

SA Public Service Medal Association

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Newsletter

Autumn Edition 2017

Dear Members and friends,

Welcome to the 2017 New Year Edition of the PSMA SA newsletter. Since our last edition we have enjoyed three events with members, a pre-Christmas celebratory morning tea, our annual Australia Day BBQ and Lawn Bowls event and most recently a visit to the State Library at which we were delighted that Valmai Hankel was able to join us. This was where Valmai worked as Senior Librarian of rare books for many years. As you read this newsletter today it is with pleasure that we have been able to include a Who's Who article about Valmai and how she received her PSM award. Valmai has and still continues to lead and amazingly busy and interesting life.

25 years of the PSM Association SA

2017 will again be a busy year for us as this will be the 25th year since the association was formed and we will be planning a special event for that. More details will be provided in the near future but please keep October **20th** free in your diary.

Australia Day 2017 - Award Winners

Congratulations to the following recipients who have recently been awarded a PSM 2017 PSM Award.

Ms Rosina Antenucci	Services to education and to the teaching of English as an additional language
Mr Robert Glen Schwarz	In the field of intergovernmental fiscal relations, taxation policy and economic policy
Ms Joyleen Joan Thomas	In the area of employment, cultural inclusiveness and Indigenous events.

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Future visits

Our next event is to the David Roche Foundation House Museum. Come and join us.

PSMA SA - Notice for your Diary Tour of the David Roche Foundation House Museum North Adelaide



Friday 16 June 2017

Venue: David Roche Foundation House Museum 241 Melbourne Street North Adelaide

Time: 0950

(Tour begins at 10am -11.30am)

Cost \$17 pp - meet at reception

Who can come? Members and family

Coffee - come and join us for coffee after at the Store

Places are strictly limited so it will have to be first come first served

RSVP by June 12th to Val Smyth

We continue to plan new events but would welcome ideas from members. If you have an interesting workplace that we could visit or a suggestion of an interesting site - please contact Val Smyth

Recent Events

Christmas Morning Tea

In early December association members gathered in the garden at the Dernancourt home of John and Val Smyth to enjoy an early Christmas Morning tea. We were very fortunate to have a dry day and as you can see certainly no one went hungry! It was a great time to relax and share fun and food together in the lead up to Christmas.



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Australia Day 2017



The Association again this year met at the Beaumont Lawn Bowls Club where Barbara Parker is a long time member. It was a day of great food, fun playing bowls, considerable heat but above all great company. Sue Ireland challenged us all to see who could identify the most Prime Ministers of Australia and the years they held office.

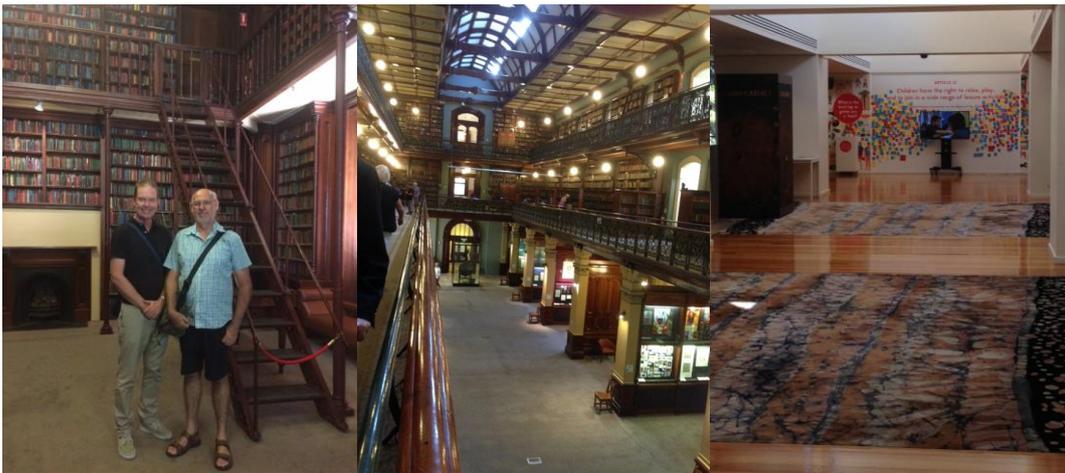
Photo Gallery from our 2017 Australia Day BBQ



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Visit to the State Library -9 March

On March 9 a group of members enjoyed our first association planned visit of the year to the State Library on North Terrace. We were delighted to have with us on the tour Valmai Hankel who as many of you would know worked at the library as the Senior librarian of Rare Books for many years and indeed her PSM Award was largely due to her work at the library. You can read more about Valmai later in this edition as she agreed to chat with me for our 'who's who' article this time.



We are very privileged to have such a great library in our state and with Valmai and the tour guides who provided such interesting information. We enjoyed a great morning, several of us staying for lunch in the Cafe after.



Who's Who March 2017

An Interview with Valmai Hankel



What a pleasure it was to meet with Valmai Hankel on 8th March and what an appropriate day to meet with her - *International Women's Day* 2017. True to form Valmai does not let the grass grow under her feet and trying to keep up with her daily timetable is daunting. When I met with her on Valmai's day had already included an interview for local radio, lunch with friends from interstate, and an exercise class and now time to chat with me - and all before 2pm!

Valmai received her PSM award in 1996 for outstanding public service in promoting library management and the preservation of rare books. She has spent 60 years at the State Library of South Australia, 43 of those years as a full time paid employee and in addition many years of volunteer service. She also has a passion for travelling the routes of explorers and reading their diaries, public speaking, good food and wine and her beloved horses.

Her journey into the world of books and outback exploration began as a young child when she read a book about Australian Explorers and then some six years later watching the film *The Back of Beyond* which told the story of the mailman Tom Kruse on his travels up and down the Birdsville Track. While these proved to be pivotal moments in her childhood, her love of books had also been noted in her very first days at school when her teacher wrote in her first school report that 'Valmai wants to read and read only, with the result that her work is not as neat as it might be.

A few years later in 1958 her love of reading and books lead her to employment at the then Public now State Library of SA. Initially she worked in a range of areas in the library but by the tender age of 20 years she was in a senior position in the Children's Library. Working in this area required Valmai to read a great deal (I suspect this was not a hardship for her) so that she would be in a position to recommend appropriate books for children. During this time she met and married the love of her life Dennis Hall, who was Children's Librarian.

After working in the Children's Library, Valmai moved to lead the Youth Services section followed by the Reference Services Branch where she was again placed in charge. She was still at this stage officially an unqualified librarian but was seen to have 'much promise'. With this in mind Valmai continued her studies for an Arts Degree while also working full time - a considerable challenge. As her story unfolded I can see clearly that she has always given 100% and more, going the extra mile in all that she does.

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In 1967 with her degree completed she now moved to the Rare Books Branch, the area that was to be her home for so many years. This section of the library contains many books but not all are necessarily old. Valmai's responsibility included adding to this collection, publicising that rare books are interesting and being prepared to take on public speaking roles including radio broadcasting and fund raising. Over the years this has involved her in many committees, writing many book reviews and working very long hours. Valmai continues to enjoy public speaking and especially the 40 forty minutes once a month when she is a guest on Peter Goers' evening program on ABC radio and being one of the 'Goer's Gals'.

After 1996 the year that Valmai received her PSM Award she began writing articles on wine for the Adelaide Review and this continued for many years. This also gave Valmai another opportunity to advertise South Australia's State Library's extensive library of wine literature which is now the largest in the Southern Hemisphere.

Throughout these busy years Valmai has always continued to love travelling and looking after horses and in 1984 with her husband they purchased a Land Cruiser and began long distance trips into the bush to places that are for most of us very hard to reach. One of her favourite places has been the very remote Lake Killalpaninna way up on the Birdsville Track where in 1866 a Lutheran Mission was started and continued until World War 1. Valmai and her husband Dennis continued trekking across remote Australia covering thousands of kilometres until his unexpected death in Katherine in 1991. Then after a break of three years she recommenced her outback trips travelling solo up until 2014 and while she still travels away for trips of four to five weeks at a time to far off places she no longer travels alone. As quoted in another article written about Valmai she stated that she is of the Robert Louis Stevenson belief that 'to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive', thus revelling in the journey as much as the destination.

Another aspect of this amazing woman's life that many may not know about is that she had a firearms licence, however it was her husband who was the expert in this area and Valmai states "she never shot anything except a metal plate" and does not like loud bangs!

Valmai commented that when she first heard she had been nominated for a PSM Award she was absolutely amazed and found it hard initially to believe. In 2012 she received another honour, becoming only the third woman to be awarded the John Lewis Gold Medal of the Royal Geographical Society of South Australia for noteworthy geographical achievements. This medal has only been awarded 24 times since its inception and she is currently the only living recipient. More recently in 2015 Valmai was honoured again becoming a member of the Order of Australia for significant service to library and information services, particularly in South Australia, and to the wine industry as a writer - what a career!

Valmai is still very active despite the onset of Parkinson's disease in recent years, still caring for her 12 horses and being dedicated to continuing to spread the word about the hardships, journeys and challenges faced by our early inland explorers as they trekked across this vast land. Valmai has an amazingly positive attitude to all aspects of life and says she will not accept she is not the person (physically that is) she was. Even now she is constantly on the go as her timetable for the day I met with her shows and she is even a regular attendee at specialist dance classes for sufferers of Parkinson Disease.

It has been a pleasure to meet this remarkable woman and PSM Association of SA is delighted to have her as one of our members. Thank you for sharing with us

Loss of friends and colleagues

It is with sadness we note passing of:

Doug Lane awarded - (4.2.2017) PSM Award 1990 - for outstanding public service over a period of 37 years as a water scientist, 17 at senior management level in the State Water Laboratories.

Arthur (Mate) Osborne - (24.2.2017) PSM Award 1998 for outstanding services to the community of South Australia in the field of Conservation Park management

Richard Hicks - (27.3. 2017) PSM Award 2006 for outstanding public service in the development of innovative policies in the area of community health. in the development of innovative policies in the area of community health.

Lindsay Best - (25.2.2017 aged 74) PSM Award 2004 for outstanding public service to nature conservation

Jill Fitch (19.5.1937- 3.4.2017) PSM Award 2003 for outstanding public service, particularly in the field of radiation protection.

In this edition we are pleased to be able to provide the Vale for Lindsay Best.

Vale Lindsay Best PSM (10.9.1942 - 25.2.2017 aged 74)



Lindsay was born in New Plymouth, New Zealand, and lived the first years of his life on Mt Taranaki, a beautiful mountain on the West Coast of the North Island.

The family shifted to Nelson when Lindsay was four and they lived with his parents on the family farm, where they built a house and farmed mainly sheep and cropped potatoes and peas. Lindsay loved helping on the farm, going deer stalking, rabbit shooting, eeling and white baiting with his Dad and friends. He became a competent skier and diver. He was a Scout and went on to become

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a Queen Scout, the highest scouting award possible, recognising his community involvement and leadership skills.

Lindsay went to Nelson Boys College and then to Canterbury University in Christchurch initially with the intention of becoming a veterinarian, however he studied science and completed a Masters in Zoology.

Rather than returning to the farm as his father wished Lindsay left New Zealand for Alice Springs in 1969 to work for the CSIRO, researching dingoes. It was here in Alice that he fell in love with the outback and with Valerie.

Lindsay enjoyed pistol shooting and went on to represent the Northern Territory for two National Pistol shooting championships

In 1976 after seven years of a wonderful life in Alice the family shifted to Canberra where Lindsay joined CAE the College of Advanced Education, now the University of Canberra, lecturing in Wildlife Management.

In 1982 an opportunity came in Adelaide for Lindsay to extend his passion for wildlife and natural resource conservation, with the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Lindsay knew all about what is now called 'networking'- he worked across the Department and State & Federal Government with ease and was widely regarded. He could hold his own in the international sphere as well and when Rabbit Haemorrhagic Disease became evident in Spain, it was Lindsay who was sent to NZ with Dr Brian Cooke to explain the potential to the Council of Conservation Ministers.

Lindsay contributed wisely to the Animal and Plant Control Commission which is something he really seemed to enjoy. When RHD (or calici virus) escaped from Wardang Island, Lindsay was involved in the task force that led the response.

In 2004 he was made the Director of Regional Conservation. In 2005 Lindsay was awarded a Public Service Medal recognising his services to wildlife and conservation. He was incredibly proud of the recognition given by way of a Public Service Medal and many in the Department were almost as proud as he and his family were.

Lindsay retired in 2006 and sadly didn't enjoy a long period of good health in his well earned retirement. With retirement he followed new passions of travel, caravanning, ball-room dancing and Dance with Parkinson's which he enjoyed immensely.

In later years Lindsay was disappointed in the way that politicians would talk about their commitment to conservation whilst at the same time remove staff and resources from the Department of Environment.

He is survived by wife Valerie and children, Sonja and Anthony, their spouses Kevin and Kristine and his three grandchildren, Kiarna, Zac and Tyler.

Newsletter items

If you have interesting articles that we can share with members please submit them to Val Smyth. We welcome the opportunity to share knowledge with each other.

URGENT NEED - PSMA SA Treasurer - Is this for you?

Andy McPharlin has relinquished his position as our treasurer and while John Smyth (husband of Val) has agreed to step into this role in a temporary status, we would like to have an association member to take on this role. Andy has done a fantastic job managing both the secretary and treasurer role in recent years and we are very grateful to him. If you feel you could help us by taking on this role please contact us. We are a small association so the task is not arduous but none the less very important.

If this is you - please let Andy McPharlin know.

SA PSMA website.

Don't forget our website is now live and can be found at: <http://www.sapublicservicemedal.asn.au/>

It is still in its infancy and over the next few months we will be loading more information. If you have something to share - especially photos please let Andy know. This site belongs to all of us, so let us make it of value to us all.

**If you have a new or changed email address- please let Andy McPharlin know
(address at the top of the newsletter)**