



# Paintings of Gawler Public Library



Gawler Institute Reading Room, ca. 1908  
(Source: E H Coombe, *History of Gawler 1837-1908*)

## **Gawler Public Library**

Institute Building, 91 Murray Street  
Gawler SA 5118  
Phone (08) 8522 9213 Fax (08) 8522 9212  
Email : [library@gawler.sa.gov.au](mailto:library@gawler.sa.gov.au)  
Website : [www.gawler.sa.gov.au](http://www.gawler.sa.gov.au)

**Of the many noteworthy citizens of this old and progressive town, a few have their memory perpetuated in oil paintings hanging in the old Gawler Institute Reading Room....**



## James Martin



The Hon. James Martin, M.L.C. was born in Cornwall in 1821. He had little formal education before he began work to help support his widowed mother with seven small children.

For health reasons, James Martin migrated to South Australia in 1847 on the *Belle Alliance*, and arrived in Gawler on June 15, 1848 with a dray containing his young wife, some furniture and a few tools. Possessed of a natural ability for anything mechanical, James Martin commenced and built up a business in the town and at one time he employed around 700 men on a property that covered 18 acres. He began by manufacturing farm implements, moved on to mining machinery and finally railway locomotives and rolling stock.

James Martin's influence on the town was far reaching over half a century and he became known as the "Father of Gawler". He was instrumental in the establishment of Gawler Institute (he gave a portion of the land and supplied the plans) and was its President (1858-60 and 1867). For eight years (1861-64, 1868, 1877-78 and 1887) he was Mayor of Gawler and he held office in the Agricultural Society, the Freemasons' Lodge of Fidelity, the Building society and the Gawler Rifles and was a foundation member of the Gawler School of Mines.

James Martin laid the foundation stones for the Gawler Primary School and the Town Hall. His fellow townsmen presented him with a commemorative trowel and seal on the occasion of the laying of the foundation stone of the Town Hall and with a gavel on the occasion of laying of the foundation stone of Gawler Primary School. These are on display in the Reading Room.

From 1865 to 1868, James Martin was the Member of Parliament for Barossa and from 1885 until his death in 1899, he was a Member of the Legislative Council.

As a token of esteem, a life-size, white marble statue of James Martin was erected by the people of the town. It first stood at the corner of Murray Street and Calton Road but is now located on Julian Terrace.

James Martin is buried at the Willaston Cemetery.

**Painting by Andrew MacCormac, 1877**

## Leonard S. Burton



Leonard Samuel Burton, J.P., was born in England in 1824. He arrived in South Australia in 1850. In 1853 he arrived in Gawler to take up the position of headmaster at St. George's School.

After the Education Act of 1875 was passed and the new State school system was inaugurated, the private schools declined. Mr Burton accepted the position of headmaster of the Gawler School but resigned after two-and-a-half years to re-open St. George's School where he served until 1893. Upon retirement, he received from his old scholars an illuminated address and a purse of sovereigns.

Mr Burton was a member of the Humbug Society, Treasurer of Gawler Institute (1860-1889), Secretary of the Bible Society for 40 years, an office-holder of the Lodge of Fidelity, a trustee of St. George's Church, Mayor of Gawler (1884-85) and, at the time of his death in a railway accident on 23 February, 1895, he was a Councillor.

Leonard Burton is buried at the Anglican Cemetery, Cheek Avenue, Gawler.

**Painting by Andrew MacCormac, 1895**

## George Warren



George Warren, J.P., was born in Scotland in 1820 and arrived in South Australia in 1842 and moved to Gawler in 1850. A surveyor by profession, he went into business as a surveyor and auctioneer. He served as Councillor for North Ward in the first Council; was a member of the Humbug Society; was president of the Agricultural Society for many years; was a member of the first School Board of Advice and was President of the Gawler Institute (1881-82).

George Warren died on February 25, 1895, as a result of a railway accident. He is buried at the Anglican Cemetery, Cheek Avenue, Gawler.

**Painting by Andrew MacCormac, 1895**

## William Barnet



William Barnet was born in Scotland in 1834. He learnt the trade of printing before coming to South Australia in 1854 on board the same ship that brought the first locomotive and rails for the Adelaide and Port Adelaide railway. He arrived in Gawler in 1857 and started *The Bunyip* printing business. The first history of Gawler, written by Dr. Nott, was published by William Barnet in 1861. The first edition of *The Bunyip* newspaper appeared in September 1863.

William Barnet was a Private, and later a Lieutenant, in the Gawler Rifles; secretary of the Lodge of Fidelity; assessor for South Ward in the first Town Council and was one of the people who took part in the Masonic ceremony of setting the keystone of the arch of St. George's Church in 1861.

He died suddenly after attending the funeral of his friend, Leonard Burton, on 25 February, 1895. He is buried at the Willaston Cemetery.

**Painting by Andrew MacCormac, 1895**

## George Nott



Dr George Nott, MRCSE, was born in 1820 in Westminster, London. He migrated to Australia on the *Amity Hall* in 1850 with his wife and two children. They first lived in the Lyndoch Valley and arrived in Gawler in 1852. During the 20 years he resided in Gawler, he became one of the most popular and well-respected citizens of the town. He was said to be “genial, versatile, public-spirited and a skillful surgeon and physician with a generous disposition”.

Dr Nott was a gifted artist, theatrical actor, poet and writer of wit. As a member of the Humbug Society he became the first editor of *The Bunyip* and his *A short sketch of the rise and progress of Gawler (1860s)* was the earliest book to be published about the history of Gawler.

George Nott was interested in political matters and served as Mayor of Gawler (1865). He died on 9 December, 1872 and is buried at the Willaston Cemetery where a monument of Aberdeen granite was erected over his grave by the residents of Gawler.

**Painting by Andrew MacCormac, 1877**

## John McKinlay



John McKinlay was born in Scotland in 1819, came to Australia in 1836 and later was a pastoralist near the River Darling. In 1861 he led an expedition across Australia in search of Burke and Wills and reached the shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria on 3 May, 1862. In 1865 he led a party to explore the Northern Territory. On his return he took up residence in Gawler and soon after, in 1863, he married the daughter of his friend, James Pile.

As a tribute to the memory of this intrepid and skillful explorer who was known as “Big John”, a monument was erected in Murray Street, Gawler, adjacent to Pioneer Park. He died on 31 December 1872 and is buried at the Willaston Cemetery.

This painting pre-dates Federation. It is interesting to note that the Northern Territory did not exist in 1880 and also that his name is misspelt.

### **Painting by Andrew MacCormac, 1880**

#### **The Painter...**

**Andrew MacCormac** was born at County Down, Ireland in 1826. He migrated to Australia, arriving in Melbourne in 1854. A fine portrait painter, he studied at Leigh's Academy in London in 1852, and in 1856, he was a foundation member of the Victorian Society of Fine Arts.

In the early 1860s, Andrew MacCormac studied for the Church, was ordained, and in 1867 was appointed pastor of Newstead, near Castlemaine, Victoria. He moved to South Australia in 1868 and two years later exhibited portraits and figure paintings at the South Australian Society of Arts. In 1880 he relinquished his ministry to paint full time. He painted numerous commissioned portraits of civic leaders as well as other notables such as the explorers Stuart and McKinlay. He continued a vigorous output of portraits, exhibiting widely both in Adelaide and interstate. He died in 1918.

Other works of his may be found in Parliament House, The Art Gallery of South Australia and the Northern Territory Museum of Arts and Sciences in Darwin.

## James Harris



James Harris was born in Cornwall in 1824, came to South Australia in 1849 and to Gawler in 1852. He acquired the Gawler Stores and built a thriving business. In addition to the lines of a general merchant, he did a large trade in imported agricultural machinery and implements which he sold in other parts of South Australia.

James Harris was a member of the first town council, a trustee of St. George's Church, a supporter of the Institute, a member of the Lodge of Fidelity and a member of the Agricultural Society committee. He died in 1879 and is buried in the Anglican Cemetery, Cheek Avenue, Gawler.

### **Painting by S. Solomon, 1879**

#### **The Painter...**

**Saul Solomon** was a commercial photographer who had a studio in Ballarat from 1857 to 1862. He remained in Ballarat until 1874, working in partnership with Bardwell. The firm Solomon and Bardwell was also active in Maryborough, and Dunolly in Victoria. From 1874 to 1891, Solomon operated the Adelaide School of Photography 1t 51 Rundle Street, Adelaide. He was an original shareholder of Adelaide Arcade Pty. Ltd.

Solomon painted portraits from photographs. Solomon's entry in the *Dictionary of Australian Artists*, page 746, says: 'a descendant stated that Solomon's wife is known to have coloured at least one profile portrait and that Solomon employed a Japanese artist to tint his photographs.'

## Hilda Heinrich, AM



Born Hilda Florence Lutzow, Mrs Hilda Heinrich was the last Gawler Institute Librarian. For thirty years, until 1985, the Institute and its library were her domain. She was fiercely proud of Gawler, its history and its heritage and was awarded the Order of Australia Medal (1982) for her dedication to the Institute. Mrs Heinrich also worked tirelessly for the Gawler Primary School Welfare Club, the Institute Ladies Committee and the National Trust.

During and after World War II many friends and relatives came to stay at her home in Seventh Street. And when European migrants came to Gawler there was usually a room to let for those waiting to get a start in a new country.

### **The Painter...**

**John Dowie** is a painter, sculptor and writer. He has significantly contributed to visual arts in South Australia and Australia for more than eighty years. His artistic career includes over 50 public sculpture commissions including the Three Rivers Fountain in Victoria Square, Adelaide and the Sir Ross Smith Memorial at Adelaide Airport.



He was named Senior Australian of the Year 2005.

## Moliere Reading Le Tartuffe to his Housekeeper



**Purchased by the late Sir John Downer, KCMG, in Florence in 1887 and presented in his memory by Lady Downer, 1915.**

**Moliere** (1622-1673) was the stage name of Jean Baptiste Poquelin, a French writer of comedy. He earned a law degree but did not practise law. Instead, he and a group of friends founded the Illustre-Theatre. After a performance by the troupe attracted the attention of King Louis XIV, Moliere was provided with a permanent theatre and was asked by the King to write court entertainments.

*Tartuffe, or The Imposter* (1664) was a satire on religious hypocrisy. It aroused such great church opposition that the play could not be performed for several years.

**Sir John Downer** was elected as the representative for the Barossa in the House of Assembly in 1878. He was Attorney-General from 1881-84 and in 1885 became Premier. His government was defeated in 1887 but he became Premier again in 1892 for eight months. He was a South Australian senator from 1901-03 and returned to represent Southern District in the South Australian Legislative Council from 1905 until his death in 1915. Sir John Downer was the grandfather of Alexander Downer, the Federal Liberal Politician.

**Evening**  
by  
**Rose Lowcay (Mrs H L Sheard)**

The painting was presented to the Gawler Institute by Mr and Mrs H L Sheard, April 1929.

Mr H L. Sheard was a Councillor for Gawler South Ward, 1925-26.



**The Old Shepherd, Any Left Behind**  
by **G. W. Bischof, 20/10/86**  
**1886**

George William Bischof was the son of Hermann Bischof, President of Gawler Institute, 1915-16.

**Mr L. B. (Laurie) Ronan**  
by **Kaye Harkness**

Mr Laurie Ronan was President of Gawler Institute, 1969-1970 and 1981-1991.



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Murray Street, Gawler, 1907  
(Town of Gawler, Gawler Heritage Collection)

All paintings hanging in the Gawler Public Library Reading Room are part of the Town of Gawler, Gawler Heritage Collection

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