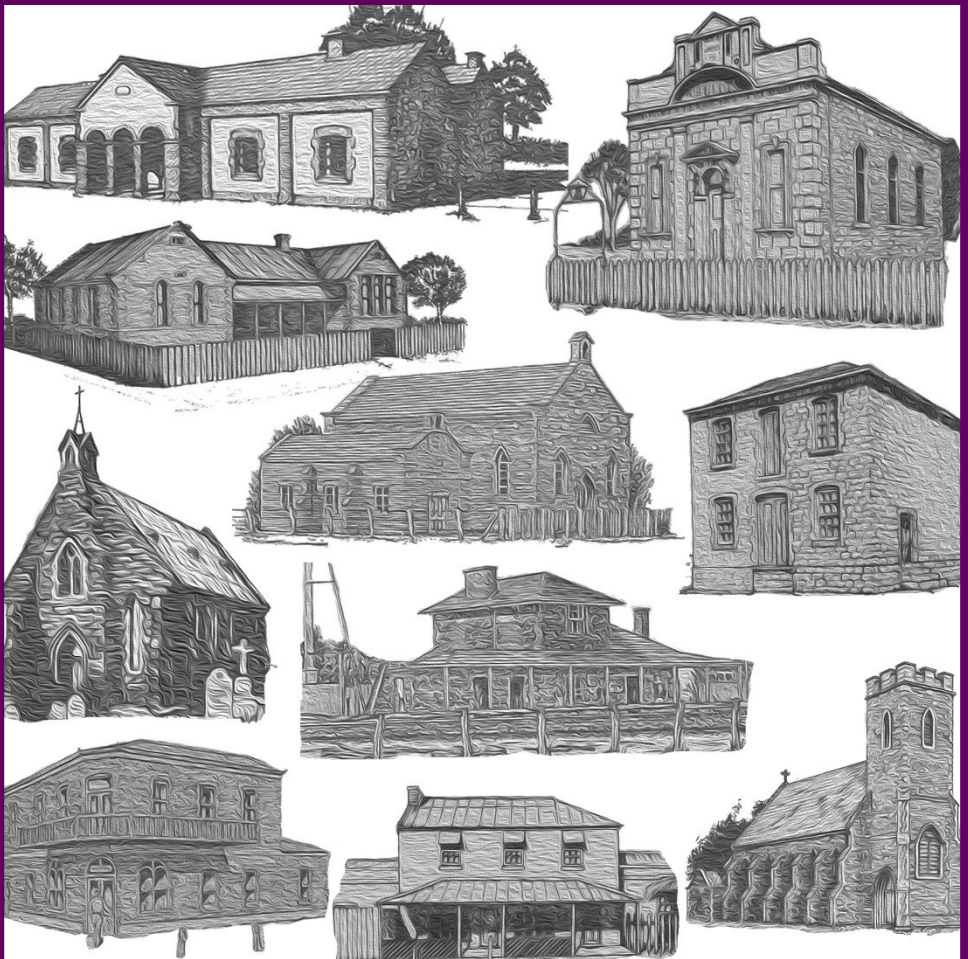


SALISBURY & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC. NEWSLETTER

Celebrating over 40 years of "keeping alive the history of Salisbury"



DECEMBER 2025



Salisbury & District Historical Society Inc.
3 Ann St Salisbury

***We acknowledge the Kaurna people, the Traditional Owners of the land on
which we live today .***

We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging

SALISBURY AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The programme for 2026 will be issued at a further date.

A Busy Bee will be held at the Museum at 9:30 am on Saturday

28th February 2026

The first meeting will be on the 11 March 2026.



*Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year.*

President's Report

As the year draws to a close your committee has been preparing for activities for 2026. While we have arranged Guest Speakers and activities for next year, we are co-ordinating dates and times suitable for our speakers. We will advise you of details when they have been finalised. One item already confirmed is Clean-up Day at the museums on Saturday 28th. February at 9.30.

All invited!

I can say that next year promises to be quite different to 2025.

We have taken delivery of a significant investment in a Display Stand, which will double our existing capacity to display photos and other light weight items.

During quiet times while on duty at the museum we will facilitate members putting together the new displays.

My thanks go to duty people for accepting the role of presenting our museums to the public, and our newsletter publishers.

I look forward to gathering with 20 of our members for a Christmas lunch at Grand Central, and extend best wishes from the committee to all members for this Festive Season.

Terry Sloan

President

THE SALISBURY INSTITUTE

For some years the people of Salisbury lacked a suitable hall for public entertainment and institute purposes. Salisbury joined the South Australian Institute network as early as 1858. A Library was established in a cottage, a Literary Society was formed and meetings were held in the Assembly room attached to the Salisbury Hotel. The old assembly room, having served for some 25 years was now felt to be inadequate and sadly behind the times. A public meeting was held in the Salisbury Public School house to initiate a movement to erect an Institute building. Mr. F.W. Danker was instructed to prepare plans, tenders were accepted and as a result one of the most elegant little halls out of Adelaide and judging from the first trial all that could be desired in acoustics was accomplished. There was a gathering of about 200 people at the opening ceremony being performed by Hon. J.H. Bagster M.P. Mr. R. Verco J.P. Presided and gave a brief congratulatory address. To build an Institute was initiated by Mr. A Mellor. Mr. W. Kelly had generously given them a quarter of an acre of land admirably situated and it was valued at £82 10s. The building cost was (including architect fees furniture and an excellent piano) £140.

In 1896 a concert was given in the Salisbury Institute in aid of the distressed farmers' relief fund. There was a very fair attendance and a good sum was realised. Great credit was due to the energetic committee

for their services and to the artists from Adelaide and elsewhere who assisted in making the concert a success.

A stage and basement room were added in 1901 and in 1927 further additions including library, supper room, kitchen, lobby, and cloak room were made at a cost of £1,120.



Entertainment was not lacking in the 1930's despite the Depression and the Institute was well used. The building was administered by a committee of prominent citizens but because of debt incurred by the building additions in the late 1920's it was always struggling financially. Their main salvation came by means of concerts under the leadership of Miss Connie James, a gifted elocutionist.



In 1941 a "Welcome Home" concert was held for Dr. Ruby Davy in the Salisbury Institute.

For 55 years a committee ran the institute, made additions and alterations to the building to cater for the increasing uses. It was finally handed over, complete with additional land to the District Council of Salisbury in 1939.



In 1956 a junior Debutant ball was held in the Institute by the local Gymnasium club. The Debs were presented to senator Nancy Buttfield.

The Institute was well used for functions, including school concerts and fetes. It was home base to some of the Salisbury clubs and remembered in the 1950's and 1960's as a popular venue for Saturday afternoon picture shows. It is one of the few old buildings in Salisbury still standing.

Submitted by Lynette Potter from Newspapers and various other sources.

JOHN STREET TRADERS

The main street in Salisbury, John Street, named after John Harvey's second son was an amalgamation of two subdivisions. Unfortunately the two subdivisions did not join up exactly, hence the bend or dog leg at the top end of the street. Initially the commercial centre of the town was on Commercial Road, but with the introduction of the railway, businesses moved closer to the top end of the street.

THE SALISBURY DRAPERS

Mr. Joseph Broadstock sold an allotment to Robert Pretty in 1856 who erected a dwelling and a shop which housed the first Drapers shop in John Street. The shop was opened in 1856 by Mrs Charlotte Pretty who carried on the business for 32 years until her death in 1888. A year later, John Harvey repurchased the property and it was leased to a variety of businesses over the next 59 years, including a general store, tea rooms and a greengrocer. Then in 1947 Mr. C.H. Bammann, also a descendent of John Harvey, established the Salisbury Drapers, catering for all haberdashery needs and a selection of clothing. The shop expanded when the newsagency located at the eastern end of the premises moved to another location further up the street. This part then became the Menswear section. The last manager, Mr John Longmire, also a descendent of John Harvey, worked there for 20 years, unfortunately he found it necessary to cease business in 1997.

WRIGHTS SHOE STORE

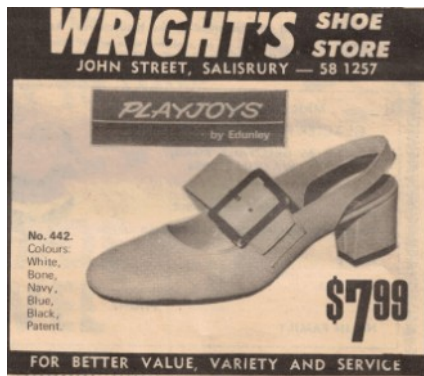
In 1868 Mr Thomas C. Matthews, a shoemaker, purchased a house and shop from Mr. Hugh Sellers, a carpenter. Thomas carried out his shoe making business for the next 10 years until he sold the premises. It had numerous owners, and in later years became a confectionery shop, hairdresser and dry cleaners. The premises was sold to Frank W. Reiss in May 1951 who then leased it to Mr. Darcy Wright.

Darcy opened Wrights Shoe Store on 10th June 1951, 83 years after Thomas Matthews had begun making shoes in the same location. The shoe shop and the Drapers were both located opposite the National Bank, which remains in the same location today. The dwelling portion of the property was converted into two more shops, one becoming a newsagency in 1954, which then became Dorothy Docketts Children's' Clothing, Salisbury Sewing Machines and Shergis Hairdressers until 1969. They were then taken over by F. & B. Hill, who sold ladies and children's wear until 1974. In 1962 the whole property was purchased

by Wrights Shoe Store but it wasn't till December 1974 that Wrights expanded with a shoe mart styled shop.

Wright's business began booming when the first families moved into the Salisbury North Housing Trust homes in the early fifties. In its heyday Darcy employed up to 22 assistants with the biggest seller being rubber boots, up to 2,000 pairs a year. Only a 3 year stint in the Navy disturbed his career in shoes. In 1930 he left school on a Friday afternoon and started at Ezywalkin Shoes on the following Monday morning. He was fifteen when he sold his first pair of shoes, a pair of black velvet high heeled round toe court shoe. Darcy earnt 11 shillings and 6 pence and as the ferry fare to the port was a penny he walked the two miles from Birkenhead every day. He also worked in Rundle Street, Port Lincoln and Port Pirie before investing 3,500 pounds to set up his shop in Salisbury. Darcy retired at the age of 72, after 57 years of employment.

The S.A. Gas Company took over part of the premises in November 1982.



Submitted by Jennifer Paine sourced from the book, John Street, A Pictorial History, by James Potter, & News Review report.

Vale—Marilyn Potter passed away on October 12th. She was a member of the Historical Society for many years providing support for the President and volunteering at many functions and activities. Our deepest sympathy is extended to James and the Potter family.

Vale—Aldyth Leombruno passed away on October 24th. Both she and Paul were volunteers at the Museum and the Water Wheel for many years. Ally was a valued member. Our deepest sympathy is extended to Paul.



Salisbury & District Historical Society Inc.

PO Box 838, Salisbury, SA, 5108

The Salisbury & District Historical Society was established in 1981. The Society was formed to promote the discussion and study of South Australian and Australian history, particularly within The District of Salisbury.

Other tasks include the collection, recording and classification of works, source material of all kinds relating to the history of the District of Salisbury and to facilitate access to the collection by the community.

SDHS Committee 2025

<i>President :</i>	<i>Terry Sloan</i>
Minutes Secretary:	Brenda Wright
Secretary:	Dennis Wright
Treasurer:	Chris Ferrell
Salisbury Council Rep:	Shiralee Reardon
Committee Members:	Delwyn Ayling, Jennifer Paine, Alice Foster and Alan Polkinghorne
Auditor:	Jeff Rittberger
Editing team:	Jennifer Paine and Lynette Potter

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While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the articles printed, responsibility is not accepted for any errors they may contain that are out of our control.

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Photo Gallery: - www.flickr.com/photos/sdhsphotos/

***Our Newsletter is printed courtesy of the Office of the
Hon Zoe Bettison MP, Member for Ramsay***

We recognise the Kurna Aboriginal People as the Traditional Owners of the Adelaide Plains in South Australia