



ISSUE 25 - MARCH 2013



# THE WAYFARER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ADAM LINDSAY GORDON COMMEMORATIVE COMMITTEE INC.

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**POEM "THE SWIMMER"**



### The Four Corners of the Earth.

And God said unto the men, "go to the four corners of the earth and there ye shall find your perfect wives".



And then God made the earth round, and laughed.

### A MUSICAL TREAT

The **Song Cycle** "Sighs of Sorrow" will soon be out on CD with the poems of Adam Lindsay Gordon set to music by Xavier Brouwer, composer of the music for "Mary MacKillop".



With Tenor, Daniel Todd  
And Pianist, Daniel Carter  
From the Victorian Opera  
Listen: <http://sdrv.ms/X1Q3UE>

### The Torquay Froth and Bubble Literary Festival Inc.

Held its AGM on Friday March 8.



The new committee are:  
President, Tim Robinson;  
Vice President, Elrae Adams;  
Treasurer, Travis M Sellers;  
Secretary, John Adams;  
Ordinary Committee Members,  
Viv Sellers and Jan Roberts.

### FILM-A DOCUDRAMA "RIDER AND WRITER"

Based on the life of Adam Lindsay Gordon whilst in the South East of South Australia and Western Victoria. - DVD out in early 2014.

Being produced by Brenton Manser with cinematography by Robert Tremelling.

This is the third docudrama for Brenton and Robert. The self-funded Mount Gambier based identities and their team of volunteers have become well known for their earlier work, 'The Wreck of the Admella' and 'Old Mary's Ride'.



Jakin Manser Plays Adam Lindsay Gordon

### Why not become an Adam Lindsay Gordon Member?

Only \$15:00 plus \$5 joining fee.

Help us to keep the memory of Gordon alive, with access to our members area.

For details please go to:

<http://adamlindsaygordon.org/joining.htm>

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**THE ADAM LINDSAY GORDON COMMEMORATIVE COMMITTEE INC. (A0049425F)**

**PATRONS: PROFESSOR WESTON AND JANICE BATE**

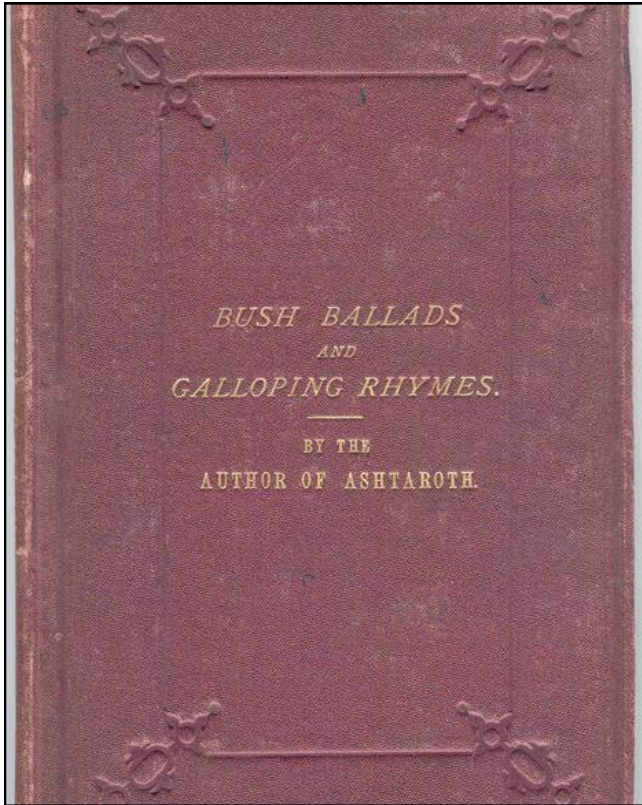
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ARTICLES

A Riddle We May Not Unravel



If you or I, dear reader, visited Melbourne for a day's outing, and then, say, a month later sat down and tried to write everything that we did on that day, we would struggle with our memories, often confusing one event with another. Here are some of the recollections of Gordon on his last day in Melbourne, by his friends.

Gordon spent the whole day of his death at the Yorick Club and killed himself three hours later on Brighton Beach.

Gordon was seen by his friends the day before his rumoured death apparently in high health and spirits.

Gordon was seen the day before in all the strength and pride of manhood, and had noted his flow of animal spirits, and heard him speak cheerfully of his present prospects, and detailed plans for the future.

*Hopes that his death was just a rumour were dispelled the next day by Dr. James Patrick Murray's report to the coroner announcing the suicide of Gordon.*

Gordon visited his publisher, Clarkson, Massina and Company, Little Collins Street East, on Thursday morning June 23, 1870 and received the account for his new book, Bush Ballads and Galloping Rhymes.

He then wandered through the streets of Melbourne in the last stage of melancholia.

During the morning he met Kendall, or a mutual friend who showed him a laudatory two column, rough print, of the critique of his book to appear in the Saturday's *Australasian*.

Gordon meets Marcus Clarke who congratulates him on his new book, over a friendly glass.

Gordon meets Henry Kendall in Collins Street, or Henry Kendall introduced Gordon to Philip Lorimer when they were walking up Flinders Street, and they went on to a bar the Argus Hotel, or the Adam and Eve hotel, where they spent the last couple of shillings they could muster together. They tossed up for the remaining sixpence and Kendall won it.

Kendall and Gordon went to Kendall's home close by in Fitzroy and then said goodbye at a near-by railway station.

Gordon was very downhearted and was worried over his poems, and was afraid that his publishers, Massina's, would make a mess of them.

Gordon had a long conversation with a gentleman who urged the futility of suicide as an act of cowardice. Gordon objected saying that it took courage to suicide. Gordon quoted from Longfellow and his friend gave another quote which Gordon disputed and together they visited Mr. Robertson's bookseller's shop in Elizabeth Street and the friend was found to be correct. Gordon then said that his brain must be softening.

Gordon asked a common friend for a loan of £100 and had been refused.

Or. It is said that, notwithstanding, Mr. Gordon had just come into a considerable amount of property and required an advance of £50 for contingencies, as he termed them, and had applied to a well-known firm in town for the amount. They, however, refused his request, and he in consequence was extremely annoyed and referred to the subject several times to a well-known sporting man.

Gordon bought cartridges for a service rifle that he possessed, saying to a friend "this will do for a fellow". When the friend became alarmed Gordon said that he was only joking.

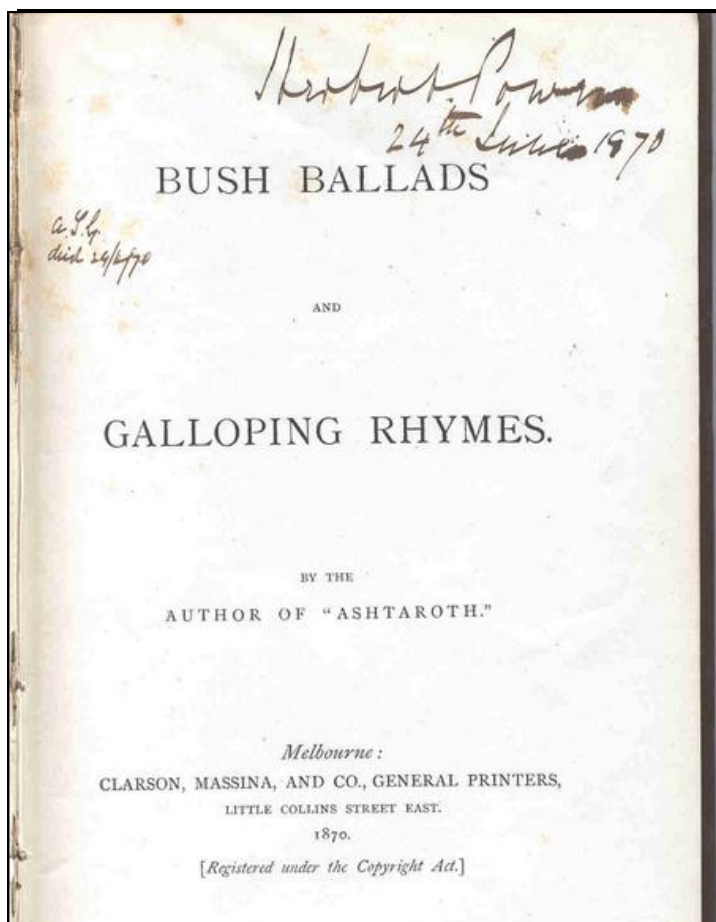
He then walked down to the Melbourne and Hobsons Bay United Railway Station and met the 7:11pm train to Brighton.

Or, Sir Frank Madden met Gordon a little after 4:00pm walked down St Kilda Road as far as St. Kilda (half way to Brighton) with him.

Henry Kendall and Philip Lorimer spent the night in St Kilda Cemetery. Gordon catching the train from St Kilda Station although no train went to Brighton from St. Kilda in 1870, but Windsor station was close by.

Kendall and Lorimer awoke with horror from the cemetery the next morning and heard the news boys crying out that the man that they had been with the day before had committed suicide.

Gordon arrived home at 10 Lewis Street Brighton at 5.30pm with a furious headache. (Continued below, left)



After tea with his wife, Gordon remained lying on a horsehair couch, rising only once to try some new cartridges to fit the barrel of his rifle which he had in his room. He was restless and quarrelsome.

He and his wife that night went to bed early, or Gordon went to bed about 11:00pm.

Or, Gordon arrived home at 5:30pm and took tea with Mrs Gordon. He spoke to Mr. Kelly, with whom he lodged, about going out to practise the next morning, as he had made a match to shoot with some person he did not name. They also conversed about the Brighton Military Corps, of which they both were members. Gordon was extremely restless and was in and out of the house several times.

Or, Gordon then had a meeting with a convivial friend at Brighton and adjourned to a bar where they discussed suicide in a Spartan manner.

Could that convivial friend have been his Doctor, the obnoxious, evil, criminal, Dr. James Patrick Murray who lived in New Street Brighton, who also was a member of the Brighton Military Corps as the Corp's Doctor, and who later conducted Gordon's *Post Mortem*? (Gordon is on record as having lent Dr. Murray a book of poems in Dec 1869.)

Gordon, being desperate by now, could have called on him as a last resort for help, and it was quite within the powers of Dr. Murray, who probably supplied opiates to Gordon for his pain, to take him to a bar and mix in more alcohol to provide the final unhinging of the brain, and at the same time urging suicide. Quite probable.

## GORDON'S POEMS USED AS INSPIRATION

It is possible to make a generalisation about the rise in popularity of Gordon. It was slow in the beginning.

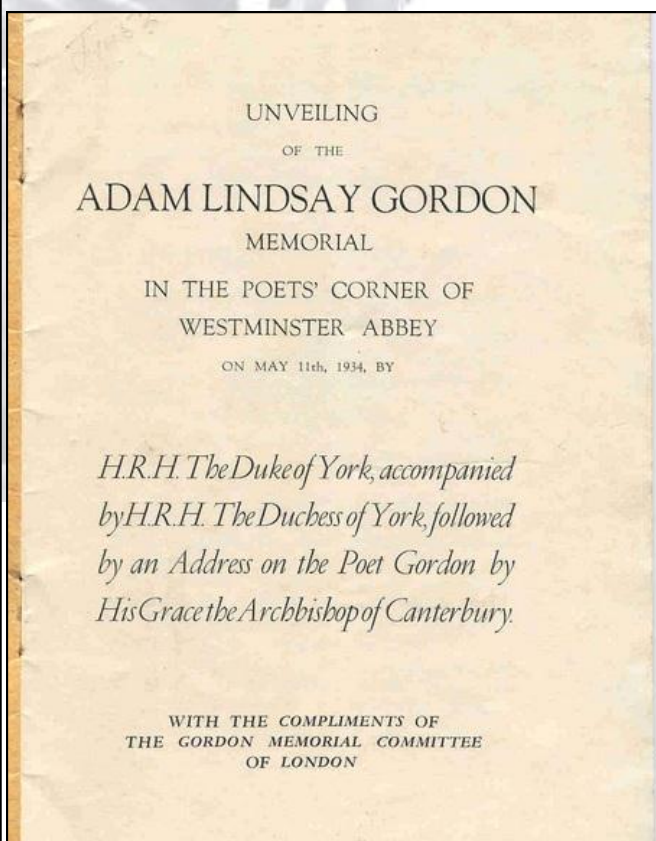
As early as 1877 a long review appeared in the USA 'The Brooklyn Daily Eagle', followed by newspaper articles in Australia and England. Then in 1885 a Gordon Club was formed in Townsville NQ by a group of professional and literary men..

In 1886 the Buonarotti Club (Michelangelo's surname) held a special Gordon evening to discuss the open air elements of Gordon's poems. This was attended by Frederick MacCubbin who used the titles of Gordon's poems as themes for his paintings.

From 1890 onwards groups met to discuss Gordon's poems. The Australian Literature Society was formed at such an evening.

Maggie Gordon gave the copyright over Gordon's poems to Gordon's publishers, Massina and Company, and it wasn't until 1912 that the copyright expired, which led to an explosion of cheap editions which could be purchased by all. The Gordon Memorial Committee was formed in 1910 and troops took Gordon's poems to war in 1914.

Douglas Sladen was instrument in getting English support for the Poets' Corner unveiling in Westminster Abbey. With the Professors of English at Oxford and Cambridge. Authors Rudyard Kipling, Arthur Conan Doyle, John Galsworthy and others. The Dean of Westminster together with Douglas Sladen both attended Gordon's old school, Cheltenham College. The Archbishop of Canterbury had the middle name of Gordon and was from Scotland.



ARTISTS AND AUTHORS

Geoff Dening

<http://www.starnow.co.uk/geoffdening>  
 CD "The Ballad of Adam Lindsay Gordon"  
 DVD Presentation "Champions" Racing Museum

Brenton Manser

<http://www.brentonmanser.com.au/admella.html>  
 DVD "The Wreck of the Admella" 2009  
 Soon: Docudrama "Rider and Writer"

The Torquay Froth and Bubble Literary Festival

<http://www.torquayfrothandbubbleliteraryfestival.com/>

Lorraine Day

<http://www.freestylepublications.com.au>  
 "Gordon of Dingley Dell": The Life of Adam Lindsay Gordon (1833-1870) Poet and Horseman  
 "Reef of Despair." The wreck of the SS Admella - COMING SOON !

Michael Wilding

<http://www.scholarly.info/home/>  
 "Marcus Clarke" Edited by Laurie Hergenhan, Ken Stewart and Michael Wilding  
 "Wild Bleak Bohemia"; Marcus Clarke, Adam Lindsay Gordon and Henry Kendall

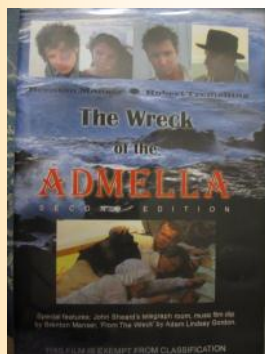
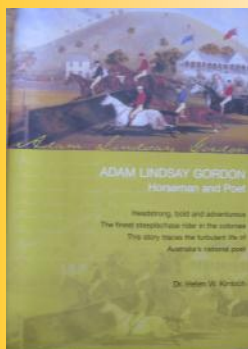
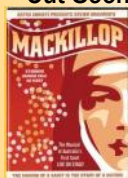
Dr. Helen Kinloch

Adam Lindsay Gordon-Horseman and Poet  
 Purchase through our website.

Xavier Brouwer

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xavier\\_Brouwer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xavier_Brouwer)  
 "MacKillop" The Musical

At present recording the poems of Adam Lindsay Gordon For the Song Cycle  
 "Sighs of Sorrow" Out Soon



POEM

THE SWIMMER

Sung by Janet Baker, mezzo-soprano,  
 with London Symphony Orchestra  
 conducted by John Barbirolli 1965



[You Tube](#)

WITH short, sharp, violent lights made vivid,  
 To southward far as the sight can roam,  
 Only the swirl of the surges livid,  
 The seas that climb and the surfs that comb  
 Only the crag and the cliff to nor'ward,  
 And the rocks receding, and reefs flung forward,  
 And waifs wreck'd seaward and wasted shoreward  
 On shallows sheeted with flaming foam.

A grim, grey coast and a seaboard ghastly,  
 And shores trod seldom by feet of men—  
 Where the batter'd hull and the broken mast lie,  
 They have lain embedded these long years ten.  
 Love ! when we wander'd here together,  
 Hand in hand through the sparkling weather,  
 From the heights and hollows of fern and heather,  
 God surely loved us a little then.

The skies were fairer and shores were firmer—  
 The blue sea over the bright sand roll'd ;  
 Babble and prattle, and ripple and murmur,  
 Sheen of silver and glamour of gold—

.....  
 See ! girt with tempest and wing'd with thunder,  
 And clad with lightning and shod with sleet,  
 The strong winds treading the swift waves sunder  
 The flying rollers with frothy feet.  
 One gleam like a bloodshot sword-blade swims on  
 The sky-line, staining the green gulf crimson,  
 A death stroke fiercely dealt by a dim sun,  
 That strikes through his stormy winding sheet.

Oh ! brave white horses ! you gather and gallop,  
 The storm sprite loosens the gusty reins ;  
 Now the stoutest ship were the frailest shallop,  
 In your hollow backs, or your high arch'd manes.  
 I would ride as never a man has ridden,  
 In your sleepy, swirling surges hidden,  
 To gulfs foreshadow'd through straits forbidden,  
 Where no light wearies and no love wanes.

(From Bush Ballads and Galloping Rhymes by Adam Lindsay Gordon-1870)

