



**Professor Peter Edwards AM
Honorary Fellow and Fourth Master of St Mark's College**

Peter Edwards served as the fourth Master of St Mark's College from 1978 to 1982. The historic development of this time was the decision which he encouraged in 1981 to admit women to the College, and the successful implementation of coeducation in 1982, his final year in post.

Dedicated and hard-working, with a strong conception of what College life could be, and with very limited administrative support, his other achievements included what was described at the time as “turning a half-empty college into one with more applicants than places” (including through the creation of a Promotion and Publicity Committee, on which he served); the formation of a Property Committee (on which he served), developments on the western end of the College site on Kermode Street (the completion of Lewis House and its re-design as flats, and the renovation of the Cain and Abel cottages), and restoration of what was called Walkley Cottage from 1982; and what were said at the time to be improvements in the College's “internal atmosphere, its reputation in the University [of Adelaide] and the general community, the quality of the senior and junior residents, and the values expressed in its daily life”.

In the years since leaving St Mark's, Peter Edwards has maintained an active and supportive interest in the College, attending various College reunions (most recently the special dinner in April 2022 for the 40th anniversary of coeducation), making donations to the College, and maintaining supportive contact with successive heads of the College.

Peter Geoffrey Edwards was born in August 1945. A student leader at the University of Western Australia, he went to Oxford in 1967 as Rhodes Scholar for Western Australia, earning an Oxford doctorate in history in 1971. On his return to Australia, he spent three years as a research historian in the Department of Foreign Affairs, Canberra, before becoming a Research Fellow at the Australian National University, specialising in 20th century international history.

At the end of 1982, Peter Edwards left St Mark's to become Official Historian of Australia's involvement in the Malayan Emergency and the Vietnam War. Over subsequent years, he has continued to work in various roles as a historian and biographer, with one foot in universities (including various fellowships and professorships in Australia and the United States), and one foot in government agencies related to foreign affairs, defence, and intelligence. He has earned a distinguished reputation in this field.

In 2001, Peter Edwards was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia “for service to the recording of Australia's military history as General Editor of ‘The Official History of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948-1975’, and as principal author of the two volumes relating to strategy, diplomacy and home front issues”. His subsequent works include, for example, highly respected biographies of Sir Arthur Tange and Justice Robert Hope, leading figures in foreign affairs and defence, and in intelligence, respectively.