

THE FRIENDS OF MAWSON INC

CONTENTS

Pages 1-2 Letter from FoM President Pamela Karran-Thomas

Pages 2-3 **Plans & Events to late 2014**

Pages 3-6 **Comment on Events, News & Views:** update on the new AAE that was trapped in ice and rescued

Pages 6-8 **From The Private Life of Polar Explorers, to when Mrs Mawson Stayed at Home Pt 2 and A meeting to hear Memories of Mawson** report by Jim Jago

EDITORIAL

From the Editor's desk
2014~February

Dear Friends

As this is our first newsletter for 2014, I wish you all a very Happy New Year.

The holidays are generally a quiet time for our FoM committee, however I can report on two special FoM related occasions occurring late in 2013.

In late October I had the pleasure of presenting the first FoM student scholarship at a function at the Adelaide Convention Centre. You may recall that in 2012 we made the decision to present a \$1000 scholarship to a student from the North East Science Trading Centre. This Centre services a number of government high schools in Adelaide's north east and offers specific science based courses for students intending to pursue a career in science.

In 2012 The Centre suggested to FoM that the award should be held over until 2013 to allow the courses more time to develop. So in 2013 our scholarship was awarded to a year 12 student, Andrew Thornton. Andrew also received his school's Physics, Chemistry, Maths Studies and Specialist Maths awards and was Dux of School for 2013 receiving a very high ATAR score.

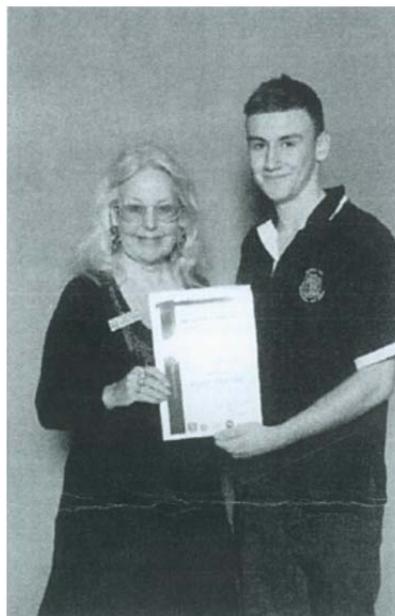
He and his parents were overwhelmed by FoM's award and it will go a long way to supporting him as he begins his university studies in March 2014. Also in late 2013 I had the honour of presenting a \$10,000 cheque to SAM's acting Director, Andrew Lowe and SAM's Chair Jane Lomax-Smith. The money was part of funds raised by FoM through the publication of the Adelie Blizzard.



The \$10,000 will be added to the Museum's Mawson Trust fund and we recently received a formal letter of appreciation for donation.

are all looking forward to FoM events in and hope to have your support once again throughout the year.

Pamela Karran-Thomas
President, FoM.



President Pamela Karran-Thomas and FoM
award recipient Andrew Thornton

PLANS & EVENTS Late 2013 onwards (Mawson or Polar-related)

The National Archives of Australia's exciting exhibition *Traversing Antarctica: the Australian experience* is open daily at the SA Museum's Mawson Gallery until 2 March 2014. It celebrates the centenary of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition led by Dr Douglas Mawson in 1911–14 and charts Australia's long relationship with Antarctica up to the present day.

***Traversing Antarctica* will then tour to the following venues:**

12 April – 15 June 2014

Museum of the Riverina Cnr Baylis & Morrow Sts, Wagga Wagga

6 December – 1 February 2015

Hervey Bay Regional Gallery 166 Old Maryborough Rd, Pialba QLD

14 February – 22 March 2015

Grafton Regional Gallery 158 Fitzroy St, Grafton NSW

Note. Additional material will be on display as well as at the nearby Adelaide University. (See enclosed flyer.)

Other late summer of 2013-14 Aurora-related events during Adelaide's festival of fun:

Research Tuesday February 11 Alan Collins, Emmas McEwin and Mark Pharaoh will all be talking at the first of the year's ever popular University of Adelaide's Research Tuesday event. (See enclosed flyer.)

Note this event may be booked out, and apologies for the late notice – MP.

Night Lab February 19 A special evening with perhaps a younger professional adult audience in mind, with food, drink and fun at SAM, involving scientist and adventurer Tim Jarvis, and David Sefton, Artistic Director of the

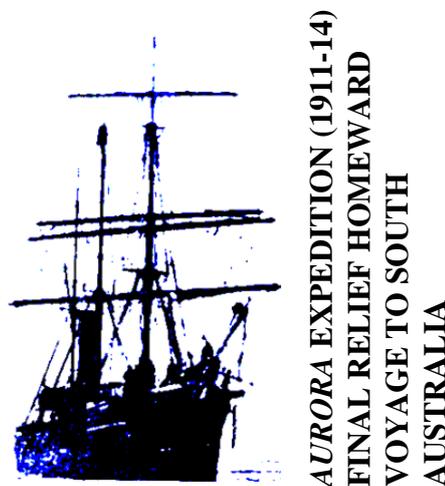
Adelaide Festival. (See enclosed flyer. Note, entrance fee \$25.)

Inquiries: Peter, 08 8313 4002
peter.burdon@adelaide.edu.au

Centenary of the Arrival of Aurora in SA waters. February 26th with a day-long Aurora Symposium and cocktail evening at the University of Adelaide. Also special tours for attendees on the following day, and other events – details will be given during the Symposium, being dependent on weather conditions and numbers. Anyone interested in attending should see the enclosed flyer. Tickets: \$125 / \$75 conc.

Registration:

www.eventbrite.com/event/9504081965



Comment on Events, News & Views

The following information may interest readers, and don't forget, we welcome articles or comments, just address them to the SA Museum – see front page for details.

In the Spirit of Mawson

We have all followed with interest the 2013-14 Australasian Antarctic Expedition led by Prof Chris Turney. While the science they have carried out seems to greatly aid our understanding of the Antarctic (specifically the region off from King George V Land), there can be no doubt even at this early stage, this understanding extends to a renewed appreciating of the power of nature there. The Expedition was already being well reported on before becoming trapped by pack ice and requiring the assistance of several ice-breakers before being finally set free again –by which time much of the expedition team and all the passengers had been airlifted to another ship.

From the Private Life of Polar Explorers, to When Mrs Mawson Stayed at Home

This article is based on a paper given at a 2012 A.H.A. Conference at Adelaide University.

Background

The first part of this research paper detailed expeditionary antics prior to the official departure of the BAE in late 1907, involving a young English teacher, Winifred West. It then followed their return to the UK, and how female favours appear to have been won by Frank Wild amongst others, with the expeditionary commodity in question being polar geological supplies.

It then covered Douglas Mawson's half-year long trip to the UK to explore selling the film rights of what proved to be his last Antarctic expedition. While he had arranged for

accommodation at the Royal Society in London, the family correspondence of Australian musician Iris de Regis referred for many months in 1933 to the comings and goings at Old Park House, Sussex – including that of Mawson. Both Mawson and de Regis were staying with Miss Hazel Hirsch – her horse-riding relative, of independent means.



Royal Society logo, their motto is *Nullius in verba* (Take nobody's word for it)

The Story Continued

It is not known how Douglas and Hazel first met – he actually travelled to the UK quite a few times in the late 1920s in relation to a proposed hydro-electric scheme in New Zealand and of course during the preparations for what became the *Discovery* Expedition he led.*

In fact, in one of the letters home by Iris dated 20.12.32, he mentions Hazel looking forward to seeing Douglas, then en route by ship. So, it seems likely that Hazel *already* knew him prior to his arrival by ship early in 1933.

In the following extracts from her correspondence Mawson is either referred to by surname, or more often as 'the Ex', which appears to have been an abbreviation of 'the Explorer' (based on her use of the word 'Com.' in reference to a Commander elsewhere). Sometimes, he, and some of the men she mentions in passing, were called disparagingly, as 'twaga', a term of unknown origin and meaning. Hazel comes across in this correspondence as besotted with Douglas, and eager to help him in any way. Hence in the extract below there is a reference to use for various purposes.

are all over the furniture in the evenings. The Antarctic prints
twaga is working + Hazel cannot bear to be away for a
moment. Even...

Extract from one letter detailing how 'The Antarctic prints are all over the furniture in the drawing room where the twaga is working + Hazel cannot bear to be away for a moment.'

For ease of reading a number of the more revealing references have been transcribed, and are listed chronologically below:

'[Jan 21st] ...Hazel is in bed with some peculiar kind of cold. It came like a blow last night, she started coughing, no other symptoms – she couldn't sleep in the night + at 5.30 this morning burst into my room making the most ghastly noises like asthma...I really thought she was having hysterics, that someone must have been trying to murder her or she had a letter from the Ex to say "all was over"!'

* In 1926 he and Paquita left the girls with his brother and travelled to UK and USA. In 1927 Mawson sailed on *Rotorua* for England, by way of the Panama Canal. He arrived in the UK on 9 May, based at Royal Societies Club, and spent many of the next months promoting a Hydro-electric scheme in London, returning to Australia by the end of September.

In 1929 he again sailed for the UK, on *Orama*, via Port Said. London-based, planning the *Discovery Expedition*: There he wrote to Paquita that 'It would have been nice if you had been here.' (Mawson of the Antarctic p.159). He left on May 9 on *Maloja* for Australia.

[Jan 25]

'Audrey came over and spent most of yesterday here. The Conservative Ball has to be given up + she is terrified of the week ahead as the Ex had promised to come down. We had great discussions about "it" as she wouldn't have Poppy Stanlake[?] here at the same time + Audrey + I said it was madness to have him here alone after all the talk there has been already...

She doesn't want anyone to know about him except Audrey + me – when we were at the Forbes's Mrs Furber? said she always knew who Hazel had staying here as her maid was a great friend of K – which remark gave Hazel a great fright! The maid told her how Hazel tied labels on all the animals with Welcome written on them for my arrival +[?] they thought it curious – the maid thought it must be an Australian custom, she had never heard of it before. Hazel horrified to see Lady Moltens the Ex was still with her and as Lady M has been [when?] so very disapproving she has been terrified of their meeting + always avoids mentioning him. Audrey [Moltens] said to me once that if her mother knew he had stayed here alone with Hazel she would never be allowed to come again!'



Hazel, with possibly Iris, and Douglas. © Frensham School

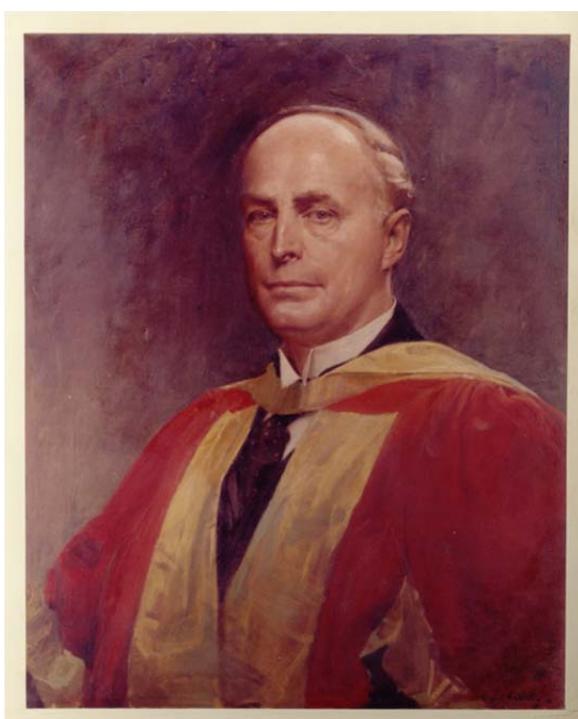
Aside from a date of two where it is known Mawson was giving public lectures in the UK, so the letters then are very helpful in providing details of his domestic arrangements during mid January to later June:

- 28/1/33 **Mawson** staying – ill with a cold
- 5/2/33 "**Ex**" noted as present
- 24/4/33 further references to processing by **Mawson** of material for a book there

- 8/5/1933 **Mawson** 'still' visiting
- 25/6/1933 many references to **Mawson** – this being his last weekend

Other encounters between the two seem highly probably, there are references to Iris being away and to Mawson and her friend being together...

The main purpose of Mawson's visit, as explained in Part 1, was to sell the film rights to the *Discovery* Expedition, and yet, ultimately this proved a great disappointment. (There was probably not a worse time to have attempted this as the Great Depression deepened.) When Mawson finally departed for Australia he did leave with a completed picture of sorts – he had sat for the portrait artist Haley while in England.



Portrait by H. J. Haley, 1933

It is not known if he stayed in contact with Hazel, certainly his wife Paquita is believed to have never known about her existence. Hazel never married and died in the early 1950s.

Paquita's thoughts (in early 1960s) on this trip:

'Looking back from now, how I wish I had managed somehow to go with him, to give him some secretarial help and make a home for him while he was there. Clubs and hotels can be comfortable enough, but all his life Douglas preferred simple food and plenty of milk to drink. He very seldom smoked and drank little wine or alcohol. He had a very busy time on this trip and was exhausted when he returned'.

Ires De Cairos-Rego, who was a prodigiously gifted child pianist, has as her first teacher, her father George de Cairos-Rego, a well-known Sydney musician and composer. He first sent her to Europe for tuition in 1907 and she returned to Australia in 1910, where she was teaching at the Sydney Conservatorium by 1915. She was soloist in concertos by Beethoven and Schumann in 1920 with the NSW State Orchestra. When she returned to Australia she

PLATE I

	PAGE
FIGURES 1-4.— <i>Kellia nimrodiana</i> , Hedley	4
FIGURE 5.— <i>Solecardia antarctica</i> , Hedley	4
FIGURE 6.— <i>Lacuna macmurdensis</i> , Hedley	4
FIGURE 7.— <i>Lovenella austrina</i> , Hedley	5
FIGURE 8.— <i>Vermicularia murrayi</i> , Hedley	6
FIGURES 9-10.— <i>Odostomiopsis major</i> , Hedley	6
FIGURE 11.—Apex of <i>Neobuccinum eatoni</i> , Smith	6
FIGURE 12.—Eggs of <i>Neobuccinum eatoni</i> , Smith	7
FIGURE 13.— <i>Trophon shackletoni</i> , Hedley	7
FIGURE 14.— <i>Trophon longstaffi</i> , Smith.	8

Interestingly, the name of the artist (bottom left of plate) which can clearly be seen in the original paper and has been enlarged below, is clearly given as 'Miss West'.



Miss West del.

Report on a FoM meeting to hear memories of Mawson by two former students

A fascinating meeting was held on November 12, 2013 at the Royal Society (SA) rooms. About 20 people attended. Two of Douglas Mawson's students, Keith Johns and Bryan Forbes (see below), discussed their time as students within the Dept. of Geology at Adelaide where Mawson was Professor of Geology. Keith and Bryan gave excellent insights into Mawson both as a lecturer and a leader of geological excursions. The relationship between Mawson and Cecil Madigan was discussed. Other topics included their perspective of Mawson prior to enrolling at the uni, contact with Mawson as an undergraduate and general aspects of university life in the late 1940s and early 1950s. A surprising point was that none of the students of the day appeared to have asked Mawson anything about his Antarctic experiences. It was a freewheeling session chaired by Jim Jago with frequent questions from the audience both during the general discussion and after the meeting.

Keith Johns originally came from Port Pirie and enrolled in first year science at Adelaide University in 1944. He graduated with BSc(honours) in 1947 and completed an MSc in 1960. He joined the Geological Survey of South Australia as an Assistant Geologist in 1948 being progressively promoted until elevated to the post of Director-General of Mines and Energy in 1983, a post he held until retirement in 1992. In the period 1948 to 1972 Keith was engaged in regional mapping and exploration and appraisal of the State's mineral resources. Keith is a Foundation Member of the Geological Society of Australia and in 2009 he was awarded the Bruce Webb Medal, the most prestigious award given by the SA Division of the GSA. Since retirement Keith has continued to publish papers especially on the historical aspects of mining developments, including on the huge Olympic Dam deposit and on the contributions made by Cornish miners to South Australia.

Bryan Forbes came to Adelaide from Western Australia at the age of 12. After secondary education at Unley High School Bryan commenced a Mining Engineering course at Adelaide University, but soon saw the light and transferred to a geology course, graduating with Bsc(Honors) in 1952. He was then possibly the first student to continue straight on to a PhD which he obtained in 1955 with a thesis on “Proterozoic sedimentary magnesite of South Australia”. The 2001 History of Adelaide University Geology Department indicates that his supervisor was Douglas Mawson, but Bryan states that it was Arthur Alderman. Bryan joined the Geological Survey of South Australia and was involved in their regional mapping programme for many years and finished as Supervising Geologist in Charge of Regional Mapping. This programme resulted in a superb series of maps. Bryan was an active member of the SA Division of the Geological Society of Australia for many years.