

The Muriel Project Epistle No: 11 (June 2011)



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Hello Members and Friends!

The year is flying and there's lots happening as we work towards another AGM. This will be held in August and a date will be advised in the next newsletter. However, don't let that stop you sending back your renewal (enclosed) as your funds are needed to continue Muriel's work via Society activities. And, new members are always welcome, so please spread the word!

The 'Why Muriel Matters' play

The suburban season in June 2011, promoted through the Out of the Square matinee series, was a great success and a further 850 people have now enjoyed the artistic endeavours of our wonderful creative team - and learnt about Muriel's story. Hopefully, they will tell their friends in time for the 4 town regional tour currently being promoted by Country Arts SA:

Clare Valley (Auburn Courthouse Cultural Centre) Sunday 24 July @ 2pm

Whyalla (Middleback Theatre) Tuesday 26 July @ 11am

Streaky Bay (Streaky Bay Institute Hall) Thursday 28 July @ 7.30pm

Pt Lincoln (Nautilus Theatre) Saturday 30 July @ 7.30pm

Muriel would have visited many regional centres in her travels around the state so it is fitting she entertains a new generation of regional residents. Please spread the word to any of your family or acquaintances. Booking details on web page or further info can be obtained from The Society.

The Grille Exhibition at Parliament House/SA History Festival

Our function in Centre Hall on 11 May was well attended and history made with the unveiling of the exhibition, featuring the grille section (courtesy of Westminster), Muriel's actual belt and chains and her Holloway Prison badge (on loan from the Museum of London). Copies of the Police Report and Proclamation Banner (held by the House of Lords Archive) are also on show. Throughout May, many groups came to see the artefacts and view the presentation. Several bookings have resulted from these new contacts and the display will remain until December. Please let us know if you would like to organise a group to come to PH for a tour or need a guest speaker to come to one of your own functions.

Progress Continues

We have a MM postcard! – super sleuth Wendy Herbert has located an original on the web and it is coming to Australia as we go to press. This will be the first piece of original ephemera held in SA – and will star at the AGM. Don't miss seeing it!

Trip to the UK - Frances will now be travelling to the UK and USA in the northern Spring to make sure she is able to speak to MPs at Westminster (after their Summer break and the worst of the Winter weather is over!). This will maximise the work necessary to make sure Muriel plays her rightful part in the UK centenary of limited women's franchise celebrations in 2018. We have 7 years to make this happen!

Research – A good deal of new information has come to light on William Porter through Kim Beazley contacts in USA. Also, WCTU contact Sarah Ward has been really helpful and our thanks go to them and everyone else who has assisted so far. Marie Maddocks is back from her extended trip (thank goodness – we have missed her!) and we look forward to following up new leads with her invaluable help.

Visiting Academics – we have welcomed our first international paid up member after a visit from Dr Beatrice Bijon. Beatrice has met with Frances and Steven and provided very useful advice on a number of aspects of research. We look forward to building on this very cordial initial meeting and a long and happy collaboration.

Matters Family members – Frances will be travelling to Perth shortly and looks forward to catching up with relatives and pursuing a few lines of enquiry.

Victoriana Society – this wonderful group have been very helpful with advice on Muriel's attire. Thanks to all who made Frances welcome at a recent meeting – MM member Wendy is also a Victoriana member and was one of the seamstresses involved in the production of Frances's costume.

Follow Ups

*Web page being updated (thanks Steven) regularly.

*New photos of WMM should be posted soon (thanks Calen).

*Planning well under way for the morning tea at Admiralty House (Sydney) in October. The Society will be guests of Governor General Quentin Bryce and our thanks go to her for this much anticipated opportunity to give us a toe in on the east coast and lead (fingers crossed!) to a big influx of new members - and information. Guests will hopefully be in the position (and willing) to further The Society's aims and promote Muriel to a much wider audience.

Merchandise

Still plenty on hand – Society badges (\$10), Muriel cards (\$10 for a pack of 4), WMM Centenary souvenir booklets/programs (\$5) and limited stock of Centenary hankies – never to be reprinted (\$20).

New items will be considered shortly – people have asked for posters, what do you think? We could provide some of Muriel in her various adventures – please have a think and get back to your hard working Executive Committee.

Presentations

May kept Frances busy and the power point presentation has been significantly updated. Bookings not heavy at the moment, so referrals are being sought. Guest speaking spots are one of the best ways to learn more about Muriel in Adelaide – 4degrees of separation has supplied several great leads.

Significant Current Lines of Investigation

*Have uncovered detailed information about Muriel's home in Penn Bucks.

*Significant new leads on Muriel's husband William Arnold Porter.

Diary Dates

*Come and visit The Grille Exhibition before the end of December!

*A date will be set for the AGM shortly and advised in next newsletter.