NOTICE OF GENERAL MEETING

The 5th General Meeting of the Society for 1985 will be held in the

CONSERVATION CENTRE, 120 WAKEFIELD STREET, ADELAIDE

on

MONDAY 22nd JULY 1985

AGENDA

1. Apologies:

2. Minutes of the previous General Meeting:
   Minutes of the general meeting held in the Conservation Centre, on
   Monday 24th June 1985, having been circulated in this journal, to
   be confirmed.

3. Papers and Journals:
   Papers and journals received from other societies and organisations,
   since the last meeting, will be tabled at the meeting.

4. Business:

5. Speaker:
   Mr Christopher Nobbs, Arts Teacher with the SA Education
   Department, will address the Society. The subject of his
   address will be his research into :-

   The legend of Murmura Darana.

6. Supper will be served.

R.Allison,
Hon. Secretary
c/o The Conservation Centre
120 Wakefield Street
ADELAIDE SA 5000
A Note on Two Radio-carbon Dates Recently Obtained From Sand-dunes in the Silver Sands Area.

Over the past ten years several radio-carbon dates have been obtained from Aboriginal sites located in the sandhills along the coast south of Adelaiade. They serve not only to date the archaeological material with which they are associated, but also document the development of the dune systems in which they occur.

The last two dates received in this series were obtained from Silver Sands, seventy kilometres south of Adelaiade. Two separate features were sampled. They were located over 1 metre below the present dune surface, and approximately 400 metres inland from the beach front. The dune in which they occurred had originally formed a tongue of sand running south across Norman Road into Coolangatta Road. Both samples were collected from a dark grey, clayey band, which possibly represents a former stabilised dune surface.

The two features sampled were uncovered by the owner of the land, Mr Bob Moore, whilst excavating the area for an ornamental pool. The first site consisted of a hearth containing eleven stones, many aggregates of charcoal and one regular core of quartzite. The hearth was 50 cms in diameter. The sample sent to the Gakashuin radiocarbon dating laboratory, was collected from between the hearth stones and has returned a date of:

$$640 \pm 90 \text{ B.P. or A.D. 1310}$$

The second feature was sampled a month later, having been uncovered 1.5 metres from the hearth, when excavation of the pool was resumed. This feature was a concentration of charcoal, containing no stones. It lay in the same dark grey, clayey band as the hearth but was some 10cms above it. It has now been dated to:

$$1790 \pm 130 \text{ B.P. or A.D. 160}$$

The difference between the two dates is of some concern, but there is no reason to doubt the accuracy of the dating: both samples were of good, clean charcoal with little root penetration. Both
features were quite separate and the absence of any cultural material in the matrix strongly argues that both deposits were formed by two discrete historical events. Given the amount of sand movement, and the irregular, lateral movements that occur in even quite stable dunes the difference is of little significance.

These two dates are of particular interest as they are the first that have been obtained for the Silver Sands-Aldinga area. When members of the Anthropological Society of South Australia surveyed this area in 1979 many small sites were located in the dunes, along with the remnant of a very large site reported by early collectors from the 1940's onward. This site appears to have been located only fifty metres to the south-east of the present features and covered several hundred square metres. It has been almost completely destroyed by the removal of sand for the Myponga pipeline, and by housing development. Early accounts indicated that this site contained many microliths; those "type-fossils" for the middle period of Australia's prehistory. Small numbers of these artefacts have been found in the frontal dunes and appear to originate in a narrow dark grey band one to three metres below the present dune surface. There is every chance that this is the same geomorphological feature that we have now dated, as less than 2,000 years old. If this is so the dates are quite compatible with the microlithic period.

Both dates are also compatible with current theories of the development of the recent dune systems along Gulf St Vincent. They are of the same range as dates obtained earlier from two Aboriginal sites in the Normanville Sandhills: 1660 ± 80 B.P. or A.D. 290 from the southern section and 2400 ± 1900 or 450 B.C. from a hearth 200 metres south of Carrickalinga Creek.

I would like to thank Mt Bob Moore and his wife for their hospitality and patience in waiting for our investigation. I am grateful to the Sturt Campus Staff Research Fund for funding the dating of these samples.

V. Campbell, July 1985