



1946 Logo



125th Anniversary Logo



2006 Logo

## A Little Bit of “Linden” — The Story of the Installation Stone

*David Porteous, 47th Chief of the Society from 2004 to 2007, relates the history of the Society’s Installation Stone, used at the Installation ceremonies of each Chief since **Lennox Pawson**.*

**B**y the early 1960’s “Linden”, the former home of **Alexander Hay**, the first Chief of the then South Australian Caledonian Society (later the Royal Caledonian Society of South Australia Inc.), sadly, had been allowed to fall into considerable disrepair and was demolished to make way for a housing development. The only parts of this historic old homestead to escape the demolishers ball were the coach house on the north side of what is now Wood Grove and, curiously, a concrete pergola on the south side of the street. As part of the development, the coach house (see picture below left) was converted into a dwelling and the pergola (see picture below right) was incorporated into the garden of another dwelling. Both can still be seen today.



“Linden” showing the keystone above the first floor window (arrowed)

During the demolition, I approached the demolishers to ask if I might have the two hand-carved sandstone keystones above the windows on the ground and first floors. To this they agreed.



The Old Coach House at Linden

I retrieved the two keystones from the rubble and stored them for some twenty or so years, intending to incorporate them into a pair of gate posts to my front entrance. I eventually constructed these in 1986.



Part of the old Pergola at Linden

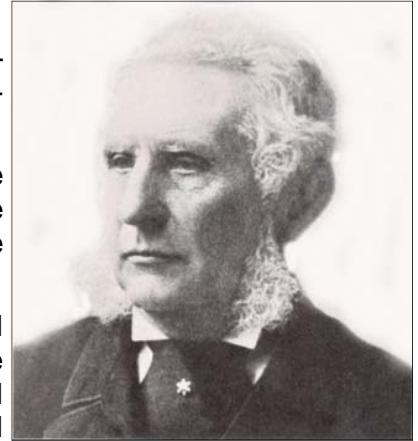
The keystone for the lower window, having to bear more weight than that for the upper one, was about 400 millimetres deep, whilst that from the upper window was only about 250 millimetres deep. Since the lower keystone was bigger than the gatepost, I decided to cut off the back of it to use for some project at a later date.

In 1996, a couple of years after I retired following nearly forty years with the Adelaide City Council, latterly as Chief Valuer and Property Manager, I decided to pursue my Scottish roots, something I had not had time to do during my working life and I joined the Royal Caledonian Society of South Australia and soon began to realise the significance of those two keystones I had rescued so many years before.

“Linden”, I learned, was the former home of **Alexander Hay** (see picture at right), one of the founders of the then South Australian Caledonian Society and its first Chief.

To my joy, I had in my possession not only the two keystones of the first Chief’s house — a house with a great deal of attachment to the Society whilst it was occupied by Hay, but importantly, a large piece cut from the rear of one of those stones.

Always being one to get fully involved in any organisation to which I belonged, it was only a short while before I offered myself for service to the Society and was elected to its Council. In the following year, I was appointed as the Society’s Secretary. Since joining the Society, I had taken a keen interest in all things Scottish and had learned that the early Scottish kings had taken their oath of allegiance with their



Alexander Hay

right foot placed in a carved footprint, usually on top of a promontory or similar. There are several of these carved footprints still visible in Scotland today.

I decided that I would carve such a footprint in the piece I had cut off the ground floor keystone and still in my possession. The stone is quite heavy, so I realised I would need to incorporate some handles to allow it to be carried.

I presented the finished stone to then Chief **Lennox Pawson** on behalf of the Society with the request that future Chiefs of the Society be installed on this stone from the house of the Society’s first Chief. My gift was accepted and to date, five Chiefs have been installed on the stone — **Lennox Pawson, Ann Calver Jim Wallace, myself, David Porteous and Anne Miller**. By coincidence and quite unexpectedly, I was the fourth Chief



The Society’s Installation stone, created from the rear of the ground floor keystone of “Linden”, the former home of the First Chief of the then South Australian Caledonian Society

to be installed on the stone, on 20 November 2004.

At right, are details of each of the two keystones “rescued” from Linden. As can be seen, the two keystones are similar but not identical to one another, indicating that they most likely were carved by two different people. Luckily, they were only slightly damaged as they were removed during the demolition of “Linden”.

When the Society once again acquires its own “home”, the Installation Stone and the many other items of memorabilia will be able to be permanently displayed.



The left hand gatepost containing the keystone from the upper window



The right hand gatepost containing the keystone from the ground floor window