

**Community Newsletter**

As many of you may be aware, Lenswood is this year celebrating 100 years since its naming. While there have been people living in the region for much longer, Lenswood itself only came about in 1917. Up until that time, the nearest postal service was at Forest Range. The following newspaper excerpt (sourced from the Forest Range and Lenswood History Group) sheds light on why Lenswood was formed.

June 5, 1917

“The eastern portion of the Forest Range district has long been inconvenienced by lack of postal facilities. Some residents were situated from two to four miles from the office, and as the bulk of mail business went to that part it was felt that some means should be found to overcome the difficulty. A strong committee has induced the Federal Government to establish a new office under the name of Lenswood.”

LENSWOOD POST OFFICE. (1917, June 5).  *Daily Herald (Adelaide, SA : 1910 – 1924)*

As to the name Lenswood, there is some hearsay around where the name came from. Lenswood was named by Arthur Mason but how did he come up with this name? There is likely some linkage to the Lens region in France. Australian soldiers fought near Lens (in France) in the battle of Bullecourt in April/May 1917 and over 10,000 men were lost. Some men from this district would have been fighting in that region at the time. The actual Battle of Lens (Hill 60) was fought by Canadians in August, however, which was after Lenswood was named. We have a sister town Lenswood in Manitoba, Canada.

So how are we celebrating this important milestone for not only our township, but also the district?

The Lenswood and Forest Range Community Association has been very busy working on a number of projects to help mark the occasion. You may have noticed that the entry signs coming in and out of the Lenswood township went missing for a few days. This was so that the date on them could be updated to correctly reflect the centenary (they previously showed a date more reflective of Forest Range’s formation).

We have also engaged with the Adelaide Hills Council to change the name of the Lenswood Recreation Park to the Lenswood Centenary Park. The Council have gone through a community consultation process for this and the name is now in the process of being changed. Why the change? Well, we are also planning on building a heritage trail through the park, with a number of steel silhouettes depicting the history of the region. There is an example of a woodcutter silhouette on the western fence of the Lenswood Primary School, and the plan is for 10 of these style silhouettes to be installed throughout the park (showing a range of historically relevant people and occupations, from indigenous people, gold panner, wood cutter, charcoal burner, fruit tree through to a number of others).

Some of the Lenswood Primary School children have been busy over the past term developing designs for the silhouettes. We are now in the final design phase and are working with Council on formal plans for installation. The Council have also cleared a number of fallen trees and mown a pathway through the Park that will form the route for the heritage trail. They have also placed logs as tables and chairs to help encourage people to linger within the Park and enjoy its beautiful environment.

Each silhouette will have a small sign and a QR Code (a special bar code that can be scanned by a Smart Phone) that will link to a web page that outlines some more detail on that element of the history of the region. The school children will be busy working on this over the next term (with guidance from the history group). These web pages will be easily able to be updated by future generations of children over time.

When we brainstormed what we would like to do at the Centenary Park, there were a number of other ideas for improvement of the area to make it a special place for locals and visitors to the region to enjoy. While we are not going to get to all of those this year, it is hoped that the Heritage Trail is just the beginning of further community involvement with this beautiful part of our district.

The Lenswood Primary School are also very busy rehearsing for their whole of school play, “Tale of the Century”, which has been written specially to look back on the past 100 years in the district. The children are thoroughly enjoying their rehearsals for what is shaping up to be an extremely entertaining performance in September. There will also be a special Lenswood Centenary class featuring apples in the cookery section at this year’s Uraidla and Summertown show in November.

The other main event that we are planning for is a Community Picnic, to be held on Sunday 15th October at the Lenswood Memorial Park (Lenswood Oval) from 11 am to 5 pm. The aim of the picnic is to bring the community together in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere for a day of celebration of our past 100 years.

We are encouraging all past and present Lenswood/Forest Range community as well as those who have worked in the area, visited or have an affiliation to the district to come along and catch up with old friends and acquaintances. What a fantastic opportunity to also meet others within the community.

There will be a range of food and non-alcoholic drinks for sale (such as burgers, sausages and apple pancakes) or you can bring along a picnic basket and your own beverages. There will be raffles, prizes, historical displays and the launch of the Lenswood History book. Lennie the Centenary, Celebrity Centipede will be making a star appearance, there will be 100 bouncing beach balls and the Lenswood Primary School Choir will be performing.

We will just be asking for a small donation on entry to help cover the costs of putting on the event.

Please help spread the word and keep this day free.

**Wanting to get involved?**

Considerable time and effort is required in order to bring these community initiatives together. If you want to help out there are lots of ways you can get involved:

* Come along to the Lenswood Forest Range Community Association AGM and Picnic Planning meeting from 12 noon on Saturday 29th July at the Lenswood Oval
* Come along to other planning meetings. You can keep an eye out on the Lenswood and Forest Range Post Office noticeboards for updates on meeting dates and times. Meeting information is also posted on the Lenswood Forest Range Community Association Website at <http://lenswood-forestrange.org.au/>
* Follow our Lenswood Centenary Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/LenswoodCentenary/> to keep informed
* Donate some expertise or goods for a raffle prize
* Sponsor a silhouette or picnic activity
* Help out at a Centenary Park working bee
* Help out with a range of assorted jobs for the Community Picnic
* Any other expertise or assistance you may be able to offer (no matter how small)!

If you think you can help out with any of the above and want to be involved, either come along to a meeting or contact Lenswood Forest Range Community Association Chairperson Susie Green on 0417 451 999 or lenswood100years@gmail.com

Lenswood Forest Range Community Association