

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

Historians are Expert Generalists

Historians should be the most sought-after professionals providing advice on issues with a time dimension. They, rather than journalists or even employees of an organisation, should be the ones engaged to write that organisation's history.

A historian does not need to be a chemist or a brewer to write the history of a pharmaceutical or a brewing company, for instance. There is much more to the history of such companies than an understanding of chemistry. However, hopefully there is someone in the organisation who is able to advise the historian about such matters where necessary.

The essential history of a company is about change over time and the manner in which this has impacted on the organisation, its stakeholders and the wider community. An understanding of the products or services identified with an organisation are important, but secondary, issues.

Historians are experts at interpreting change, unlike authors who specialise in other fields of writing. The historian's task is not simply to recount what happened in the past, but rather to explain how and why developments occurred and why they occurred at particular times and in particular ways. The task is to make sense of a mass of data that is so extensive as to be essentially incomprehensible.

A feature of any historian's training is an insistence on the communication of ideas in a clear fashion, free of jargon and any in-house code that is foreign to all but members of an organisation.

At the end of a history project, there will still be members of an organisation who have more detailed knowledge about aspects of it than the historian. But there will be few who have a broader general knowledge than the historian—the expert generalist. Moreover, members of the wider community will have a better understanding of the organisation because of the skills that the historian has been able to bring to the task.



D&A's Scope of Work

Donovan & Associates has continued to be busy since our Autumn *News*.

June Donovan completed her work as cultural heritage officer with the Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO) at Edinburgh, implementing many of the recommendations she made earlier for the conservation of heritage objects.

Our updated history of the City of West Torrens is currently in press and is expected to be published before Christmas.

D&A completed a scoping study for Murray Irrigation Ltd of Deniliquin in southern New South Wales. The object of the report was to recommend projects to record the social history of irrigation in the area.

D&A has continued with several oral history projects. Recent interviews have been conducted with potter Milton Moon and journalist Max Fatchen for the National Library's 'Eminent Australians' project; textile artist Kay Lawrence is yet to be interviewed. Sir Eric Neal, one-time Managing

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Director of Boral Ltd, later Governor of South Australia and currently Chancellor of Flinders University, has been interviewed for the Australian Institution of Engineers. Preliminary interviews have been conducted with former South Australian Attorney-General and Chief Justice, Len King, and former Whitlam Government Minister, Clyde Cameron, for an oral history program originated by the Don Dunstan Foundation to record the political achievements of Premier Don Dunstan.

Work has continued steadily on two major history projects. Short reports on the commissioned histories of the Western Australian Nurses' Memorial Centre and the Adelaide Airport are included in this *News*.

The firm has continued with heritage projects and is once again providing advice on the conservation of features of the Edinburgh Defence Precinct. In addition, D&A was asked to record the physical details of an unusual building known as 'The Rotunda' that formed part of the Lyle McEwin Hospital. The building, once used for nurse education and as a matron's flat, was demolished because of the redevelopment of the site.

D&A published *The Trial of Mary Schippan* in September with assistance from the South Australian History Fund. Details are provided on page 4. The project was 30 years in gestation: our interest in the issue had been aroused originally during a heritage survey of the Murray Flats area of South Australia.

Nurses for Nursing

The Western Australian Nurses' Memorial Centre was established in 1960 to commemorate the work of generations of nurses in war and peace, and to provide a venue for nurse organisations in the state. The acquisition of the property and the later construction of modern multi-storey additions were made possible by the fund-raising activities of hundreds of nurses throughout Western Australia over many years. The Centre became the offices of the Australian Nursing Federation (ANF) and the venue for meetings.

However, changes to nursing and nurse education made the Centre less relevant to nurses, while changing demands on office accommodation made it increasingly inconvenient for the ANF.

The Centre committee ultimately decided to sell the property and establish a charitable trust to continue to pursue the objectives of the Centre, but in a more appropriate manner. The Western Australian Nurses' Memorial Charitable Trust continues the tradition of enhancing the nursing profession by providing research funds to nurses.

The Trust has commissioned the history of the Centre to perpetuate the memory of those who worked so assiduously for the Centre and to highlight the sense of mission that energised them.



Top: The Nurses' Memorial Centre, 34 Kings Park Road, West Perth, 1960-1997. Below: Members of the Centre committee after the last meeting at the Centre. From left, back: Rosemary Lorrimar, Susan Milos, Fred Huis and Wilma Gardiner; front: Gail Milner, Jess Burgess and Liz Manley.



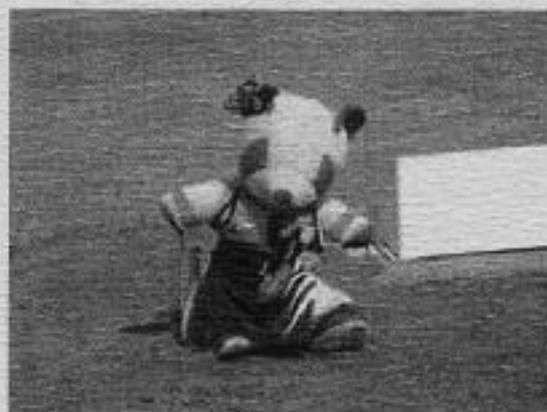
Adelaide International Airport: 1955–2005

Commercial operations began at Adelaide Airport at West Beach on 16 February 1955. Adelaide Airport Limited, the lessee since 1998, has commissioned **Donovan & Associates** to compile a history to commemorate the 50th anniversary and to mark the opening of the new terminal in October 2005. As many as four million people currently pass through its passenger terminals each year. Few are aware of the features of the airport. For instance, how many would know that the international terminal that opened in November 1982 was named in honour of former South Australian Premier Sir Thomas Playford? Indeed, this name was mooted for the airport as a whole when it opened in 1955.



Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser opened the international terminal on 2 November 1982 before the concrete floor had been covered; a framed photograph of Sir Thomas Playford is seen on the ground behind Mr Fraser. The terminal was opened four days before the state election that did not return the Tonkin Liberal government.

The airport bear (right) has become something of an institution since it appeared in the 1990s. It is used to mark various celebrations, such as Australia Day, when it is usually seen with an Australian flag. Currently the bear is dressed in a Port Power guernsey to commemorate Port Adelaide Power winning the 2004 AFL premiership. The bear is to be seen a little to the north of the intersection of the runways on the eastern side of the A6 taxiway. It is visible from the right side of aircraft taxiing to the north-east to the end of Runway 23.



The project provides a great opportunity to reproduce photographs of the variety of aircraft and airlines that have used the airport during its 50 years.



Convair

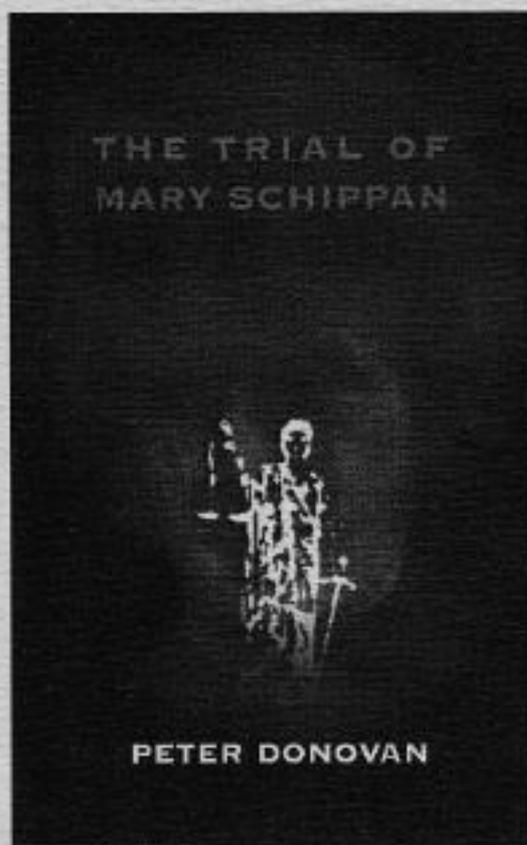


Vickers Viscount



Boeing 727

New Publication



The Trial of Mary Schippan was published in September with assistance from the South Australian History Fund. The book tells the story of the gruesome murder of Bertha Schippan that occurred on 1 January 1902, and the events that followed.

The inquest after which Bertha's elder sister, Mary, was charged with her murder caused a sensation, largely because of the lengths that rival newspapers went to record the event. Mary's trial in the South Australian Supreme Court proved equally sensational with large crowds gathering each day to follow it and to catch glimpses of witnesses and the accused. The trial turned largely on circumstantial evidence that proved insufficient to have the jury convict Mary. Ultimately, no-one was brought to justice.

The book is in softback, measures 215mm x 135mm, has viii + 132 pages and is illustrated in black and white. The book is distributed by Landmark Press and retails for the recommended price of \$19.95.

The copy editing of the *News* has been undertaken by **Bernard O'Neil**; the cartoon is by **Stephen Stanley**.



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. The firm 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 records management.

Donovan & Associates was established in 1980 and has since undertaken work for clients throughout southeastern 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
- * Land tenure research
- * Oral history programs
- * Advice on cultural tourism
- * Advice on historical displays

PO Box 436, Blackwood, South Australia, 5051
Phone/Facsimile: (08) 8270 1770
e-mail: p_donovan@optusnet.com.au