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**Title:**  
Speech opening McDonald Montgomery 'House Fair', Kent Town

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SPEECH BY THE PREMIER, MR. DUNSTAN, OPENING McDONALD MONTGOMERY  
"HOUSE FAIR". KENT TOWN. 26.8.74

Mr. Redwood, ladies and gentlemen:

Thank you very much for inviting me to open your "House Fair".

It marks the company's 120th anniversary - a most impressive achievement under any circumstances and an indication both of the firm's tradition of good service and the abiding nature of the great Australian thirst.

It's especially pleasant that McDonald Montgomery's success has been on a national basis but that expansion has come from a secure South Australian base.

Much of the company's business now, of course, is centred around supply to major institutions - such as the major hospitals and in a sense I suppose I'm here as the chief customer.

But its reputation was built up from its role as the leading hotel supplier - a role it still very much has today.

The change in the hotel industry in recent years has been remarkable indeed and Montgomery's have had to grow and develop to meet rapidly changing circumstances.

Happily the days of the six o'clock swill are now just a nasty memory and we've emerged from the dark ages in which relaxation in an hotel was equated with sawdust and profanity. Now the emphasis is on service, pleasant and congenial mixed company. The hotelier unwilling to supply good food, an attractive decor and a wide range of amenities rapidly finds himself or herself with an extremely restricted clientele.

I don't think anybody would seriously argue that those changes - stemming from reform of the Licensing Act - have not proved a great social good.

But now just when we've come to terms with what should be found inside a good hotel it seems to me that we're facing a very serious problem about the exteriors.

We are in danger of losing or spoiling so thoroughly that they're as good as lost, some of the superb hotels for which Adelaide is remarkable.

We have around this city some of the most memorable, distinctive elegant and charming examples of Victorian and Edwardian Colonial hotel architecture to be found anywhere in the world.

Individually they are remarkable; together they make up a unique heritage - one we have thus far disgracefully neglected in a way that would be tolerated nowhere else in the world today. Adelaide abounds in beautiful pubs.

But they're getting fewer every year. They go either under the wrecker's hammer or succumb to the developer's garish notion of good taste where wrought iron is subordinate to strip lighting.

Just think of a few names almost at random - the Botanic, the Stag, the Newmarket, the British, everyone has a favourite - and you get an idea of the measure of what we have here.

I believe we need to be as vigilant and demanding towards the preservation of our hotels as we are, properly, to a fine old bank building or private mansion. I believe its incumbent on those who own or manage such buildings to look on themselves as custodians as well as businessmen. I believe that Governments and local authorities have a responsibility to encourage preservation and restoration and at the very least to discourage despoilation.

I have become increasingly concerned about the fate of numbers of fine old hotel buildings in and around Adelaide and convinced that the State Government should act.

To this end we will shortly commence a survey to identify those most worthy of preservation and those most imperilled and to classify them accordingly. This will enable us, in concert with local authorities, to ensure that they survive for the enjoyment of future residents and visitors.

We've got some great pubs, we've got to keep them.

I think that any responsible Government can do no less.

In doing so, by the way, we'll also ensure that Montgomery's will have customers around for at least the next 120 years.

Thank you.

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