

The
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THE JOURNAL OF THE
AUSTRALIAN BRONTË
ASSOCIATION



VOLUME 4
2007

THE BRONTË TH(UNDER)ER

The Australian Brontë Association has two levels of publications. The *Newsletter* appears twice a year, generally in June and December, and contains ephemera, book reviews and news of topical interest. Longer items, including the text of talks given at our meetings, appear at the end of each year in this journal-type publication.

The reasons for the name of this journal are as follows. For a start it clearly contains the name “Brontë”, so readers will not be left in any doubt as to the purpose of the publication. Secondly, the name *Thunderer* would have been well known to the Brontës as a nickname for the respected newspaper *The Times* of London.

Then the Greek word for “thunder” is βροντη, or Bronte. So in Greece Charlotte might be known as “Charlotte Thunder”. How she came by this name is interesting, since her father was born Patrick Prunty, or Brunty.

The town in Sicily, near the volcano Mount Etna, was named “Bronte”, no doubt because of the thunderous noise given out by the volcano during an eruption. Then, because he won an important victory at this place assisting the King of Sicily, he received the title “Duke of Bronte”.

Patrick Prunty, or Brunty, was a young Irishman attending Cambridge University and, having a high regard for Nelson, he adapted the spelling of his name in the university register to Bronte. To add further distinction he experimented with various accents for the “e” before finally settling on Brontë.

The final reference in the name is the fact that the word “thunderer” contains the word “under”, reflecting the fact that this journal represents the Brontë followers “down under”.

Editor – Dr Christopher Cooper

THE AUSTRALIAN BRONTË ASSOCIATION

In 1986 Fergus McClory was appointed the Australian Representative of the Brontë Society, serving the members of that society who lived in Australia, and meetings were held in Sydney. Then, in 1998 the Australian Brontë Association was formed as an independent but complementary organization, in order to expand the local Brontë activities. Our patron is the distinguished Brontë scholar Christine Alexander, professor of English at the University of New South Wales. We currently meet on certain Saturday mornings in the Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts, 280 Pitt Street Sydney. This institute was founded shortly after the Keighley Mechanics Institute, of which Patrick Brontë was a member.

The current committee is as follows:

Patron: Professor Christine Alexander (Scientia Professor
of English at the University of New South Wales)

President: Dr Christopher Cooper

Secretary: Sarah Burns

Membership Secretary: Mandy Swann

Treasurer: Ann Lock

Publicity Officer: Annette Harman

We maintain a web site at:

www.maths.mq.edu.au/~chris/bronte/aba.htm

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