



INFORMATION NEWSLETTER

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Our October Meeting Heather Latz

A history of brickmaking in Marion

Our published program for the year had Greg Drew speaking to us about Brickworks and Pug holes of the Western Suburbs. The MHS's Heather Latz had planned to spend a few minutes at the end of Greg's talk showing, on a 1949 aerial photo, where each of Marion's brickworks and pug holes had been. When Greg advised that he would not be able to attend our meeting, Heather decided she had enough material on Marion's brickmakers to fill Greg's slot.

Heather began her research on Marion's brickmakers in February 2019 when a descendant of the Boots family pointed out errors in what Alison Dolling had written about the family in *The History of Marion on the Sturt*. Heather then researched the other early brickmakers in Marion (to prepare content for a sign about the subject that has been installed in the George Street Reserve) and discovered numerous additional errors in Dolling's pages about brickmakers. The errors have been documented in a folder kept for this purpose in the Marion Heritage Research Centre, and Heather commented that the errors do not detract from Dolling's interesting story about Marion's brickmaking history.

Marion's first two brickyards were established in the late 1840s by brothers Charles and Philip Lattin, who had arrived in Adelaide from Yorkshire in 1840 and 1844 respectively. Philip's pug hole was north of the Sturt River and Charles' was south of the river. Philip made bricks at his site on and off (mostly off) until 1890 and his descendants lived on the plot until 1974, when it was subdivided for housing.

Charles left the district in 1856, coinciding with the arrival of Marion's next brickmaker, Henry Shearing. Heather provided brief summaries of the lives and brickmaking careers of Shearing; Charles Threadgold; Threadgold's eight sons – particularly Thomas and Alf (who dropped the 'a' from their surname); Thomas Boots and his sons Charles and George; Bill Wade; William Best and the Metropolitan Brick Company. A 1935 aerial photo showed the locations of the last three operational brickworks – at George Street and either side of Norfolk Road – but the brick industry in Marion was in decline at that stage thanks to the Depression and competition from larger and more modern operations elsewhere.

To describe how bricks were made in Marion, Heather read a description written by Bob Threadgold, who used to stay with his grandfather Alf in the 1930s. She illustrated the description with photos of the George Street brickworks during Bill Wade's time and an amazing photo of Thomas Boots in the 1870s or 1880s holding a brick mould while at work, probably in the Shearing yard.

Heather then read some passages from the memoir of Ladell May Smith, née Threadgold, who was born in 1912 and grew up in a house on Sturt Road, less than 100 metres south of the function room in which we were sitting. Her father Jim worked at the Threadgold brickyard about 300m north of the function room. The memoir depicted the family's life, chores and leisure activities in Marion 100 years ago.

Finally, Heather showed what was now on the site of each brickyard in Marion – housing, light industry, an RSL complex, sporting facilities and a reserve.

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Vale Margaret Pill, née Western

Margaret Pill, née Western, died on the 10th of October 2021 at the age of 94. Margaret was a great-grand-daughter of Henry Shearing and grand-daughter of George Western, who were both prominent characters in the history of Marion. She lived in Marion throughout her life. She wrote 'Yesterday's Child' so that her memories of growing up in Marion in the 1930s could be shared and as a fundraiser for the restoration of the Marion Wesleyan Chapel. Her stories inspired the popular "Little Marion" statues in Marion. She was generous in sharing her memories and her time for the benefit of the Marion community.

Our Newsletters – Did You Know?

Did you know that since the first meeting of the Marion Historical Society in December 1984, almost 200 newsletters have been produced by the association?

The first newsletter editors were Philippa and Michael Middleton, who produced 29 newsletters between May 1985 and September 1996, each up to 14 pages long. From October 1993 to October 2001, Claude and/or Jenny Rankin produced a double-sided news-sheet five or six times a year. Bob Donley re-introduced the news-sheet in April 2010 and they have been issued monthly since then, with John Hoult doing most of the compilation work after Bob's death at the end of 2011. Heather wrote most of the meeting summaries from 2012 to mid-2016 when Mandy Coote took on that job.

Every newsletter from 2016 to the latest issue can be viewed on the Marion Historical Society web page at <https://www.marion.sa.gov.au/services-we-offer/history-and-heritage/marion-historical-society>. Some copies of the earlier newsletters are stored in the Marion Heritage Research Centre (MHRC) and Heather Latz will be donating her complete set to the MHRC in 2022.

The newsletters have often provided useful information for answering enquiries. Examples in the last couple of years were enquiries about former member and Marion Councillor George Ellis, Bleak House in Park Holme and Ballara in Warradale.

But how can you find out whether an article has been written about a topic, and which issue of the newsletter the article is in? The MHRC has an index on their computer. The index of issues to June 2014 was produced by volunteers Jennifer Vincent and Heather Latz, but in the last few weeks, Heather's daughter Nicole Allen has been updating the index to cover all issues to October 2021. Thanks, Nicole!

Thanks

A big thank you to all the people behind the production of monthly newsletter especially Mandy and Heather who do the really hard work in transcribing the talk into words. Thanks also to those who check it all out to remove my many errors.

Merry Christmas - John

News from the Marion Heritage Research Centre

We have survived and thrived in another year of Covid. The interest in our services continued unabated, enquiries never stop, and the skills of the team and their service to our customers, are sharper and better than ever!

**We will be closing for Christmas
at 4pm on Wednesday 22nd December
and re-open in the New Year at
10 am on Monday 31st January 2023.**

Watch out for our events, listed on the Marion Libraries Facebook site and the *Whats On!* brochure.

*In the meantime, Danielle, Lauren and the
MHRC Volunteers wish you and your families
a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful
and healthy 2022.*

Marion Historical Society

Next meeting:

7.30pm at Cooina

Wednesday 16 February 2022

Danielle Trewartha

Extinct suburbs of Marion



*Wishing you and those you love a merry
Christmas and a happy and healthy new year*

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