

President's message

Geography provides ideas on healthier lives, opportunities and environmentally sustainable development activity for society. This issue of the South Australian Geographical Journal is generally about South Australian development as society learns the lessons of the country's needs. After almost 245 years of European settlement this is vitally important to Australia's fragile ecosystems.

In this issue we learn how geography assists society through its interpretation of the time that degraded stock pugged areas may take to recover back to pasturage. We also learn about the very local activity of providing vegetable produce through the community—which in turn leads to a community's sense of improved amenity and self-worth and well-being.

The South Australian landscape with its Flinders/Mount Lofty Ranges spine running some 900 kms south from the northern tip of Lake Frome's western side to Kangaroo Island provides an iconic bush setting for many a casual visitor and to those who earn their living from those environs. Settlement and technology have provided some hard geographical data from the broad area of the Mount Lofty Ranges on the gradual change to the landscape's vegetation and wildlife of the Ranges from 1945. Careful rehabilitation based upon the geographical data is needed to ensure bush setting and development can coexist.

Adelaide's River Torrens at settlement in 1836 provided some engineering challenges as the river periodically flooded. It took a few decades to work out the river's flood patterns and to provide suitable engineering works for all weather crossings allowing reliable access to promote development.

In this issue we also explore the highlights of initiatives of settlement through our wonderful German heritage in our pluralistic society. Many an activity in South Australia today can trace its origins back to the contributions and developments of our German forbears. Some of the early explorations, mineral assaying, Aboriginal cultural evaluation and farming in the Ranges areas were undertaken by German settlers.

One hundred years ago we read of geographical activity being paramount for development. Development depends upon organised and sustainable settlement—this is why geography is important.

I wish to thank Carolyn Spooner for her work as *Journal* editor for three years, during which time her self-styled *Women's Weekly* approach to editing, introduction of an Editor's message, and of colour photographs has broadened the appeal of the *Journal*.

Rod Shearing
President
admin@rgssa.org.au