



# PROSPECT LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Issue No.8  
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2026

## Newsletter

### Welcome

The past year was a momentous one for the Group. In 2025 we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the group's foundation; no small feat since many local history groups in South Australia have sadly had to cease operation in recent years.

We marked the occasion with a wonderful event for current and past committee members and friends at our local watering hole, Wassail. We were also entered into the Hansard of the Parliament of South Australia in a generous speech by the Hon. Lucy Hood. These were moments that we will cherish, recognising as they do the incredible dedication and skill of the many people who have contributed to the Group since 2005.

We now look ahead to 2026 and beyond with a renewed sense of enthusiasm and confidence. As the newly minted Chairperson of the PLHG I wish to thank the committee and all those who have assisted this past year and I recognise Dr David Kilner as outgoing Chairperson. It is hoped that his tireless efforts in consolidating the Group will now allow him to enjoy more time for research and rather less administration in the years to come.

**Anna Graves,  
Chair**

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### In this issue:

- **Dr David Kilner PhD – Outgoing Chair, PLHG**
- **Prospect Women's Service Association Collection**
- **Featured Story: Rosemont Hall: A Prospect Treasure with a Musical past**

## 2026 COMMITTEE

<b>Chair</b>	Anna Graves
<b>Deputy Chair</b>	David Kilner
<b>Secretary</b>	Josie Meyer
<b>Treasurer</b>	Simon Smith
<b>Newsletters &amp; Social Media</b>	
	Karen Martin
<b>Committee</b>	Kristina Barnett
	Garry Mighall
<b>Local History Officer</b>	
	Catherine Manning



### Dr David Kilner, PhD

Dr David Kilner has retired from the Chair of PLHG after many years of outstanding service. Happily retired from a long career in the social welfare sector, David completed his PhD on housing policy in South Australia and describes himself as being “well familiar with the darker side of human nature”, a background that has clearly informed his series of crime novels featuring the perpetually imperilled Detective Sergeant Skyla Merrick.

Within the PLHG, David has applied those same forensic skills to local history, helping countless residents uncover the stories behind their homes. A tireless advocate, grant-writer, and administrator, David steered the Group through Covid and into a strong, sustainable future. Awarded Prospect Citizen of the Year in 2019, David has been a tireless worker for PLHG and has set us on a steady path for the next 20 years. David will continue on the committee as Deputy Chair.



## CALENDAR

### Prospect Air Raid Shelter Tour

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb  
2pm – 3pm  
Book via Eventbrite

# Prospect Women's Service Association Collection

– reflections from Danielle Manticos

*Danielle is currently studying for her Diploma in Library and Information Services and has recently completed a student placement with the City of Prospect, working with the Prospect Local History Officer and volunteers.*



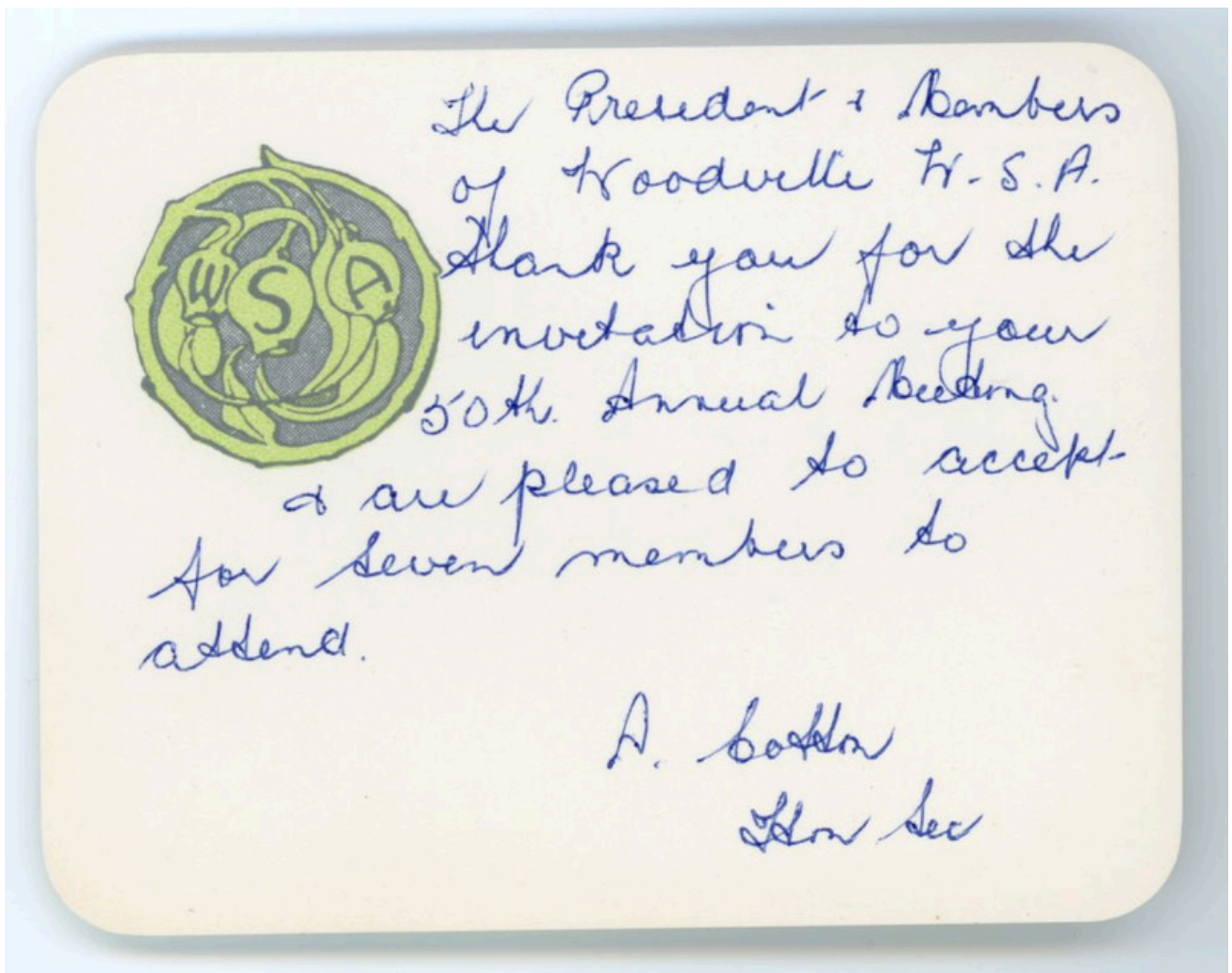
Hidden within the Prospect Local History cupboards are some local treasures. Over the past few weeks, I have been delving through archival items, inherited or donated over the years, in hopes of cataloguing for future historians.

Among the discoveries made, I came across a box labelled Prospect Women's Service Association. This wonderful association, along with others in the metropolitan area, carried out remarkable charitable work. According to its constitution the group's purpose was: To develop and assist the philanthropic, social, educational and general activities of the town. Our records include items dating from as early as 1933 through to around 1985. They feature meeting minute books, invitations from neighbouring Women's Service Association groups to share ideas, and annual reports detailing the years' accomplishments.



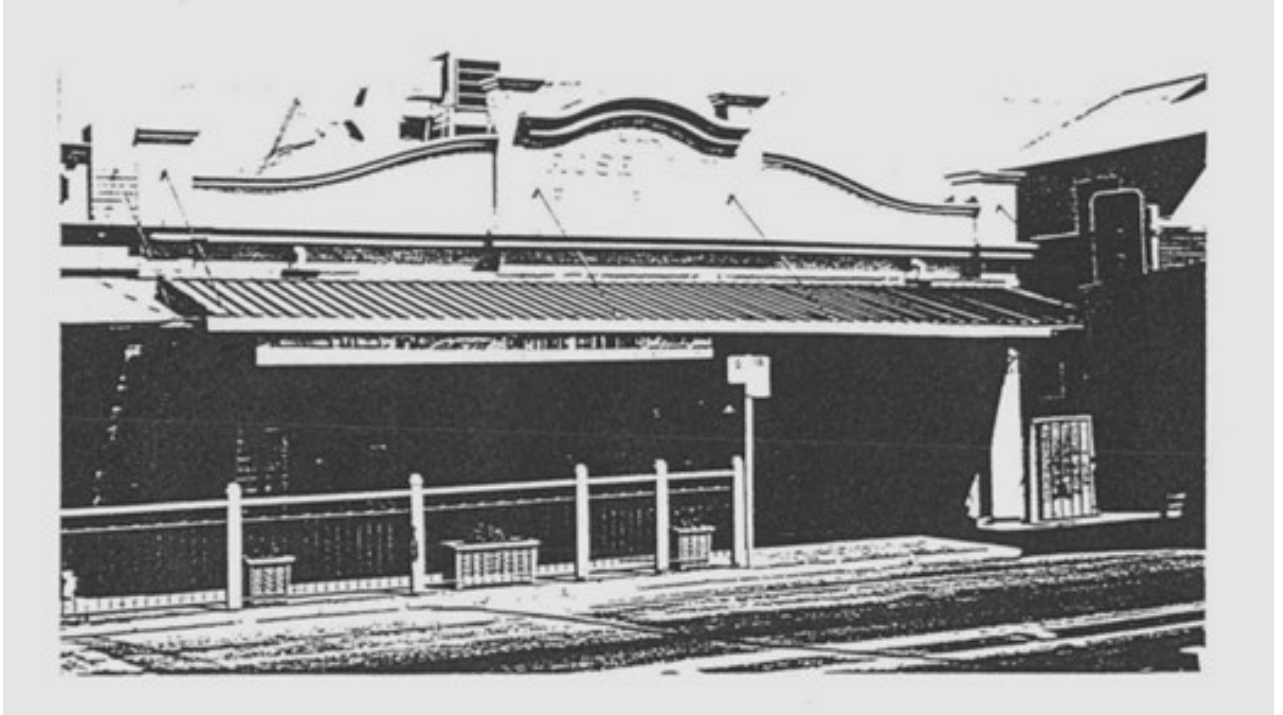
## Prospect Women's Service Association Collection

The report for 1963 recorded the group supplying new shoes to a family of school children prior to winter and supplying firewood to two very sick pensioners, while 1964's report mentions their involvement in Badge days and providing supper, posies and buttonholes at Citizenship ceremonies. Such fascinating pieces of women's history.



Were you, or someone you know, a member of the Prospect Women's Service Association? We'd love to hear your memories.

**FEATURED STORY:  
ROSEMONT HALL: A PROSPECT  
TREASURE WITH A MUSICAL  
PAST**



**Rosemont Hall: A Prospect Treasure with a Musical Past**

Rosemont Hall, located at 106a Prospect Road, is a property with important historical connections to Prospect.

**Early history**

Section 371 , Hundred of Yatala, was granted to Robert Bernard in August 1838. A year later Bernard transferred it to John Ellis, who subdivided a portion of the land as the town of Beresford.

In 1881 the land at this address was recorded as being owned by H. Parr as part of a large number of allotments described as 'township land unbuilt upon'. By 1885 this land was owned by E.T. Thomas, along with lots 5,6, & 8. In 1891 it was described as 'Buildings and Land occupied therewith' and a Mrs Wadham was listed as the occupier in 1893 only, after which the block reverts back to being described as unbuilt.

# ROSEMONT HALL

The first appearance of this block as a separate lot was in 1898, owned by A.C. Were. By 1899 the lot was listed as 'Buildings and Land occupied therewith' still owned by A.C. Were and occupied by a Mrs Peacock. This is thought to have been the first building on the land despite the earlier listing of occupation in 1891 and it is likely that the building constructed by Were. It is not known whether this building is the same one that was there by 1924 or whether the original was demolished and rebuilt.

## **The Oates Family**

In 1905 the ownership of the land and building at 106 Prospect Road had passed to Edward Thomas, with the occupier listed as Stanley Oates. Stanley Oates purchased the property from Edward Thomas in Dec 1923. The date 1924 on the façade suggests that this is when the shopfront was constructed. It is not known whether the original house was demolished and rebuilt, or if the frontage was added to the existing building. It is this distinctive façade and parapet with its timestamp of 1924 and name Rosemont Hall that is so familiar to residents of Prospect. The original building was one of a number of old buildings to have leadlight above the windows, with the building later altered to have full glass windows and the cantilevered verandah. It is believed that some of the space was rented out to various businesses.

## **Stanley Albert Brewer Oates and the Rosemont Concert Party**



Stanley Oates, born in 1881, had a long career at the Adelaide General Post Office. Starting as a telegraph messenger in 1896, he worked his way up to the Money Order Office, where he remained until his retirement in 1946. A newspaper report at the time of his retirement noted that he had served under Sir Charles Todd and every director since.

### **Stanley Oates**

Photo from: Out Among The People (1946, June 13). Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1895 - 1954), p. 39. Retrieved August 16, 2025, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article93157738>

# ROSEMONT HALL

Oates had a deep passion for the arts. He studied painting under Arthur Milbanke, learned piano from E. E. Mitchell, and took singing lessons from Edward Howard. But it was through the Rosemont Concert Party that he left his most colourful legacy. For over 15 years, he served as conductor and pianist of this travelling troupe, performing in country halls across South Australia. Their programs featured elocution, humorous recitations, piano and violin music, and musical monologues. Mabel Oates, daughter of Stanley's brother John, also took part in the performances. The Rosemont Concert Party also performed as the Rosemont Orchestra and the Rosemont Quartet. There are numerous articles in Trove listing their performances around the State, and accounts of people attending Rosemont Hall itself for performances. Stanley Oates died at Rosemont on 12<sup>th</sup> October 1968 aged 96 years and is buried at Centennial Park Cemetery.

## **Beyond the Rosemont Concert Party**

By the mid-20th century, the Rosemont Building housed various commercial tenants, including a leather store and eventually Kostakis Continental Deli, a favourite among locals for groceries, Greek sweets, and newspapers. The building passed through several owners, including Christos and Nicholaos Sakoridis and later K. & S. Georgaris. In 1996, the City of Prospect Heritage Review described the building as having a rendered brick façade with heritage features such as the ornate parapet and original shop windows.

In July 1999, as Rosemont Buildings, the premises was granted Prospect Local Heritage status for the east wall including the verandah form and original shop windows.

In July 2017, the building took on a new life as Rosemont Hall, home to two Asian eateries—Sunny's Shop and Mr Chan—operated by the Ratanatray family, well known in the local hospitality scene since the 1970s.

# ROSEMONT HALL

## Tragedy Strikes

However, tragedy struck on September 16, 2021, when a fire severely damaged the historic structure. In the aftermath, a proposal to demolish the damaged façade sparked strong community concern. The Prospect Local History Group advocated for the retention of the parapet and shopfront, citing the building's historical and architectural value. A structural engineer confirmed that retaining the parapet was possible, and many hoped it could be preserved. Despite these efforts, the original façade could not be saved. A decision was made to rebuild the structure as a faithful replica. Today, the new Rosemont Hall mirrors the look and character of the 1924 building, honouring its legacy while continuing its role as a vibrant part of Prospect's main street.

Through fires, rebuilds, and changing times, Rosemont remains a symbol of Prospect's living history – a place where past and present continue to meet. Next time you're dining in the building, raise a glass to Stanley Oates and imagine being at one of the performances of his Rosemont Concert Party.

– Prospect Local History Group, July 2025

## 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

WWW.PROSPECTHISTORYGROUP-ADELAIDE.COM.AU

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