March 1997 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the opening of the course and clubhouse.

Work on other history projects continues. The manuscript for the centenary history of Sacred Heart College is to be completed at the end of July 1996 for the launching of the book in February 1997. The story

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of the Strzelecki Track is due to be completed at about the same time in readiness for its launch when the new section of the Track is opened officially in November 1996.

NEW PROJECTS

Donovan & Associates has been commissioned to work on several new projects since the previous *News*.

The firm has already completed a conservation plan for the drill hall at *HMAS Encounter*, the former naval depot at Port Adelaide. The project was undertaken for the Australian Property Group.

D & A has been retained by Oakhill College of Castle Hill in New South Wales to oversee the production of a historical publication to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the College in 1996.

The firm has also undertaken work associated with the preparation of the Torrens Catchment Management Plan, as subconsultants for the urban planning company, Hassell. **D & A** has been retained to assess and comment upon heritage implications of the management plan.

The firm is also acting as subconsultants for Kinhill Engineers to consider the heritage implications of the development of the Washpool Lagoon Wetland near Sellicks Beach, to the south of Adelaide.

History on track

Donovan & Associates goes far and wide in the cause of history. One of the current projects is the compilation of a history of the Strzelecki Track, which extends from Lyndhurst to Innamincka in the north-east of South Australia. The project was commissioned by the Department of Road Transport in order to preserve some of the lore associated with the Track. The booklet is to be launched in conjunction with the opening of the new alignment of the northernmost portion of the Track in November 1996. Although an open-surface road, the new alignment will provide virtually an all weather track to Innamincka and eliminate the last of the notorious hazards associated with the Track.

Although a cattle duffer, Harry Redford, overlanded stock south from western Queensland along the Strzelecki Creek in 1870, the lack of watering points along the route and the recurrence of drought in the region meant that it was largely abandoned as a stock route in the 1930s. Innamincka, which was proclaimed a town in 1890, was supplied from western New South Wales, rather than South Australia until it was abandoned in 1953.

The Track was built in 1958 and Innamincka revived, primarily because of exploration for oil and gas in the region from the mid 1950s. Premier Sir Thomas Playford wanted benefits of any oil and gas discoveries in South Australia to flow to that state rather than states to the east, so encouraged the construction of the Track. The first track was blazed through within a few weeks and was only the width of a four-wheel drive vehicle. It was very fragile because of the dry and sandy nature of the region and it soon deteriorated under the weight of heavy vehicles travelling to and from the oil and gas exploration and development sites. The Track had to be rebuilt and upgraded almost immediately and continually maintained thereafter. Portions of it were realigned in order to minimise the damage from infrequent, but major floods. The new northern alignment will mean that most of the Track beyond the Dog Fence will have been realigned from the route originally surveyed.

The booklet aims to record the experiences of those men responsible for surveying, building and maintaining the Strzelecki Track.

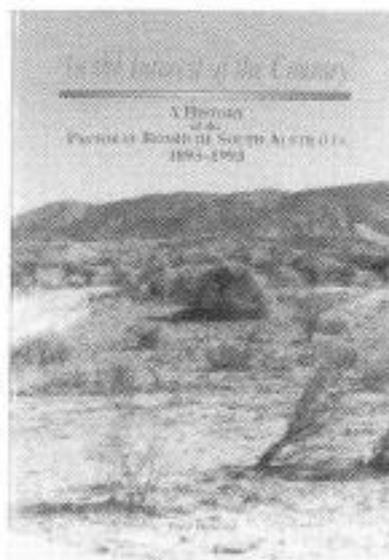


The construction camp, 15 kilometres from the Delta gas-field, September 1995.

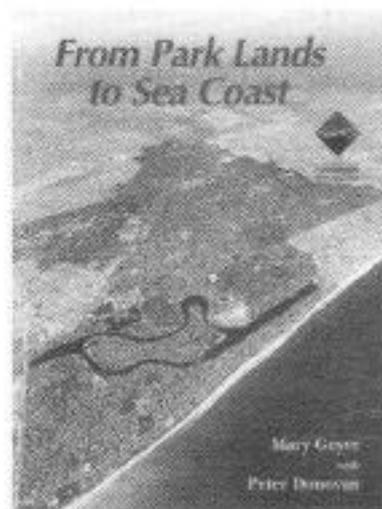
New Publications

The period since the previous *News* has been a productive one for **Donovan & Associates** with the publication of two books during the first few months of 1996. The history of the South Australian Pastoral Board was launched by David Wotton, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, on 8 February 1996. The history of the City of Hindmarsh Woodville was launched by Mayor John Dyer during celebrations to mark the City's History Day on 24 March 1996.

'In the Interest of the Country' a history of the Pastoral Board of South Australia, 1893-1993, by Peter Donovan, was produced by **Donovan & Associates** and published by the Pastoral Management Branch of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The book is in hardback, measures 250mm x 175mm, has xii + 236 pages, an index and is illustrated in black and white. The history was commissioned to record the activities of the Pastoral Board and to mark its centenary. Copies may be obtained from the Pastoral Management Branch at Kensington Park.



From Park Land to Sea Coast, by Mary Geyer with Peter Donovan was published by the City of Hindmarsh and Woodville. The softback book measures 240mm x 180mm, has x + 150 pages, an index and is illustrated in black and white. The history was commissioned by the City of Hindmarsh and Woodville to complement the separate histories of Hindmarsh and Woodville which were published in the 1970s. It takes the story to the amalgamation of these separate local governments in 1993. Copies of the book may be obtained from the council offices at Woodville.



SNAPSHOTS



Peter Donovan with Minister David Wotton after the latter had launched 'In the Interest of the Country'.



Mary Geyer speaking to guests following the launch of 'From Park Lands to Sea Coast' by Mayor John Dyer.



Stephen Stanley's comment on the naming of the City of Hindmarsh Woodville.

Copy editing of the *News* is by Bernard O'Neil. The cartoons are by Stephen Stanley.

In search of history

As indicated in previous issues of the *News*, those at **Donovan & Associates** go far and wide and visit some strange places in search of history. Several years ago, when writing the history of Australian National (AN), both Bernie O'Neil and Peter Donovan travelled in the cabins of AN locomotives to gain an appreciation of train working. Later Graham Boulter and Peter Donovan stayed in train crew quarters in remote localities on the Nullabor Plain while documenting South Australia's railway heritage. The history of the Pastoral Board took Peter into the pastoral country of South Australia and, more recently, he spent several days in the remote construction camp with the men realigning the northern part of the Strzelecki Track.

Peter Donovan had to go inside Yatala Prison to interview some of the inmates when undertaking an oral history project documenting life in the Adelaide Gaol. While researching the history of the Australian Protective Service (APS) he visited the top secret Defence Facility at Pine Gap near Alice Springs. On the same trip he observed an anti-terrorist exercise at the Alice Springs airport. The APS history meant visiting facilities in most states of Australia, so too, did research for the history of Quality Bakers Australia.

Two projects in Sydney meant that Leonie Randell, June Donovan and Peter Donovan spent considerable time there during 1995 and early 1996. The Sydney office of **D & A** was a flat at Dee Why, one of the harbour city's northern beach suburbs.

Such travelling is an enjoyable part of the life of an applied historian, but it is also an essential part of the work in order to gain an understanding of what it is that we are asked to write about.



DONOVAN & ASSOCIATES History & Historic Preservation Consultants

Donovan & Associates is a consulting firm which specialises in matters relating to aspects of historical research, writing and historic conservation and undertakes a wide variety of tasks based upon these specialties. Major projects completed by the firm include large commissioned histories and heritage studies, recording of oral history, and providing advice on historical records management.

Donovan & Associates was established in 1980 and since that time has undertaken work for clients throughout south-eastern Australia on projects that have involved research and work in all parts of the country.

Donovan & Associates' services include:

- Corporate and institutional histories
- Regional and local histories
- Heritage surveys and assessments
- Oral history programs
- Advice on cultural tourism
- Advice on historical displays

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