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BURRA WALK OF FAME

BURRA
SOUTH AUSTRALIA



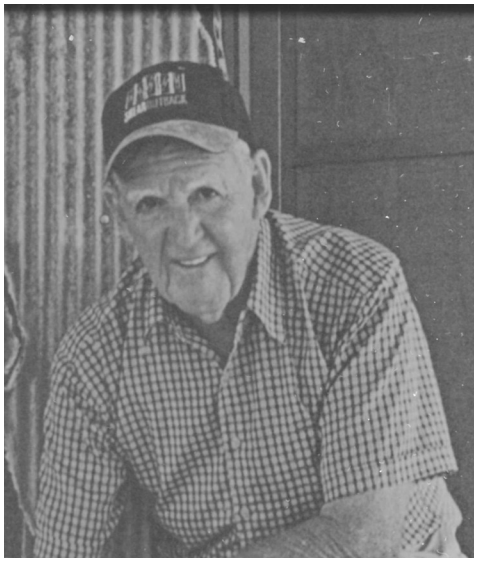
CELEBRATING AUSTRALIA'S CENTENARY
OF
FEDERATION
2001

In celebrating Australia's Centenary of Federation in 2001, the Township and District of Burra established the Walk of Fame.

We recognise the contributions to the district of Burra, the state of South Australia and the nation of Australia of the individuals listed below:-

Sir Henry Ayers
George Kingston
Sir Frederick Holder
James Tiver
John Collins
Mary Warnes
Essington Lewis
AJ (Tony) Ryan





AJ (Tony) Ryan
OAM

Shearer, Instructor, Australian Shearers' Hall of Fame Inductee

1923 –

Tony was born in Burra and began his career as a rouseabout before becoming a shearer. From here his career progressed to shearing contractor, and then a senior instructor with what was formerly known as the SA Department of Agriculture. Next he joined the Australian Wool Board now the Australian Wool Corporation. Tony spent 22 years instructing young shearers. His greatest gift to the industry though, was his idea of complete shearing and his vision for the future of the wool industry. His considerable contributions are seen in his involvement not only in teaching shearing technique and the physical fitness of shearers, but also in repairs and maintenance of shearing equipment, shearing competitions, and industrial relations and the law as well as occupational health and safety issues.

For service and leadership in the industry, Tony was awarded the Medal of The Order of Australia (OAM) and was inducted into the Australian Shearers' Hall of Fame in April 2005.



Sir Henry Ayers

Secretary of SAMA and Premier of South Australia

1821 – 1897

At the same 1845 meeting of the South Australian Mining Association during which seven Directors were chosen, an ambitious young lawyer named Henry Ayers was elected as its Secretary. Aged twenty four he had emigrated to South Australia in 1840, newlywed and confident that his future lay in the young colony. With two young sons and the need for some extra income he judged that SAMA brought with it a promising chance to assist his finances and his ambitions. Ian Auhl in his book 'The Story of the Monster Mine' wrote 'it would be an over-simplification to say that during the lifetime of the Burra Burra Mine, two men were responsible for its success – Henry Ayers in Adelaide and Henry Roach, the Cornish Captain at the Mine.' Ayers possessed a very shrewd business sense. He also gained increasing control over the company finances and also the votes of many investors. By 1850 he was the Managing Director of 'Sammie' as it was affectionately known. Although the Burra Mine closed in 1877, he continued to oversee SAMA's affairs until his death in 1897.

In 1857 he was elected to the legislative Council of the Colony's first Parliament and had by then garnered a considerable personal fortune. In the ten years from 1863 he served as Premier no less than seven times, the terms ranging from thirteen days to eighteen months. It was said that during this period the Colony's young and fragmented parliament suffered from 'chronic ministerial instability.'

Sir Henry was knighted in 1872. He remained a powerful, respected and influential member of the Legislative Council up until his retirement in 1893. Although it is now more often known as Uluru, the great monolith in Central Australia was named Ayers Rock in 1873, by the explorer William Christie. He is also perpetuated in the name of his former home, the beautiful mansion on North Terrace Adelaide, 'Ayers House.' Originally much smaller, it was originally owned by William Paxton another man associated with the town of Kooringa. Also named after him are Ayers Street in Burra, the small district school of Ayers, the property 'Ayers Park' and the geographic location the Hundred of Ayers.



Sir
George Strickland Kingston

Surveyor, Architect
and
Member of Parliament

1807 – 1880

George Kingston's first visit to what was to become the Monster Mine was inauspicious to say the least. As ex-Deputy Surveyor-General he accompanied two prominent Adelaide men, Stephens and Giles on the journey to inspect the Burra Creek lodes. Much of their horseback journey was made in pouring rain and he was noted for having grumbled about 'the want of comforts and the weather.' In August 1845 working with Frome and his surveyors, he took part in the special survey of the Burra creek. Owing to the terrain and bad weather the task took longer than anticipated.

However, as the Mine developed, it was Kingston who with Samuel Stocks laid out the main township of Kooringa in 1846. He also acquired 83 shares in the Mining Association and was a Director of the Company from its formation. Always described as a controversial person, both in England and South Australia, 'Paddy' Kingston was born in Ireland in 1807 and came to the Colony in 1836. He completed the survey of Adelaide in the wake of Colonel William Light's resignation. When he wasn't recommended as Surveyor-General by Governor Gawler, he resigned and set up in private practice as an architect, a profession for which he had received some training. He drew up plans for extensions to the former Paxton home bought by Sir Henry Ayers, now known as Ayers House.

He also aspired to political life and in 1851 was elected to the first Legislative Council as the member for Burra and Clare in the House of Assembly of the Parliament. He became its first Speaker and remained in that role until his death in 1880, as well still being the Chairman of Directors of SAMA. He was given a knighthood in 1870 and died at sea while on a voyage to India 'to benefit his health'. His son Charles Cameron Kingston was later to be Premier of South Australia for six years in the 1890s. Burra's long east-west street is named after this man who helped to chart the layout of the town and the fortunes of the state.



Mary Warnes

Founder of CWA in South Australia

1877 – 1959

From 1922, CWA (Country Women's Association) was well established in New South Wales and Queensland with a similarly styled group in Victoria. Mrs. Bowman, president of the National Council of Women in SA called a meeting of Mayoresses and the wives of country Council Chairmen in 1926 to see if something similar could be established in this state. No-one replied

Mary, Mrs. I. J. Warnes (nee Fairbrother) attended a later gathering in the Queen Adelaide Club, again called by Mrs. Bowman who invited country ladies known to her. Mary was the only person who followed up the invitation to call a meeting in her own town to promote the aims of CWA as they were perceived in the other states. As a very young bride, Mary had taken up residence far from any town on Koomooloo Station, in the pastoral country east of Burra and outside of Goyder's line of rainfall. In those days modern means of communication were unknown and she sorely felt her isolation. Her sister had married her husband's brother and lived about seven miles away on 'Old Koomooloo.' Each week the two would bicycle to meet halfway between the two properties and chat for a couple of hours in the shade over a cup of tea, after which they would pedal home. Apart from rare trips into Burra, these meetings were the only contact each had with another woman in a long time.

In the later years of the 1920s, and now living much nearer to the town, she strongly felt that much more could be done for the isolated women in the bush. Drawing on her own memories of those early days, lonely days, she followed up that earlier city meeting and the CWA was established in Burra on 5th November 1926.

At first it was called 'The Burra Country Women's Service Association', but it was later changed to the CWA. The first project was to set up a rest room where women could meet, or see to the baby, or just relax over a 'cuppa' during trips to town. The idea met with great enthusiasm and the ethos of mutual help was paramount from the beginning. Mary Warnes took on the task as first president, a post she held for fifteen years. CWA groups were gradually formed all over the state and even in these days of change within our current society, CWA has moved with the times and is still an influence on the lives of many women.

As a wife and mother, she was described as a gentle person, with a 'natural culture and love of breeding.' She was loved and loving and achieved her goals not by force, but more through quiet persuasion and passionate conviction for the cause. She died in Adelaide in June 1959 and was buried in Burra Cemetery: a woman who in her own lifetime was able to enrich and strengthen the lives of those around her in so many ways.



Essington Lewis

Mining Engineer and Industrialist 1881 – 1961

Essington Lewis was born in the family's Kangaroo Street home here in Burra in 1881, the third son of John and Martha Lewis' six children. He received his early schooling here before going on to St. Peter's College , Adelaide in 1894. As a lad he was recognised as an outstanding horseman and at school he enthusiastically threw himself into sports. He did not excel at schoolwork. In order to increase his self reliance and strength, his father sent him to the family cattle station 'Dalhousie Springs' for about a year, after which he returned to St. Peter's for another two years.

In his book 'The Steel Master' eminent historian Geoffrey Blainey portrays Lewis as a confident and assured man who is even today remembered as one of the giants in Australian industrial history. His meteoric rise through BHP (Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited) begins in 1904 when he started out as a newly graduated mining engineer earning 7/6 a day. By 1921 he had become General Manager, in 1926, Managing Director and until his death in 1961 he was Deputy Chairman having in the intervening years filled the highest positions that the Company could offer. He was made a Companion of Honour, but refused a knighthood.

During World War II at the request of the Prime Minister he played a vital role in Australia's war effort, starting as Director General of the Department of Munitions. He held several other crucial posts during that time, but in 1945 returned to full-time work with BHP. He was a proud man, for many years little given to any outward show of sentiment. He stated that he 'rarely asked anyone to do what I could do myself.'

He married Gladys Cowan in 1910 and the couple had five children. Their Melbourne home in the suburb of Malvern, bore the name "Kooringa' after the part of this town where he spent his early years. He returned to Burra in October 1945 to open the Centenary Celebrations. He died in 1961 at his property 'Landscape' at Tallarook in Victoria. After his death, amongst his personal items was a text which for many years had hung on the wall. It simply stated what he stood for through all that he achieved in life. 'I Am Work.'



Sir Frederick William Holder

Speaker of the first Federal Parliament

1850 – 1909

The school teacher Frederick William Holder arrived in Burra in 1876 to take charge of Burra's largest severely overcrowded school, conducted by the church as the 'Wesleyan Day School' He was instrumental in organising others to help him lobby the District Council of Burra to take advantage of the new Education Act of 1875 and to secure a suitable site on which to build a government school to serve the whole town. By the time the Burra Model School was opened in 1878, Holder had given up teaching. In that year he was one of a group to rescue the 'Northern Mail,' Burra's two year old ailing newspaper. In July of that year he took over as Editor and Manager of the paper renamed 'The Burra Record' He soon became the sole proprietor and pursued his journalist career with success for ten years. Under the banner of 'The Burra Record' the paper was published for almost 100 years.

Always interested in politics at various levels, he began the Burra Parliamentary Club which became the training ground for a number of local citizens in public life. In 1880 and 1887 he was Mayor of Burra and in 1887 he was elected as MP for Burra in the House of Assembly, with finance at the top of the agenda. With his wife and family he left Burra in 1891. He became Treasurer in 1889 and after two years as Leader of the Opposition he became the Premier in 1892. However his government fell four months later. In 1899 he was elected as Treasurer again before at the same time taking on another stint as Premier. He was active in planning for Federation as an active advocate for a Commonwealth of Australia.

In 1901 he resigned as Premier to become a member of the first Federal Parliament based in Melbourne. He was knighted in 1902. As a member of the House of Representatives he was elected as the first Speaker of the House, known for his courtesy, impartiality and great knowledge of Parliamentary procedure. Those formative years with the Parliamentary Club paid a handsome dividend. He held the job of speaker for eight years, until his death of a cerebral haemorrhage. He was given a state funeral in Adelaide on 25th July 1909 and in Burra much attention was paid to his passing…..'the Methodist Church being draped in mourning while the seat he used in Burra was left vacant.'



James Tiver

Stonemason, Builder and Pastoralist

1829 - 1909

James, one of four children born in Bristol, England to Hugh and Rebecca, migrated to Australia aboard the barque 'David Malcolm' with his wife Elizabeth, son James Hugh and daughter Margaret Malcolm who was born on the voyage, arriving at Port Adelaide in 1855.

James left school at eight years of age and joined his father, in the bakehouse often walking in the dark learning multiplication tables on the way. Later he learned the trade of stonemasonry, a trade to benefit his new home town of Burra.

Unfortunately Elizabeth died of TB in 1856 leaving two small children. They had lived for this short time in a wattle and daub hut which James had near the ford at Burra North.

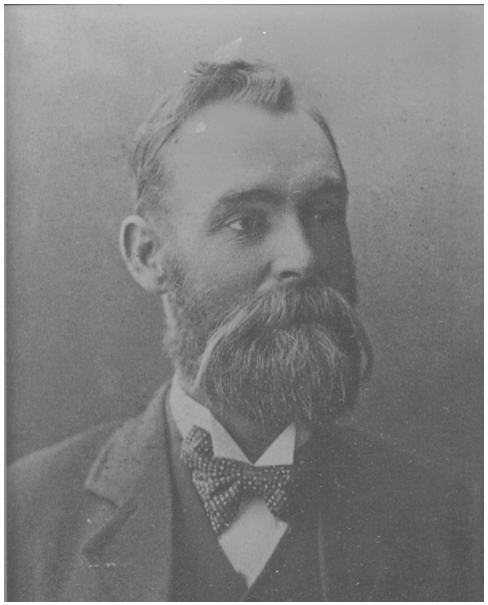
In 1856 James married Emma Price and had ten children. During this time he built a house in Truro Street, Burra North and lived there whilst building homes on either side of the first now known as 'Tiver's Row Cottages' which have now been delightfully restored as bed and breakfast accommodation.

Sara's Corner was originally James' hardware store and house which he built, managed by wife Emma and stepson James Hugh whilst James himself contracted around Burra. Much of his stonemasonry is still to be seen in the buildings at the Burra Town Hall, Station-masters house, Red bridge and two similar houses in Sancreed Street, Burra North. There were many and varied buildings in towns around Burra and as far away as Kapunda and Wallaroo, as they would have been travelling by horse and dray.

About 1864 James ventured into the land buying 'Mt. Cone' at Mt. Bryan for £2 per acre, but this was not to be the success that he hoped. His purchase of the old Paratoo run and subsequent transactions became 'Pat's Well', which was later to become 'Tiverton' at Yunta and proved to be a much better investment.

As a member of the Kooringa Corporation and Superintendent of the Sunday School in the Methodist Church, a Justice of the Peace and in the Masonic Lodge he earned the respect of his fellow beings and was highly spoken of by the youth for his fatherly advice.

He died at 80 years of age and is buried in the Burra Cemetery.



John Collins

Merino Sheep Breeder

1859 – 1932

The name 'Collins' has become synonymous with merino sheep breeding throughout Australia and linked to the name 'Collinsville' sheep stud which John Collins began, still carries great weight today, through all the changes that have beset the properties and the wool industry itself in recent years.

John was born at Mt. Bryan in 1859, the second of Henry and Jane Collins' (previously Collings) sixteen children. His father was a cartage contractor who was able to buy some land of his own in the district when it was released by the Government of the day to small holders. Henry began a sheep stud in 1884, but it was some time before success came to him in that field. At the age of sixteen, young John took some of his hard-earned holiday money and bought a bag of lucerne seed. The ensuing crop was the first sown north of Adelaide. The plant still holds an important place in its own right for its nutritional and hardy properties. When John established his 'Collinsfield' later 'Collinsville' property in 1895 he set about the back-breaking task of building up a profitable sheep run on eastern pastoral land that uncompromisingly demanded light stocking rates and good management. Over the years John added greatly to his original land holding and also bought land in the 'inside country' where the rainfall was more certain. His sons took important roles in the development of these properties. When John started the business of breeding stud sheep using rams and ewes from the 'Koonoona' stud he could not have envisaged that even by dint of careful selection and breeding in years to come, his sheep would be judged the finest of their kind in the world.

John and his wife, Catherine, had seven sons and two daughters. They built a fine Federation-style homestead at Collinsville and encouraged their family to participate in various sports, particularly cricket and tennis. John was a strict task-master, sometimes described as a 'hard man' always demanding the best from his family and his employees alike. For many years he was a member of the Hallett District Council. As an ardent Methodist, he was also a strict teetotaller. His sermons at family services held in the dining room were at times said to be an hour long. Arthur, the sixth son was mainly responsible for placing the stud into the pre-eminent position it held for so many decades during the last century. John Collins died in July 1932, just four days after his wife. They are buried in the Burra Cemetery, but the name lives on.