NOTICE OF GENERAL MEETING

The 3rd General Meeting of the Society for 1985 will be held in

THE CONSERVATION CENTRE, 120 WAKEFIELD STREET, ADELAIDE

on

MONDAY 27th MAY 1985 AT 8.00 PM.

AGENDA

1. Apologies:

2. Minutes of the previous General Meeting:
Minutes of the previous General Meeting held at the Conservation Centre, Monday 22nd April 1985, having been circulated in this Journal, to be confirmed.

2. New Members:
The following new members have joined the Society since the last meeting:--

   Mr. C.J. SPEED
   Ms. CAROLINE LAWRENCE
   Mr. BARRY CRAIG
   Mr. STEPHEN HARDS

4. Papers and Journals:
Papers and journals received from other societies and organisations will be tabled at this meeting.

5. Business:

6. Speaker:

   Mr Harry Howard will address the meeting and the title of his address, illustrated with slides will be:-

   "Travels through the Tanami Desert."

   Harry has been a member of this Society for many years, and has a deep interest in Rock Art.

7. Supper will be served.

R.Allison
Hon. Secretary
c/o 213 Greenhill Road
EASTWOOD SA 5063

SUBSCRIPTIONS. Members are reminded that subscriptions for 1985 were due last October. After June, unfinancial previous subscribers will no longer receive the Journal.
The following interesting paper was written by Bill Thomas - a Society member of many years, his contribution is gratefully acknowledged. The Editor hopes that other members of the Society will be encouraged by this paper, to submit articles of their own experiences, the rejection rate is 0%.

ABORIGINAL RELICS ON A FARM IN THE MID-NORTH.

Whilst agricultural activities may at times seem incompatible with the preservation of Aboriginal sites, the long hours spent on a tractor seat, gazing at the passing ground beneath one's feet, do at least allow for quite close scrutiny of that portion of land which the Bank so graciously allows us to call our own.

Although disturbed many times over the course of 100 years of frequent cultivation, the larger stone tools are readily observed and any concentrations of them naturally lead to further investigation in that particular area.

One campsite, covering 2-3 hectares, a nearby outcrop of medium grained quartzite which appears to have been a source of material for many of the implements, scattered cores, and large flakes have been found over an area of about 450 hectares.

The campsite appears to be well placed on rising, well drained ground near the junction of two dry creeks. Remnant mallee (Eucalyptus porosa) and Broughton willow (Acacia salicina) grow in the immediate vicinity, suggesting a larger stand of timber in pre-European times. The general area was not well wooded at the time of European settlement; it was portion of the grass plains noted by Eyre as he traversed what are now known as the Gulnare plains in 1840. Other remnant vegetation includes She-oak (Casuarina stricta) Emu bush (Eremophila longifolia) Golden wattle (Acacia pycnantha) Blackboys (Xanthorrhoea) Needle bush (Hakea leucoptera) and Galostemma purpur-eum. The bulbs of the latter genus are reported to have been cooked and eaten by Aborigines in the Northern Territory (A.B. & J.W Cribb "WILD FOOD IN AUSTRALIA"). Some preparation would seem to be necessary, as in an unprepared state, the bulbs have an extremely bitter taste. (personal experience).

The only water available near the site at the present time is during brief times of flooding of the adjacent creeks. At the time of settlement, a lagoon is reported to have existed during wet winters near the site of the township of Gulnare, 2 kilometres to the north. There are several permanent streams; the Broughton River, the Yacka-moorundie and Never Never creek within a distance of 10 kilometres as well as several small springs several kilometres to the east and north-east in the nearby ranges. The extent of the campsite could possibly argue for a more available source of water. The possibility of a wetter regime at some time in the past, resulting in more frequent flows in the nearby creeks could be worth considering.
The implements on the site are mostly core tools showing varying amounts of secondary trimming on their high angled working edges. Several high domed "horseshoe" cores weighing from 400 to 1000 grams are present as well as irregularly shaped blocks of similar weights and degrees of retouch. Some cores are much flatter with parallel bases and upper surfaces and trimming along one or more of the margins. Several hammerstones are included in the kit, one in particular showing considerable usage.

Closer inspection of the site has revealed a variety of small flake tools including casual flakes, some with dentated margins, several microliths, a point trimmed on one edge only, 3 end scrapers 3-4 cms. in length and a scraper resembling a tula chisel made from milky quartz. One small piece of chert of a variety not personally known to occur in this area has been found as well as a small Anadara trapezia shell. This sub-fossil is often washed up on the shores of Spencer Gulf some 70 kilometres to the west.

Quartzite of varying textures occurs near and at the site and appears to have been used in the manufacture of most of the tools. An outcropping of fine grained rock several hundred metres to the south has produced a number of knapped cores and numerous flakes in the vicinity, giving mute evidence of the use of this resource.

Finds on the remainder of the farm have been limited to isolated core tools and occasional flakes. The apparently random occurrence of these large implements elsewhere than on the campsite has led the writer to contemplate the possibility of the utilization of small stands of timber in a predominantly grassland habitat. Perhaps the tools were taken to these hypothetical stands, used to obtain the required material, and then abandoned. Or perhaps such suggestion is merely the result of too many hours on a tractor, gazing at the furrow from the preceding round.