

## U3A Program Session 1, 2019

### Australia's cameleers - masters of our fierce continent

**1. How did Afghan cameleers shape South Australia (and Australia), 1860s – 1930s.**

**Why did South Australia need camels? Who brought the “Afghans” and camels here to conduct essential works on our fierce continent that saved South Australia?**

Why did South Australia need camels? Who brought camels and “Afghan handlers” here? What were their origins? How did the Afghan cameleers master our fierce interior and develop it? What is our continent’s debt to the Afghan cameleers? Where today can we find the Afghan cameleers’ legacy?

**2. Adelaide’s south-west community of Afghan cameleers and herbalists, 1880s – 1950s.**

**Why did a significant Afghan cameleers community evolve in south-west Adelaide? What was the impact of Adelaide’s Afghan cameleer herbalists? How was Mahomet Allum an exceptional benefactor?**

Why did an Afghan cameleers’ significant community evolve in south-west Adelaide? What work, eg herbalists, did cameleers do in Adelaide? Where was their “community”? What significant Adelaide businesses, eg Elder Smith, Adelaide Central Market, North Terrace stockyards, West Terrace Cemetery, were cameleers and herbalists associated with? How did the Afghan herbalists, including Mahomet Allum, benefit South Australians? Why was Mahomet Allum so extraordinary?

### **3. Influence of camels on South Australia's economy: working to wild camels, 1870s - 2018.**

**What national works, served by working camels penetrating our fierce continent, developed [South] Australia and its international trade? Can Australia, now the only continent with wild camels, find solutions for its wild camels?**

Who brought camels and their Afghan handlers to this continent? What national works using camels developed [South] Australia's economic progress and international trade? Why were working camels so suited to penetrating our fierce continent? What happened to the working camels and Afghans after their decline? How is Australia, the only continent with wild camels, dealing with its unpopular wild camel hordes? Can Australia find markets for its wild camels?

### **4. The "old Ghan's debt to the Afghan cameleers, 1870s – 1950s.**

**How did the "Great Northern railway", essential to South Australia's survival, collaborate with the Afghan cameleers to serve colonists, entrepreneurs, exporters and the state? Why did the "Old Ghan" get that name?**

Why was a railway through the fierce interior of South Australia [and Northern Territory] essential to the colony's survival and progress? How did the "great Northern Railway" follow in the tracks of the Afghan cameleers? How were Afghan cameleers collaborators with the "Great Northern Railway"? How were both "critical lifelines" to colonists, settlers, entrepreneurs and exporters, and critical to South Australia's economic survival and progress? What hazards challenged the "old Ghan"? How did the GN railway gain the nickname "Old Ghan" and its icon?

## **5. South Australia Police Department's debt to camels, 1880s – 1950s.**

**The SA Police Department needed to acquire camels to patrol in “the largest beats in earth” in our fierce interior. Our unique camel police earned praise from far beyond our shores.**

What caused South Australia's colonial police to expand into the fierce arid interior and to patrol “the largest beats on earth”? Why were camels essential to horse mounted police in achieving their many duties and “getting their man” over vast patrols “beyond horse country” in our fierce interior? How did police acquire camels, and manage these unpredictable dromedaries? What connections did the police have with Afghan cameleers? What challenging conditions did remote camel police experience? Learn how Australia's “camel police”, who conquered unique and significant challenges, were repeatedly acclaimed and praised within the British Empire and beyond.

Pamela Rajkowski OAM

17/10/2018