



Prospect Road



PROSPECT LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Issue No. 5
Feb/Mar 2025

Newsletter



David Johnston, Prospect Citizen of the Year 2025 with Mayor Matthew Larwood

WELCOME

Congratulations to our long-serving member David Johnston, who was named Prospect Citizen of the Year for 2025 by the City of Prospect. David is the author of many of our publications and a tireless volunteer. His knowledge of the Prospect area is without equal and we turn to him frequently for advice.

David Kilner, Chair

Official publication of the Prospect Local History Group Inc.

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- Plumbing into local history
- History Festival 2025 list of events
- SPECIAL FEATURE: The Road with no pub
- Book excerpt: The one armed man who lived in a hole in the ground

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that there's a place in Belgium named after South Australia?

Why on earth would that be?

Luckily, we have a Belgian sleuth who will be able to reveal all in our next e-newsletter.

Stayed tune for her special report!



Local History Collection Volunteer

Neil Rossiter, one of our members is now volunteering to assist with management of the Local History Collection at Payinthe. He will assist Local History Officer Catherine Manning with reorganising and improving the Collection.



CALENDAR

History Festival 2025

May 2025
See list of events in this issue

TWENTY YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Twenty years ago, in 2005, the Friends of Prospect Library, with the support of Library staff, formed both the Prospect Family History Group and the Prospect Local History Group. The Family History Group did excellent work for many years but no longer operates - however we are still going strong. To celebrate our twenty years, we're planning a special series of events. More information next time.

PLUMBING INTO LOCAL HISTORY



Shopfront of RW Davey & Sons original building at 118 Prospect Road. c.1950
Copyright: Public Domain

We recently received a wonderful digital donation of family photos from Roger Davey, of the RW Davey & Sons family. Residents may remember the plumbing business which traded at 118-120 Prospect Road into the 1960s.

The Davey family lived in the Prospect area from 1897. Richard Williams Davey opened his shop in the front rooms of his house at 118 Prospect Road in 1908. It became RW Davey & Sons after RW Davey died in 1922. Brothers Richard Clyde, William Vernon, and John Lancelot were partners in the business. A vacant block at 120 Prospect Road was bought to extend the shop, which had a major makeover in 1957-58.

The collection of photos scanned includes images of the business, the family home, school and church photos.

PLUMBING INTO LOCAL HISTORY



The RW Davey & Sons business after the building was expanded to take in 118-120 Prospect Road. Vern Davey's FJ Holden is parked in front of the building. C.1958 Copyright Davey Family CC-BY-NC



The Davey family pictured at 23 Charles Street, Prospect. Left to right: Vern (William Vernon Davey), Gladys Davey (nee Pointon), Henry Pointon, Stan (Stanley Vernon) Davey. Baby Roger at front. C. 1960 Copyright: Davey Family CC-BY-NC

For more information on the Davey family and business visit the Old Prospectors website:

<https://www.oldprospectors.com.au/davey-r-w-and-sons.html>

<https://www.oldprospectors.com.au/davey-william-vernon.html>

For more on the Prospect Local History Collection please contact Catherine Manning, Local History Officer, City of Prospect:

<https://www.prospect.sa.gov.au/explore/arts-culture/local-history>

HISTORY FESTIVAL 2025 EVENTS

Here's some of the fantastic events we have lined up for this year's History Festival.

Save the dates in your diary, or better yet, grab your booking now before tickets sell out!

TICKETS FOR ALL EVENTS
Must be booked online using the links provided

Sun 4th May
2pm - 3pm

TOUR
**Be on Guard: Tour of Prospect
Air Raid Shelter**

Cost: \$5 per person

Venue: Prospect Air
Raid Shelter, Willcox
Ave, Prospect

[BOOK TICKETS
HERE](#)

Learn about the power of ordinary people in civil defence roles during WWII. A short film made in 1942 illustrates the efforts to prepare the population for the event of an air attack. Gain an understanding of the role of air raid wardens, and women and children's war efforts, set within the 1940s social context.

Sun 4th May
2.30pm - 3.30pm

TALK
**Researching Your House History
in the City of Prospect**

Cost: \$20 per person

Venue: Payinthe (Irish
Harp Room), 128
Prospect Rd, Prospect,

[BOOK TICKETS
HERE](#)

In this talk by David Kilner, you will learn how to successfully research the history of your house. The speaker will share the many tools now available to assist you and provide you with an illustrated example of how to best research the history of a local house. The cost includes a free copy of one of our books to the value of \$5.

HISTORY FESTIVAL 2025

EVENTS

Sun 11th May
2.30pm - 3.30pm

TALK
**Crime Fiction: Will It Be The
Death of Us?**

Cost: \$20 per person

Venue: Payinthe (Irish
Harp Room), 128
Prospect Rd, Prospect,
SA, 5082

[BOOK TICKETS
HERE](#)

In this light-hearted and well-illustrated talk, author David Kilner examines crime fiction from its origins 200 years ago through the years to contemporary fiction. Along the way, he looks at the impact of film and television on crime writing. Each paid ticket includes a copy of one of our books to the value of \$5.

Sat 17th May
2.30pm - 3.30pm

TALK
Agatha Christie: Her Life

Cost: \$20 per person

Venue: Payinthe (Irish
Harp Room), 128
Prospect Rd, Prospect,
SA, 5082

[BOOK TICKETS
HERE](#)

In this light-hearted and well-illustrated talk, author David Kilner discusses the world's favourite crime writer, and her fascinating life. From her upbringing, tragic first marriage, her successful second marriage, to her family, her character, her travels and a little on her books. A copy of one of our books to the value of \$5 is included in the price.

HISTORY FESTIVAL 2025

EVENTS

Sat 24th May
2.30pm - 3.30pm

Cost: \$5 per person
Children under 8yrs FREE

Venue: Prospect Air
Raid Shelter, Willcox
Ave, Prospect, SA,
5082

[BOOK TICKETS](#)
[HERE](#)

TOUR
TRAIN AS A WWII AIR RAID
WARDEN

Betty and Bert Button, fictional air raid wardens, will lead training activities such as evacuation, checking supplies, over and out, and finding unexploded bombs. Learn about the power of ordinary people on the homefront during WWII.

Suitable for children 8–12 years of age. Must be accompanied by an adult. \$5 per child

Sat 24th May
2.30pm - 3.30pm

Cost: \$20 per person

Venue: Payinthe (Irish
Harp Room), 128
Prospect Rd, Prospect,
SA, 5082

[BOOK TICKETS](#)
[HERE](#)

TALK
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle: His Life

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is best known as the creator of Sherlock Holmes. But this fascinating man was far more than that. A wide-ranging writer; an amateur detective in his own right; and a spiritualist. This illustrated talk by David Kilner will explore his life from a broad perspective. Price includes a free copy of one of our books to the value of \$5.

Event Organisers and Speakers:

Talks:

David Kilner ph 8269 4197
localhistoryinprospect@gmail.com

Air Raid Shelter Tours: **Neil Rossiter** ph 0402 719 626
njrossiter@hotmail.com

FEATURED STORY: THE ROAD WITH NO PUB

Many times we have heard that Prospect Rd, within the City of Prospect, does not have a pub because Prospect was founded by conservative churchgoers who hated the demon drink.

Is this a correct story or could there be other explanations?

The District Council of Prospect was founded in 1872 by locals who were dissatisfied with the allocation of Council rates in other parts of the District Council of Yatala South.

Leading lights of the breakaway were Samuel Braund and James Harrington. Both of them were Wesleyan Methodists and both are buried in the Wesleyan cemetery in Smith St Walkerville. So that would help confirm the story.

It's also telling that the number of dissenters (such as Methodists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians and Baptists) in Prospect exceeded the number in Yatala South by a considerable proportion – 56% to 36% in the 1876 Census. They also exceeded the proportion of South Australians who were dissenters (43%).

Four men from Prospect, including Town Clerk John Le Cornu, were involved in running the South Australian Sons of Temperance in 1880.

In the early 1900s there was even a Prospect Liquor License Reduction League, while the Prospect Women's Christian Temperance Movement was active from the 1890s until at least the 1960s.

So Prospect might have seemed fertile ground for those who opposed the establishment of hotels locally.

Against that it must be noted that the District Council of Prospect had several hotels in the nineteenth century, not all of which survived – the Irish Harp (now Reephram) on Lower North Rd (1851), the Farmers Home Inn on Main North Rd, the Windmill on

THE ROAD WITH NO PUB

Main North Rd (1843) and the Hamstead on North East Rd (1854). There was also the Northern Tavern on Main North Rd (1850) although this was in the then Yatala South Council.

There was also the Heart and Hand Hotel on Lower North Rd from 1848 to 1871.

So why did Prospect Rd miss having a durable hotel when others didn't?

I'd like to suggest that more than the wowser factor was in play – namely the original road layout of the Adelaide Plains.

Prospect Rd did not exist in Colonel Light's plan for the Adelaide Plains. Prospect was divided into many farming sections and the through routes were Main North Rd, North East Rd and Lower North Rd, which we know today as Churchill Rd.

Why did Prospect Rd not exist? Because Prospect was expected to be a farming district. Those who farmed sections 2066 and 367 to 373 abutted Lower North Rd while those who farmed sections 354 to 348 and 2064 abutted Main North Rd. so those were their entry and exit points. Others to the east had access via North East Rd.

Charles Cane in Progress and Development of the City of Prospect notes that at first Prospect Rd was merely a lane from Highbury St to Marian Place. Not until 1858 was the lane opened to Fitzroy Tce – and then later to Barton Tce, the work being funded by public subscription.

As our member David Johnston has noted, hotels in those far off days had a role to play in ensuring easy transport for travellers, whether on foot or using horses or bullock drays. Hotels were not only places for locals to drop into or conduct business or other gatherings – indeed the number of locals in Prospect in the 1870s numbered less than a thousand – but also places to overnight, to eat, reprovision and to change horses.

THE ROAD WITH NO PUB

Naturally therefore hotels in less populated areas to the north of the City tended to be on the main transport routes to serve travellers to and from the north or north east – and Prospect Rd was not on one of these. Prospect Rd did not even finally become Prospect Rd until 1895, prior to which it was usually called Eliza St after a daughter of James Harrington.

Attempts to promote farming in Prospect soon fell victim to the demand for suburbanisation, starting as early as 1839, and the need for a central road between the farming sections became apparent. But this grew in dribs and drabs over many decades and was never a major road, which were one chain (66 feet/20 metres) wide, compared to 33 feet (ten metres) for what eventually became Prospect Rd. The battle for Prospect Rd continued well into the twentieth century.

So, along with the ‘wowser’ element, the practical considerations of unsuitability of the ‘road to nowhere’ and its lack of commercial possibilities as transport infrastructure, delayed the establishment of a hotel. Even today Prospect Rd terminates at Grand Junction Rd and is not part of a major transport corridor, and in the 1922 Street Directory it stops just north of Regency Rd.

Dr Pauline Payne has noted that even in the 1930s the Women’s Temperance Movement was able to block a hotel on Prospect Rd and in the 1990s Prospect Council failed to obtain community support for a tavern adjacent to the Town Hall due to concern over disturbances to the neighbourhood by patrons.

So there were two strikes against a hotel on Prospect Rd: the temperance movement and the practical and commercial unsuitability of the road especially in the nineteenth century.

David Kilner
January 2025

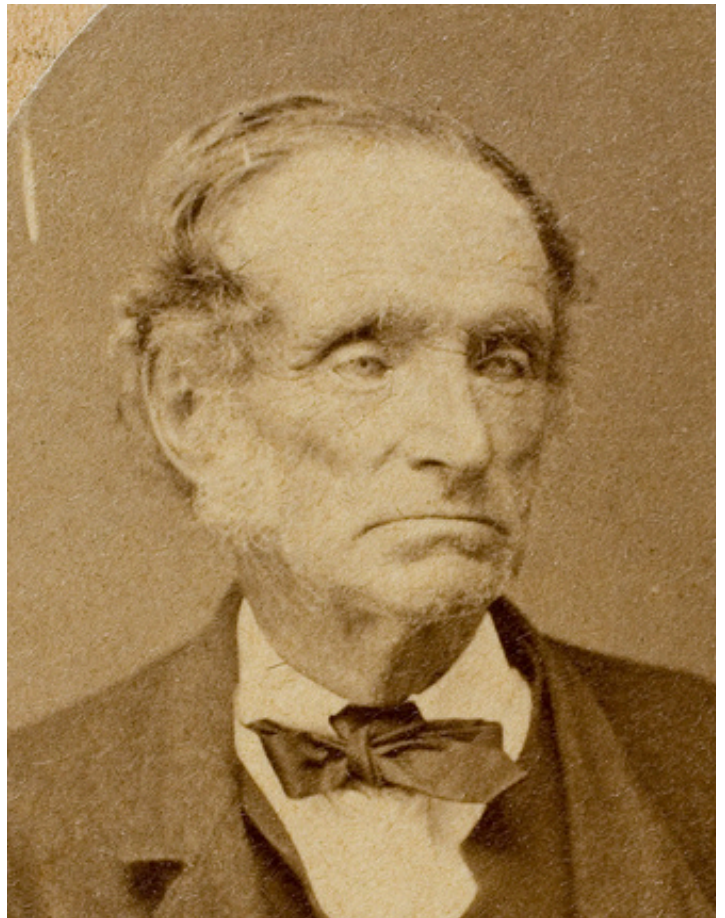
THE ONE ARMED MAN WHO LIVED IN A HOLE IN THE GROUND

In 2022, our brilliant researchers David Johnston and Lesley Attema compiled a collection of articles called 'Stories of Prospect Past.' Over a hundred stories are included in this fascinating publication.

The following story is a favourite:

In the late 1830s a one armed man lived in a hole in the ground on the corner of Carter Street. But research proved that the man was far from what sounds like someone very much down on their luck.

He was a notable early colonialist named William Tully (not "Tilly" as in some early reports). He was indeed a man with one arm and he was laying out the blocks of land for Little Adelaide.



William Tully

He had made a dugout in the ground for himself in the extreme south-west corner of the area, evidently for when he didn't feel like returning to his family home in North Adelaide.

In October 1839 the public were respectfully informed, "that in consequence of the intended meeting of the proprietors of Little Adelaide, the few remaining allotments will be offered for sale only by private purchase". Plans of which could be seen at various city hotels and at Mr. Tully's office in Morphett Street.

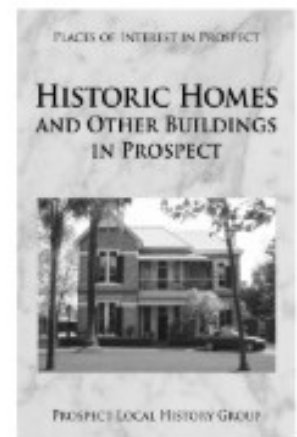
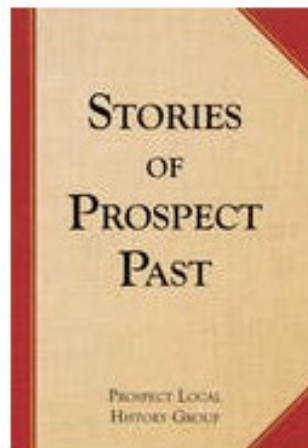
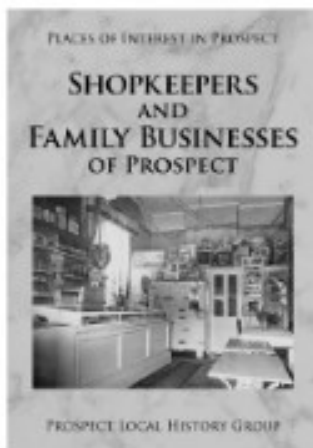
Sources: Southern Australian, 30 October 1839. The News, 31 August 1954

THE ONE ARMED MAN WHO LIVED IN A HOLE IN THE GROUND

The hole in the ground was reputedly where former Prospect Mayor David O'Loughlin and his wife Alison now live in their beautiful art deco home.

To read more of these enjoyable stories you can buy a copy at the Prospect Library or via our e-book store at: www.prospecthistorygroup-adelaide.com.au/e-books-for-sale.html

Most titles are only \$5. Click the images below to purchase.



Membership

MEMBERSHIP OF THE PROSPECT LOCAL HISTORY GROUP IS FREE!

Just fill out the membership form on our website [here](#)

We love hearing from the community!

Got a local history matter to tell us about? Want to contribute a story or photos?

Send us an email at the address below!

localhistoryinprospect@gmail.com

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