

*historic*

# south west corner

*south west corner*

adelaide | south australia



Bridget Jolly

The Corporation of the City of Adelaide  
Adelaide 2005



## Foreword



The *Historic South West Corner* booklet is more than just a potted history of this unique part of our City. It is a record of the colourful characters and individuals who have contributed so much to the development of our City.

This entertaining booklet paints a picture of a community that is proud of its past and positive about its future; a community that welcomes and embraces people whose luck in life has run out and a community that includes many, very successful businesses and individuals.

The *Historic South West Corner* booklet is a project initiated by the South West Community Network.

The Network was instigated and is supported by Adelaide City Council.

The Council encourages active engagement of local communities in City life and in making decisions about their neighbourhood.

A method of accomplishing this is through the development of local projects such as the production of this booklet.

The booklet presents a history of the South West Corner of the City that will inspire people to think of this area as an interesting place to live, work and visit.

I hope that you will enjoy reading this exciting, factual and humorous account of how the South West community of the past created a great community spirit of the present.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'M Harbison'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**Michael Harbison**  
**Lord Mayor**

## *Acknowledgments*

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Jean Grunert, former South West business person	



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## *Introduction*

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The traditional occupiers of the Adelaide Plains region, the Kurna people, were living north and south along the Fleurieu Peninsula at the time of the coastal explorations of the British and French colonial powers in the early 1800s. The Kurna were associated with Adelaide from the commencement of European settlement on mainland South Australia in 1836. Although the landscape of the Adelaide region has changed greatly from those times, the newly named Wirranendi Park in the West Park Lands of the City of Adelaide is being revegetated with native plants and protected flora. The creation of this park, including a Kurna food and medicinal plant trail, is a reconciliatory gesture towards the traditional use of the Adelaide Plains and the Kurna's continuing culture.

Close to Wirranendi Park is the South West Corner of the City of Adelaide. This booklet sketches the character of the South West Corner as it has evolved over more than 165 years of European settlement. The commemoration of the founders and promoters of South Australia is reflected in the South West: for example, the naming of Whitmore Square after William Woolryche Whitmore MP, a South Australian Colonisation Commissioner, and Gilbert Street after the London optician Thomas Gilbert who became South Australia's Colonial Storekeeper and then Postmaster. South Australia's Colonial Secretary and then Treasurer, Robert Gouger, gave his name to Gouger Street.

The South West Corner was part of the former City of Adelaide Grey Ward (that is mentioned in this story) that extended from King William Street to West Terrace and from Grote Street to South Terrace.

Lesley Currie, an 'outsider', vividly recalls that the South West was 'like a country town' in the early 1970s. Certainly by that time the knife sharpener, the egg man and the rabbit'o (a man who skinned your purchase on the spot) no longer hawked in the streets. Although she was not a local resident, her familiarity with the South West grew in 'walking the accounts' from the petrol station where she worked to customers of her employer and in talking to residents over their front gate while they worked in their gardens. Her five-year stint as a part-time barmaid at the Duke of Brunswick (the hotel began in February 1858) and at Trades Hall on South Terrace, where the Duke ran the bar, broadened her appreciation of the community. When an electrical business demonstrated its latest fad, a microwave oven, 'we all went over the road to see it boil water'. Similarly, John Adey's childhood in Gilbert Street was alive with opportunities and personal activity. Some other residents were attracted to live in the South West in the early 1970s because the area reminded them of the bustling multicultural cosmopolitan Sydney they knew.

Preserving the environment and maintaining the memory of the South West's past helps to sustain the lifestyle of the present. Pauline Ween, who regularly shops at Adelaide's Central Market, speaks for many in saying, 'I continue where my mother left off'. The Market, Adelaide's most multicultural centre, is closely linked to the South West. Harold 'Bunny' Grunert, for long a shoe repairer on a corner of Whitmore Square, learnt some of his craft from a Lebanese shoemaker in the Market. The Central Market increasingly provided the range of services that were once available from corner stores in the South West and other convenience outlets in the city generally. For example, the Star Grocery that was opened in Hindley Street by Greek proprietors made it a magnet for newly-arrived southern Europeans – as indeed it was for monocultural Anglo-Australian appetites in the 1950s. The popularity of the Star Grocery helped to promote the growing diversity of the Market, which quickly capitalised on the acceptance of wider tastes and ultimately attracted more of Adelaide's citizens to the South West as well as featuring prominently in the lives of its residents.

The Central Market precinct offered other attractions. The Empire Picture Theatre ('The Bugs'), its Grote Street façade now partly incorporated in the Market buildings, was a popular Saturday matinée house for Adelaide's children. The rubbish bins of The Bugs were a treasure trove of reject film stock and torn movie posters for the Gilbert Street child John Adey on his Sunday scavenging.<sup>1</sup> John's career in television began with pioneering production work in Adelaide. The Bugs began as the Hippodrome Theatre entertainment centre in 1906. After some rebuilding and renaming as the New Empire Theatre, by 1909 it was showing moving pictures. The Bugs closed in November 1948.

The Trades Hall in Grote Street (built 1895–96) was demolished in 1972 when the new Trades Hall was completed on South Terrace fronting the city's South Park Lands. Despite the dismay of some such as the unionist Bob Giles, who considered that the imposing classicist form of the original building's façade was 'symbolic for an important institution' and reflected the dignity of workers, the new Hall firmly reasserted its importance in an area long associated with labour activism and community care.



## *A look back to the future*

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In 1867 a triumphal three-bay archway entrance to the western end of South Terrace, its centre arch 9 m wide, flew flags and royal standards. 'Topped with cloth of scarlet and gold',<sup>2</sup> the archway unknowingly signalled a future identity colour of southwest Adelaide: the red and black of Sturt Street School and of the West Adelaide Football Club. The arches welcomed Prince Alfred, the Duke of Edinburgh, who journeyed along South Terrace – where the private houses were festooned with wreaths – on the way from his frigate's port at Glenelg to his formal reception at the Adelaide Town Hall.



## *Home quarters and dwelling improvement*

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Most of the more grand South Terrace residences (mainly built from the late 1860s and increasingly through the 1870s and 1880s) were later demolished or converted for office and commercial purposes. Two early 20th century cottages at 73 South Terrace today have become a single residence with a well-cared for garden, although a later addition obscures the original façade. Cottages, of course, were usually the residences of the working and less-well-to-do classes. In 1928 W.H. Andrews, a labourer, lived at 73 South Terrace; J. Martin, a carpenter, lived at 73A; and a cabinetmaker, Joseph Hamra lived at 74 where he remained until at least 1941, when 73 became vacant.

South Terrace was the preferred site for building in the South West until the 1850s. Interest in building domestic establishments on West Terrace was aroused only later in the 19th century. But by the late 1920s the lingering afternoon summer sun on West Terrace and the proximity of the railway line and Adelaide's cemetery began to turn residents away from the area. Increasingly, and especially with the widening of West Terrace in the 1960s (which signalled a fearful crossing by residents to the Glover Playground and West Terrace Cemetery), it became a site for factories and warehouses, and more residences were lost.



## *Home quarters and dwelling improvement*

The greater number of South West Adelaide's earliest buildings were constructed of rammed earth and wattle and daub until supplies of stone, brick and timber were more readily available and affordable. The difficult economic conditions of colonial settlement contributed to the initially somewhat temporary city settlement. The Adelaide Corporation's Town Surveyor and Rate Collector, the architect George Strickland Kingston, even noted 'ruinous buildings' on his 1842 survey map of 'every building in the City' of Adelaide. At the start of 1851, Adelaide proper and its vicinity had nearly 12 000 dwellings, almost half of masonry, the remainder of wood or were tents.<sup>3</sup>

Small landholders in Adelaide's south and west from the 1850s had to buy 'their tiny building sites, by exorbitant instalments, out of speculators' subdivisions'.<sup>4</sup> By 1852 the Town Acre in Wright Street on which the Prince Albert Hotel was built (first licensed in that year as a six-room, two-storey hotel) was divided into 12 speculative allotments.<sup>5</sup>



Nos 73-74 South Terrace in 1928. (Lantern Slide Prints: 759, courtesy of Adelaide City Council Archives)

## *Home quarters and dwelling improvement*

The health hazards posed by Adelaide's mostly stagnant cesspits (generally 1.5 m deep and only cleared once a year) and the night-soil removal by carts, led to a survey of Adelaide's roads and buildings between November 1878 and August 1880. When the Adelaide Sewers Bill for the planning and laying of deep drainage in the capital was discussed in Parliament in 1878, Adelaide's population was 33 000 and there were some 7000 cesspits.<sup>6</sup>

Adelaide's mortality rate then was a worryingly 44-48% higher than that of the rest of the colony. Unnecessary sicknesses were attributed to the undesirable state of affairs. Deep drainage was 'a question especially affecting the working classes of the population whose income stops with their labour' and on whom sickness was a 'pressing severity'.<sup>7</sup> In 1881 the Islington Sewage Farm opened for Adelaide's waterborne sewerage system but night carts remained the order of the day for many buildings: by 1901 about two-thirds of all Adelaide houses were sewered.<sup>8</sup>

Before the reticulation of water supplies from two rural reservoirs built in the later 19th century, water carriers attended to Adelaide's houses. The 340 l (90 gallon) 'barrels slung between shafts and wheels were filled [from the River Torrens] by bucket and emptied by leather hose into the wooden storage casks and square iron tanks of householders': the daily Summer ration of 11.5 l (3 gallons) of water for Adelaide's population (11 000 in 1850) was provided by 30 carriers.<sup>9</sup> The opening of laneways facilitated the delivery of water and of garbage collection for the Town Acres that were progressively subdivided into mainly 15 m (50 feet) wide allotments.

As manufacturing firms and other commercial enterprises developed in Adelaide, more workers' dwellings were built. The three-room cottage, Dunmoochin, in Maud Street was built for a labourer between 1855 and 1858, remaining the property of his family to 1914.<sup>10</sup> The six Murray's Cottages in Murrays Lane were built by 1880.



No. 76 South Terrace in 1928. (Lantern Slide Prints: 753, courtesy of Adelaide City Council Archives)

## *Home quarters and dwelling improvement*

A long cottage row built at the turn of the 20th century in Rutland Place was progressively demolished, most dramatically when in 1937 a two-storey brick building was erected between the remaining cottages. One of the smallest city dwellings erected for a worker (and, probably, his family) was the 3 m (10 feet) wide existing cottage at 10 Maxwell Street, larger overall perhaps than that at 76 South Terrace.

June Hocking grew up in Gilbert Street (in a cottage adjoining that where three generations of her family lived) and in Whitmore Square. Upon marrying, she returned in 1950 to live again at 177 Gilbert Street. Her husband, Ken Fischer, had just enough room in Grace Lane at the rear of their cottage to restore his new-found 1929 Essex buckboard automobile. Here was the stone building that the residents knew as 'the stables', probably large enough to house four horses, and where John E. Newman, furniture removalist, stabled his horses not so long before. The existence of the stables suggests the original property builder's confident (and perhaps speculative) investment in the area. Robert Gouger, likewise, built in Gilbert Street (a little eastward of the South West area) a house of 'seven rooms, with extensive passages, closets, store rooms, a bath house, stables and a coach house' that sold quickly after his death in 1846.<sup>11</sup>

The loss of significant buildings of earlier decades, mainly from industrial incursion (particularly from the late 1950s and during the 1960s), encouraged a heritage preservation sentiment in the broader community. In the South West, the promotion of a renewed inner-urban neighbourhood from the early 1970s saw a few successes in the struggles to retain buildings (partly because generations have remained, often in the same house, or close by).



*The Alfred Street Residents' Action Committee picket assembling in front of cottages being demolished on a chilly morning in 1981. A wake was held after the demolition in September 1981. (Courtesy of Kathleen and Gerasimos Patitsas)*



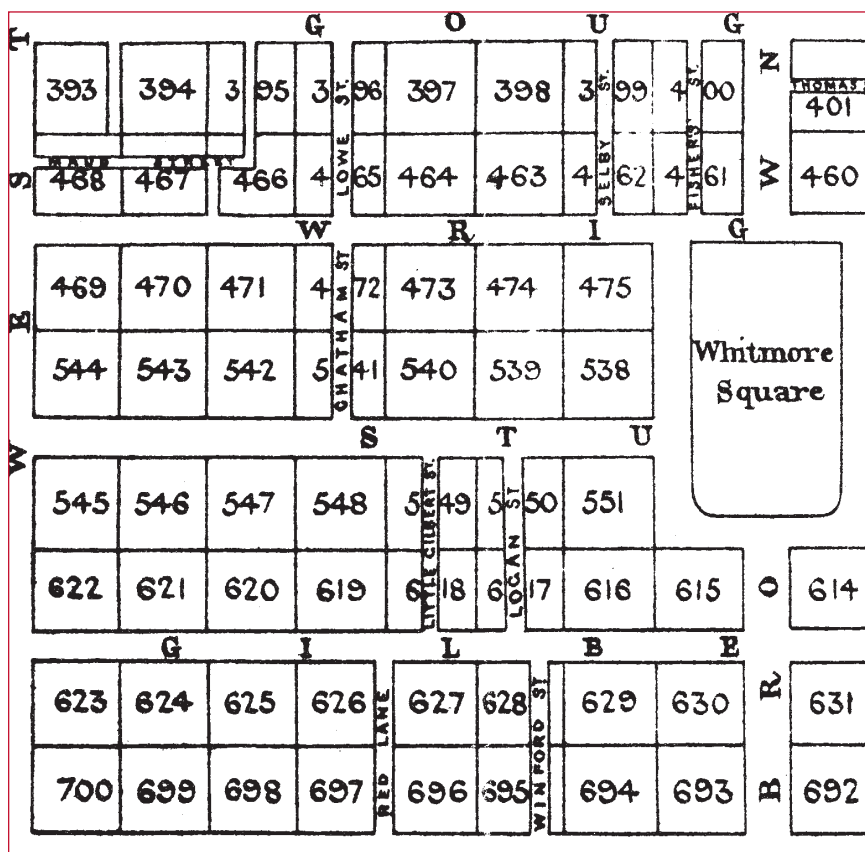
## *Home quarters and dwelling improvement*

Concern over the demolition of humble dwellings might seem unusual to some people, but many in the South West dearly felt the loss of cottages. The dominance of the automobile at the expense of residential quality, lane widening at the expense of dwellings, and expanding commercial activity despite space restrictions affected the character of the area. In 1981 the City Council refused a developer's application to demolish Alfred Street cottages for a proposed warehouse and car park. The developer took its interests to court, and the residents' hopes of retaining an intact residential street were thwarted. A reminder of the cottages are some of their sandstone blocks embedded in a southern wall on the street.

Some of the small streets laid out by original owners of city land and property were first declared public streets in 1850. By 1861, ten minor streets and lanes had opened the South West to north-south (and some east-west) access.

Unrest over sub-standard housing in Adelaide was becoming widespread by 1901 when the colony acquired statehood in the newly federated nation of Australia. A visiting town planner, Charles Reade, lectured on 'Garden Cities v. Adelaide slums and suburbs' in 1914. Two years later the Town Planning and Housing Bill that Reade had helped to draft passed the House of Assembly, but was fiercely opposed by the City Council and lingered in the Legislative Council.<sup>12</sup> The Bill was modified in 1919. Reade was appointed by the State Government as Town Planning Adviser for four months in 1916; and he became Australia's first permanent Government Town Planner in 1918. He designed a playground for the South Australian Town Planning Association for the West Park Lands on a site donated in 1918 by the City Council for the 'children of the thickly populated south-west quarter of the city'.<sup>13</sup> The Council took over responsibility for the playground site in 1922, reducing its size and finally completing it in 1924.<sup>14</sup> The City of Adelaide ultimately practised several of Reade's planning recommendations from the late 1970s and early 1980s!<sup>15</sup>

## Home quarters and dwelling improvement



Detail of the South West from the 'Map of the City of Adelaide' (1877) which shows the numbered Town Acres and ten small streets and lanes (from Thomas Worsnop, History of the City of Adelaide, 1878). By the late 1870s, when the city was surveyed for a proposed deep drainage system, South Adelaide had almost 24 000 m of 'cross streets constructed by private individuals'.<sup>16</sup>



## *Home quarters and dwelling improvement*

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The disquiet during the 1920s over inner suburban and Adelaide City's sub-standard housing increased during the Great Depression of the 1930s. In September 1939 the State Government's Building Act Inquiry Committee began to survey housing conditions. The Committee's second progress report in 1940 illustrated conditions in Adelaide.

Among its concerns were pockets (narrow lanes, cul-de-sacs and alleys), narrow streets, factory blighting of residential areas, site overcrowding and what were considered to be high rents. The committee classified 3000 houses in Adelaide proper as sub-standard.

Little was to change for the better while the nation was embroiled in World War Two.

The urgency of the predicament was revived after the war, although materials rationing and restrictions delayed the pace of reform that the post-war reconstruction ethos spurred. In 1947 the Rev. E.D. Shaxted, rector of the evangelical Anglican St Luke's Church and superintendent of St Luke's Mission from 1945 to 1952, described many dwellings near Whitmore Square as 'rotten little hovels', particularly those in lanes off Wright, Sturt and Gilbert Streets.<sup>17</sup> Long-term deterioration of masonry walls from damp and of timber from termites, leaking roofs and the flooding of low-lying yards and rooms contributed to the less than salubrious quality of the mainly rented dwellings.

The later post-war City Council reaction to the new mood to gear up industry and clear away sub-standard dwellings included the proposal to reduce the residential area of Adelaide south of the River Torrens from 80 ha to 42 ha (the total city residential area would have been reduced to 41%), and to increase industrial and commercial activity. The Council's by-laws required the city to be 50% residential. But with an eye to servicing those residential areas, hotels, clubs, flats, theatres, banks and professional chambers were permitted. It was proposed to separate residential areas from factory areas by contained strips of commercial activity.

On Whitmore Square, for instance, a core of residences would be allowed around its perimeter with an inner surrounding commercial area: but all the area to the Square's west would be zoned 'factory'. The plan also proposed a commercial strip running the length of South Terrace behind and parallel with a residential strip fronting the Park Lands.<sup>18</sup>



## *Home quarters and dwelling improvement*

In October 1955 the City Council passed the by-law that shrank the residential area at a time when more and more migrants were arriving to live in Adelaide.<sup>19</sup> But there were some gains: because of regulations covering tenants, they 'often struck handsome relocation deals from the new owners'.<sup>20</sup> At this time banks considered house finance unprofitable (preferring to lend for new or commercial buildings). This proved a barrier to some who wanted to buy in the South West during this changing era. In a real sense, the clearance of sub-standard dwellings helped to diminish the residential population: the total city population in 1972 was 7400. The Council is successfully reversing this trend through the work of the City of Adelaide Development Committee (from 1972), the residential rate rebate (introduced in 1976), and through other policy reversals and initiatives introduced from the 1970s and 1980s and continuing to the present day.



*Katina Patitsas with her much-admired olive tree, ornamental plants and part of her vegetable garden in Alfred Street. Photographed in Winter, this view does not highlight the abundant herbs and trellised vegetables that Katina's garden produces. Katina Patitsas was born on the Greek island of Lefkas and settled with her husband in Alfred Street in 1957 when she was 31 years old. (Photographer: James Eiffe. Courtesy of Katina Patitsas)*

The reasons for the more recent retention and renovation of remaining workers' cottages and other residences with their unique gardens are several, partly due to a belief that preservation is best served by occupation, part Council policy and the desire and economic means to improve dwelling standards in the congenial community of the South West.

Several of the productive gardens remaining in the South West are still in the care of the Greek and Italian families who established them. Here may be found thriving grape vines, and lemon, mulberry and other fruit trees.

## *Home quarters and dwelling improvement*

An example of the once-common attached residence and shop is where Pauline Ween's grandmother ran a grocery shop next to Mr Bailey's grocery store in Brown Street (renamed Morphett Street in 1967). Pauline still lives in the residence built in about 1844.



Pauline Ween's grandmother, Martha Jemima Jennings (who married Robert George Standley) with her daughters. Top left: Pauline's mother, Alice, who married Norman Ween. Her sisters are Amelia Valancy who lived in Hamley Street; Eliza Sincock who lived in Gilbert Street (as did one of their cousins) and Martha Souter who lived nearby in Brown Street. (Courtesy of Pauline Ween)

Pauline's mother chaired the Sturt Street School Committee for many years. Ken Gutte, a former teacher at Sturt Street School and a South West resident, recalled the committee's annual morning visits to the school: Mrs Ween would ask the students, 'What would you want?' whereupon they would reply 'Holidays!', to which she announced that they had the rest of the day free from classes because of the Committee's visit.



## *Home quarters and dwelling improvement*

Joseph Kennedy, who rented 1 Mary Street to the Cartwright family from the 1930s, conducted a plumbing business at his Alfred Street house. The business overflowed into the Cartwrights' small backyard, competing for space with Mr Cartwright's beehives that he kept from the Great Depression onwards.



No. 1 Mary Street, formerly on the corner of Alfred Street. Murray Cartwright, who was born in the cottage in 1943, then the only one in Mary Street, recently returned to the South West to establish an exhibition gallery in Sturt Street. (Courtesy of Murray Cartwright)

The Star and Garter Hotel existed from 1849, firstly on Town Acre 539 on what became the western corner of Frederick Street. The making of this street probably caused the hotel's relocation in about 1880 to 194 Sturt Street, where it remained until its demolition in May 1961. Its building over 1880–81 was to the design of the Adelaide architect, Thomas English.



From left to right, Mary, Nicholas, and Lilly Bambacas outside the Bambacas fruit, vegetable and grocery shop in Sturt Street. Opposite are the Star and Garter Hotel (left) and to its left the former grocery store of H. Arthur (later R.T. McEllister's) and the one-time Builders' Labourers' Union office. (Courtesy of 'Little' Con Bambacas)

## *Adelaide's 'hopeful and helpful' South West*

An Anglican Divine Service was held east of Whitmore Square in a schoolroom in Hobson's Lane in 1853: Paxton's new grain store in Wright Street was the venue for the service in 1855.<sup>21</sup> The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts provided the Whitmore Square site where St Luke's Church, the fourth church to be built in Adelaide, was consecrated in February 1856. St Luke's still continues its traditional evangelism, missionary, and social service work as well as other community services on this site. St Luke's Mission's Mothers' Union was formed in 1895 and the Girls' Friendly Society also in that decade, while weekly Mothers' Meetings and a 'thrift bank' were instituted in the early 1930s.

An early Colonial Treasurer, Osmond Gilles, sold Town Acre 542 in Sturt Street to the Trustees of St Luke's Church. An iron rectory was built there in 1855 for the Rev. James Pollitt, St Luke's minister from 1854 to 1881. This possibly was a prefabricated building because the original plan to erect a prefabricated iron church on Whitmore Square had been largely abandoned and so unsold components may have been used for the parsonage. Unfortunately, at 4 a.m. on Sunday 7 June 1857 the rectory was completely destroyed by fire. The Rev. Pollitt and his family lost everything. Adelaide's citizens rallied round and raised £560 (with another £125 donated by the Freemasons) to compensate the Pollitts. The replacement parsonage, designed by the architect Edward J. Woods, was completed in 1862 at a cost of £650.

No evidence of the original iron parsonage has been found on the site. In July 1869 the Trustees mortgaged the eastern half of Town Acre 542 for £200, which suggests that the new parsonage had been built on the western half of the acre - to the west of Arthur Street where the Offenders Aid and Rehabilitation Services of South Australia (OARS SA) is now located.

In 1874 the Trustees purchased the half acre south of the church, and decided to sell their land and building in Sturt Street and build a new rectory next to the church.<sup>22</sup>



*St Luke's Rectory, left (built 1875-76; bluestone additions after 1881) and St Luke's Church on Town Acre 538 facing a then slip-rail fenced Whitmore Square, c. 1875. The hall behind the church was built in 1884. (State Library of South Australia: B10693)*

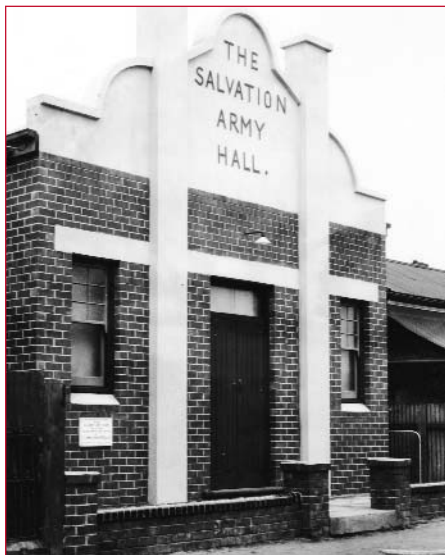
## *Adelaide's 'hopeful and helpful' South West*

In Sturt Street OARS SA continues the work of the Prisoners' Aid Society which had been formed in the 1890s. 'Restorative Justice in Action', its current motto, indicates that it shares and maintains the long tradition of benevolent and community services operating from the South West. One of the more recently established services is Karpandi Women's Centre, a part of Baptist Community Services in Millers Court.

The early colony's tight economy, some official mismanagement of funds, failed crops and drought, led to a consequent lack of funds for State aid to those who had not been expected in the new settlement – the disadvantaged and needy. Private and individual philanthropy was relied upon. Indeed, the first city charity (the Adelaide Benevolent and Strangers' Friend Society) was not formed until February 1849. Interestingly, the Society came to manage cottages in the South West for deserted wives and their children and for widows. In 1919 another charitable group, Lady Kintore Cottages Incorporated, transferred its three Mark's Cottages in Gilbert Street to the Society. Short of funds, the Society was able to add two cottages onto the row only six years later: the five cottages still stand. The two attached cottages – the Keith Sheridan and Simpson Cottages – in O'Brien Street were nearing completion on a vacant lot for the Keith Sheridan Trust in 1919 when they too were transferred to the Benevolent Society.<sup>23</sup> Such dwellings remain as reminders of earlier support, although the Society's cottages in Vinrace

Street, to which two more were added by purchase in 1941, no longer exist; but the South Australian Housing Trust has long-filled a modern complementary role in the South West.

South Australia was the first toe-hold of the Salvation Army in Australia. Much of its 'evangelistic out-reach [and] social up-lift' programs were developed and continue today in the South West.<sup>24</sup> Despite some zoning exclusion of the 'congregate care' that the Army provides, it retains the ability to exercise such programs within the city of Adelaide.<sup>25</sup>



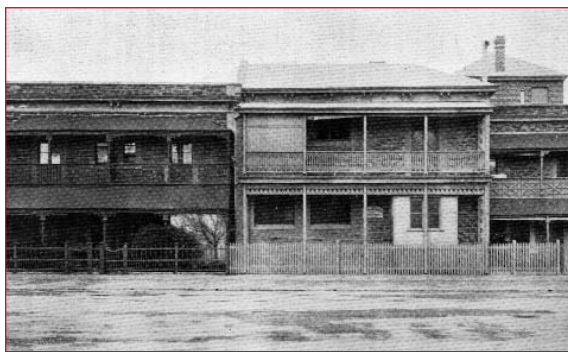
*The former Salvation Army Hall, Selby Street in April 1942, two years after it was built. (State Library of South Australia: B10907)*

## *Adelaide's 'hopeful and helpful' South West*

No trace remains of an eight-room dwelling at 257-259 Gilbert Street that was the Salvation Army's Adelaide Maternity Home where 'the surplus young mothers from the somewhat overcrowded Rescue Home' found 'tender care and encouragement'.<sup>26</sup> Opened in October 1893, it moved after some three years to a more spacious building (north of Brown Street) in Morphett Street. The Salvation Army continues to provide its services in Whitmore Square and Gilbert Street, where the Army established itself when it bought the Bushmen's Club property in 1899.

The Bushmen's Club was the brainchild of the bush missionary affectionately known as 'William' (W.H. Hugo) who was determined to provide accommodation and refuge from city temptations for visiting country workers. A committee of civic leaders with the support of pastoralists opened the Club in May 1870. George Fife Angas, popularly regarded as 'The Father of South Australia', and his son, John Howard Angas, contributed money to help buy the then leased property.<sup>27</sup> But by 1899, with thinning numbers of rural workers (partly due to their movement to mining developments), its patrons dwindled.<sup>28</sup> During 1890 the Bushmen's Club accommodated 1508 weekly and temporary boarders (making a total of 39 757 boarders over the 21 years since its foundation). But the Club desired premises closer to Adelaide's Railway Station. The government could not be induced to buy its property for some public use and almost a decade passed before the Salvation Army secured the site.<sup>29</sup> The two bluestone wings of the Club, built in 1871 and 1872, remain either side of the Army's main building – the Booth Memorial Home – that in 1910 replaced the Club building.

In Selby Street, John Adey's bedroom in his grandparents' house 'was about half a metre from the Citadel wall' and so he would lie on his bed 'in the



*Lady Victoria Buxton Girls' Club, left, and at 58 Whitmore Square, centre, 1927. The porch entrance (plainer than its present form) was added in 1929 and led to the Jean Mills Hall that later was renamed Ozanam House by the St Vincent de Paul Society. The exterior of these buildings remain essentially as they were when photographed in 1927. (Courtesy of State Library of South Australia)*

early evening and on Sunday mornings and listen to the singing and hand clapping, accompanied by drums and rattling tambourines' in the Army's Hall. Twice a week he also had the experience of observing 'a gaggle of girls' marching down Selby Street from the Salvation Army Girls Industrial Home in Gilbert Street.

## Adelaide's 'hopeful and helpful' South West

The Home was in fact 'The Bridge' Women's Rescue Home that operated from 1899 to 1977 in Gilbert Street, providing shelter for women and a commercial laundry and cleaning service for their own and the Home's income. It was known from 1934 as The Bridge Industrial Home. By the 1970s, with changes to government welfare and other support services, and the growing secular advocacy on such matters, the Army's priorities began to change.

Lady Victoria Buxton, the wife of a philanthropically minded Governor, Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, came to Adelaide in 1895. She was soon alert to the needs of the 'factory girls': the Lady Victoria Buxton Girls' Club established in 1898 for working girls was the first of its kind in South Australia, and continued its work to the early 1960s.

With what seems a patronising objective today, it provided 'rooms where factory girls and others living in West Adelaide might meet for amusement and instruction. The only other playground for these girls is the street. The Club keeps them from this and the unsuitable companions they would inevitably find there'. The Club's 32 permanent beds for home accommodation were never empty, and there was an average of eight applications a month for the emergency beds. Crafts, drama and elocution, home nursing, millinery, and gymnasium skills, including Spectacular Drill, were taught.<sup>30</sup>

The Club Committee produced Adelaide's *Kookaburra Cookery Book* to raise funds: it may well have published in its 1912 edition the first direction that the Lamington cake, the Australian culinary treat that vies for popularity with the Pavlova, should be divided into square pieces!<sup>31</sup> The premises changed their gender focus when a patron of the west of Adelaide, former State and Local Government Politician Bert Edwards, gave this and adjoining properties in Whitmore Square to the St Vincent de Paul Society and to the State Government.<sup>32</sup> The Frank Lundie Hostel for the rehabilitation of former prisoners (named by Edwards after a South Australian union organiser and official), Ozanam House and the St Vincent de Paul Night Shelter for Homeless Men began services by 1963.



Concern for the well-being and health of South Australia's infants led to the foundation in 1909 of the School for Mothers in a cottage in eastern Wright Street. The School developed into the Mothers and Babies Health Association, whose award praising Mahomet Allum's daughter (the family were residents of the South West) in one of the years of concern for post-war regeneration is pictured.

An inscribed metal plaque: 'Torrens House. Mother and Baby Contest. 1944. Under five years—open section. Won by Mrs. Mahomet Allum and Bebe Nora'. (Photographer: James Eiffe. Courtesy of Magarey House)



## *Crafts, trades and livelihood*

Job Malin's flour mill, the City Mill 'at the south-west corner' opposite the West Terrace Cemetery, was built using local timbers (red gum, stringy bark and box tree with wheel cogs of the oily 'peppermint') by August 1842. An eight-sided building, it had one pair of grinding stones. Malin sold the mill in January 1843 to Stevens, Phillips and De Horne, one of whom was a professional miller. The new proprietors added a larger pair of grinding stones and renovated the structure, adding 'a superior wind-shaft' and a smut machine, and continued Malin's charge of 1/- a bushel for grinding cereal.<sup>33</sup> The mill ceased operating in about 1872. The mill and the Angel Inn were among the first businesses in the South West, beginning the concentration there of small trades, light industry and the settlement of artisans and labourers.

The Angel Inn on Town Acre 395 (Gouger Street) existed under that name from March 1839 until 1947. Samuel Stephens of the South Australian Company originally bought the land while on Kangaroo Island. Over time, the South West's hotels (eight by 1858) became meeting places for political, sports and community associations; they now host their own social clubs and provide business lunches and continue to sustain a convivial community focus.

The age-old staple food, bread, was baked in the South West well into the 20th century. The McDermott family, who came to live in the area in 1908, regularly took their Sunday dinner to their local baker, who cooked it in his oven for two pennies.<sup>34</sup> The South West was connected to a South Australian 'delicacy' (for some), the pie floater! The Gibbs and Beale families, and Chrissyologous Christie, bakers and pastry cooks all connected in some way to the South West, later ran some of the several metropolitan pie carts that by 1958 numbered only two.<sup>35</sup>



George French Angas (1822-1886). The City of Adelaide from Mr Wilson's Section on the Torrens, June 1845. 1845 Adelaide. Watercolour, 24.5 x 32.8 cm. Detail. (Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide. Gift of Miss E.M Johnson in memory of her father, the late Mr Arthur Lawrence Johnson, direct descendant of George Fife Angas 1972). Painted one year after Angas's arrival in South Australia, this shows the 'distant city with its two West Terrace windmills', one of brick on the corner of Waymouth Street (demolished after 1876), the other (right) on the corner of South and West Terraces.<sup>36</sup>

## *Crafts, trades and livelihood*

In 1911, Elizabeth Gibbs, daughter of the English-born James Cross Gibbs, baker and coffee stall proprietor, married George Arnold Beale. In about 1921 Elizabeth and George moved to 69-70 South Terrace, and bought 25 Hamley Street from James Gibbs and ran it as a bakehouse. Up to 1920, the coach painter, Mick Pierce, had lived and worked at 17-19 Hamley Street: number 19 was the site that became known as Gibbs's Stables.

When George died in 1926, Elizabeth maintained the bakery business – together with her son Ernest from 1912 when he left school at age 14. Elizabeth built a two-storey shop and residence in 1928 beside the bakehouse, and 'Beale's' sold groceries as well as the baked goods that motorcycle and sidecar police (and others) deviated to the South West to enjoy.

On Ern's marriage in 1937 to Evelyn the couple ran the business until 1956 when they sold it to Ern's brother, James C. Beale. Jim worked with his son, Raymond, and he eventually sold the business. In the early 1970s, Ron McKenzie bought what had become the 'Swiss Bakery, Deli and Pies and Pasties' shop and continued to bake the naturopath Dr Vögel's bread to the recipe he inherited from the outgoing baker. Three of McKenzie's bakery vans went every morning to buy petrol from Tonkin's Garage in Gilbert Street. The McKenzies were the last to bake on the site where now there are residential units.

Ern Beale operated two pie carts, one probably transferred from Walter Beale (Ern's uncle and a pastry cook of Parkside), the other his grandparents' wedding gift to Elizabeth and George Beale. The horses were stabled at the rear of 69 South Terrace. He operated the carts at Hilton and at the city railway station: Ern's licence for the railway station (held by his mother before him) was abolished in June 1943, and the cart lay derelict until it was taken by railway in 1951 to 'work' at Loxton, eventually entering the Loxton



*The west side of Hamley Street, 11 July 1928. (State Library of South Australia: B4780). The wood pile in this yard no doubt fired a baker's oven and a pie cart's pea soup pot. The cart on the right is titled 'E. Beale's Railway Stall'. Ernest Beale held the railway station licence from 1937.*

Pioneer Village. The Red Cross bought the other cart. Another pie cart owner, Chrysologous Christie, was a resident of 201 Sturt Street in the later 1930's and he stabled his cart horse at the Elephant and Castle Hotel, West Terrace, where the firewood was cut to stoke the boiler for cooking green pea soup.<sup>37</sup>

Like all developing mixed-use areas, the South West remains prone to changing opportunities and policies on its residential and commercial/industrial nature. In 1920, for instance, residents of Whitmore Square's western side included a box maker, carrier, wheelwright and brewer. A blacksmith and a farrier were in nearby Halls Place, and boot makers were in Little Sturt and Weil Streets. Alfred Street in the mid 1890s was home to 21 residents, who included a grave digger (probably employed locally), and in the 1920s it housed the musician Louis von Wirndt, the plumber Joseph Kennedy, a gardener, linesman, cellarman and 'a striker' (– if not one on strike, perhaps he was a blacksmith's hammer-man).

Many did not conduct their trades or businesses from home but were part of the southwestern residential concentration of small income-earners and tradespeople. Prior to the late 1920s the bulk store of J. Inverarity was in Millers Court. Inverarity, now suburban felt manufacturers, shared the Court with the Baptist Christian Mission (whose church building had been erected in 1913), which operates the significant WestCare Day Centre. Margaret Goodwin recalled that the locals brought old clothes and rags (flock) to the bulk store and received 'a few pence per pound to extend the budget'.

In 1926 R.G. Lock's butter factory and distribution warehouse was built on the eastern side of Wilcox Street. Fred House probably supplied the factory with fresh milk as he and his wife provided milk and scalded cream to local residents. Like other South West dairymen, House grazed his four or five cows in the South Park Lands, the cows crossing South Terrace straight from his Wilcox Street milking shed. Some time after House had left the street the Council bought the site for road widening, and then 'Fred House's cow shed really got the axe'.<sup>38</sup>

Sharpe Brothers operated a cordial manufactory at 255 Wilcox Street in 1930. The residents of South Terrace then included cabinetmakers, a railway detective and F.L. Heyneman, whose Waverley Vinegar Works was situated on the south corner of Gilbert Street and West Terrace. This business also made mustard and produced olive oil. 'Deafy' Harris took over the last ownership of the factory.<sup>39</sup> It closed in 1942. In the 1950s the factory buildings housed Waverley Salvage, motor wreckers and timber merchants: it was partly destroyed by fire in that decade. The J.B. Sellers Joinery Works on the Selby and Gouger Street corner perhaps did business with Waverley.



## *Crafts, trades and livelihood*

The house and attached shop on the corner of Whitmore Square and Sturt Street was built in 1889 for the maltster, Frederick May. He was the licensee of the Prince Albert Hotel in Wright Street from 1876 to 1885.<sup>40</sup> Harold 'Bunny' Grunert, who was born in Gilles Street in 1917 when the shop with its cedar counter was vacant and for let (having most recently sold 'Drinks & Tobacco'), rented the building from St Luke's Church at a low cost from the time he opened it for shoe repairs in 1939.

A competitive long-distance swimmer, Bunny participated in swimming events 'through Adelaide' (from the Torrens Lake weir to the Morphett Street bridge and back, and from the weir to the Adelaide University footbridge), at Port Pirie, from Henley Beach to Grange and from Normanville jetty to Carrickalinga beach. The great emphasis on sport at Sturt Street School, which Bunny attended, introduced children to football, cricket, soccer, and regular swimming lessons at the City Baths. Bunny's first swimming 'chance' (as he described it) came through St Luke's: he was chosen by the minister, 'a man of the people', for a boys camp at Mannum where he won the 275 m swim across the River Murray.

A row of five chairs inside Grunert's shop window was a lunchtime meeting place. Passengers also caught up on news there before boarding the trams that ran past every ten minutes. The shop was 'a hive, not of industry but of talk'. And it was more than a hub for commuters: there was a boy who every time Bunny turned his back 'came in and took my hammer' to fix his 'bitser'. Bunny's finishing, patching and riveting machines were no doubt safe from the makers of those low racing carts constructed from salvaged bits of packing cases, baby pram wheels and pieces of ironmongery!



*'Australia's Own Car!' – and H.W. Grunert Shoe and Canvas Repair shop, corner of Whitmore Square and Sturt Street. The width of the Whitmore Square carriageway was reduced in 1975. Up until then it carried two-way traffic and accommodated parking on both sides of the roadway. (Courtesy of Jean and Harold Grunert)*

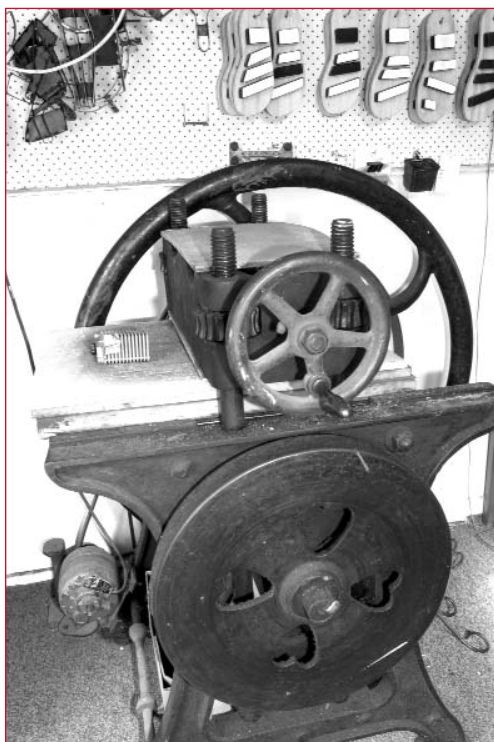
The local availability of services was shown when a one-legged man, his fitted leg under one arm, requested Bunny to find him a bolt for its repair. Although having a strange thread, Bunny found one in a fastener shop in Wright Street.

## *Crafts, trades and livelihood*

Repairs to dancing pumps were the major part of Bunny's work. Adelaide had 38 Saturday night dances (including those at the Palais, North Terrace, and the North Adelaide Football Club) in the 1940s and 1950s. During wartime rationing, repairs to repairs were the order of the day; and Bunny sold second-hand the shoes that children had grown out of. Football boots were often borrowed for an important game and if by the following Friday the boy's paper round had earned him enough to buy the boots, they became his own. There are many tales told of Bunny: one is that he wore his customers' shoes because his own were so holey. Bunny had helpers: his wife, Jean, sewed shoes and canvas covers for small boats; a young Greek man, Michaelis (Mik) Thomas, worked for him part-time during the 1950s while employed at Australian Glass Manufacturers; and Andy, who worked night-shifts at General Motors-Holden. The building has been a second-hand goods shop, a delicatessen, the Witches Brew Café and is now the office of Cystic Fibrosis of South Australia.

During the 'swinging' 1970s the international poster import business known as Hangup moved from its suburban warehouse to a commercially more

accessible southwest corner cottage on Morphett Street and Whitmore Square. The plumbers who currently occupy this site, W.F. Gray & Co. Pty Ltd, once operated from 175-177 Sturt Street (which was built in 1877 for A. Delavaux).<sup>41</sup> One of Hangup's proprietors, the craftsman Gay Wilson, once went into Bunny Grunert's shop and was amazed to see him standing behind the counter on a half-metre high pile of leather trimmings – 'condensed leather over 40 years!'



*A Pearson & Bennion clicking press, of probable English-make and originally hand-operated, c. 1888. Bunny Grunert bought this press from a shoemaker in Angas Street, and used it at his home to cut out Kromhyd soles to various sizes, mainly for the South West's Greek families who glued them on when required. When families (and his work) increased, Bunny attached a motor to the press. (Photographer: James Eiffe. Courtesy of Tim Skyrme)*

## *Crafts, trades and livelihood*

In the 1870s the occupations of Gilbert Street residents included those of wood moulder, carpenter and boot closer; and in 1879 in Little Gilbert Street lived the 'corporation scavenger', the man responsible for collecting solid refuse in his dust cart (a tip dray). The occupations of the 1890s – cab driver, tobacco twister and printing trade stereotyper, among others – gradually fell away to progressive changes. Yet monumental masons had lived in the area and applied their skills for the West Terrace Cemetery in particular for many decades. For instance, Maddaford & Polkinghorne in Murrays Lane; and William Henry Martin, also a Methodist lay preacher, who operated a building and masonry business in Whitmore Square from 1892 to 1895 and at 162 West Terrace from 1928 until about 1934.<sup>42</sup> S.D. Tillett Memorials Pty Ltd of West Terrace has the most venerable (and continuing) history of all the masons. While the spectrum of occupations applied mainly in the city, some tradesmen, such as the stonecutter and building contractor John Chapman of Whitmore Square, worked elsewhere: in the 1880s he built rural underground powder magazines for the South Australian Railways.



Jean and Harold Grunert and the sole stitching machine in 'Bun's Boot Shop'. (Courtesy of Jean and Harold Grunert)

## *Crafts, trades and livelihood*

As the local population increased in the 19th century, so did the number of corner stores and providers of goods. Some such as John Austin combined services.

The draper, Lewis T. Funnell, operated from 167-169 Logan Street in 1920, and probably earlier. By the late 1920s he and John Austin were the proprietors of this drapery store (below) at 185-187 Sturt Street. V.C. Shaw was running that drapery by 1955, but the retail focus changed and in the 1960s and 1970s Mine Safety Appliances (Aust.) Pty Ltd operated there.

When Luigi (Lou) Cimarosti, who was born to Italian parents 'three doors down from the Duke', was about 12 years old he began working at the Gilbert Street Meat Store. Ralph Wells, the butcher, had him scrubbing the meat tubs and counter, and spreading sawdust on the jarrah floor. Lou later took over the business and ran it as a family butcher shop: his son, Steve, succeeded him. Steve believes that the shop was probably the last such enterprise in the city apart from the Central Market. Lou lived with his family above his shop for several years until his growing family 'moved us out' to the suburbs – so said Steve, who now lives with his family in the former shop and residence.



John Austin Grocer & Draper on the eastern corner of Sturt and Little Gilbert Streets, c. 1890. He supplied Cadbury's Cocoa and many other staples. (State Library of South Australia: B32483)



Austin's Drapery, Cheap Grocery and Ironmongery Mart in about 1895, after successful trading and the addition of a storey and architectural embellishments. After their contents were used for fuel, kerosine tins (displayed on the pavement) were handy half-bushel measures and were recycled for numerous other domestic purposes well into the 20th century. (State Library of South Australia: B46510)

Steve Cimarosti left Sturt Street school at 14 years of age to work in the family shop, later becoming a licensee of the Duke of Brunswick Hotel for four years to December 2002, then returning to the butcher trade outside the city. Steve's grandparents ran a terrazzo and cement laundry trough works nearby in Gilbert Street. Changes of scale and economy imposed by outside forces brought an end to many such small, industrious family businesses.

## *Crafts, trades and livelihood*

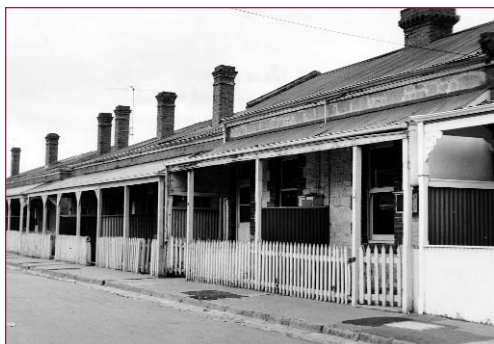
The occupations centred in the area have changed in focus and type, but light industry continues and now encompasses 'clean' electronic services. Householders once took home the wood they bought from the local woodyards (on the corner of Wright and Claxton Streets and in Sturt Street) in two-wheeled carts that they afterwards returned. Other industries such as flour milling, tin canister-, cheese- and bicycle-making (the latter in Hamilton Place), and iron foundries gave way to motor car detailing and venetian blind-making, speedometer servicing and automotive transmission fitting, printing, repairing small machinery and supplying bulky goods. Faced with change, resident craftsmen diversified: the Lockett family, for example, used Model-T Ford parts in converting horse-drawn vehicles to motorised ones. In 1930 Martin and Crago, motor painters (the coach painters



*The 'Gilbert Street Meat Store. Quality Butcher' later became 'Cimarosti and Sons Quality Meats'. The building's front was changed by 1971, leaving little indication of the original nature of the archway for the butcher's horse and cart. (Courtesy of Julie and Steve Cimarosti)*

of former times), were in Little Gilbert Street. Evesan Stock Foods on the corner of Weil and Gilbert Streets, known as the 'fowl feed' store to those who had room to run a few chooks, was a productive bulk pollard and grain supplier: this service has not been replaced by a contemporary enterprise.

Over time Vinrace Street was home to many tradespeople and work sites: T. Dawson & Sons' jam tin and canister factory, R. Stitt (a rabbit merchant of the 1920s), and in the 1930s the South Australian Gas Company bulk store were some. Shirley Cocks's mother ran a small shirt factory in a cottage owned by her on the corner of Vinrace and Gilbert Streets in the late 1920s – not a far cry from today's Gilbert Street headquarters of the nationally acclaimed clothes designers, George Gross and Harry Who.



*Row cottages on the north side of Vinrace Street, December 1970. (State Library of South Australia: B21253)*

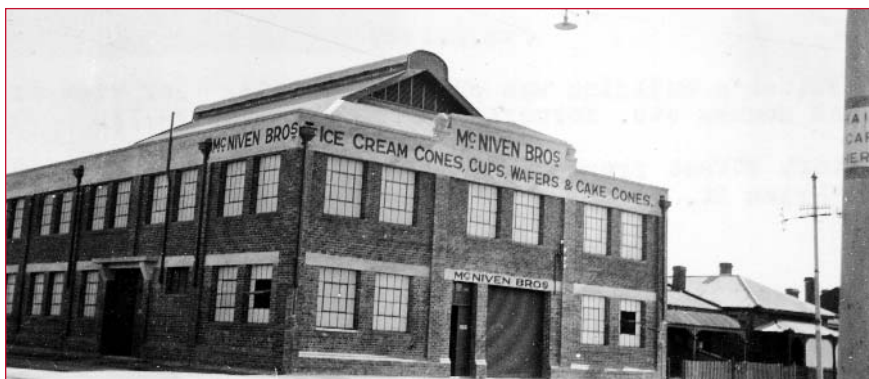


## *Crafts, trades and livelihood*

The McNiven Brothers' ice-cream cone, cup, wafer and cake cones factory on the corner of Sturt and O'Brien Streets presented great temptation to local residents, especially the children as John Adey recalled.

On baking days the aroma of those delicious wafer-thin cones would waft into our classroom ... At lunchtime we would run down to the open door of the factory and would be given handfuls of broken wafers. They were as good as the one-pennyworth of broken biscuits which we could buy at the corner grocery shop!

Greengrocers in the South West also stocked supplies from Arnott Motteram's biscuit factory on the northern corner of Gouger Street and West Terrace. Gibbard's fruit shop, where a variety of cut fruit pieces could be bought for one penny, was on Sturt Street near McNiven's factory. Mr Williams's shop, on the corner of Sturt and Little Sturt Streets, was the only fish and chip shop in the area in the early 1940s. John Adey and the Sturt Street schoolchildren would see him at morning recess and lunchtime when Mr Williams 'would bring his large wooden tray of potato fritters down to the school fence and sell them for one penny each. The potatoes were covered in crispy batter and loads of salt and fat, but they were a real treat for us wartime kids'.



The McNiven Brothers' factory, 1929. The electric power lines of the tram service score the sky above a tram stop – 'Hail Car Here'. In 1910 the double tracks for the new electric tramcars were laid into Sturt Street and across the northwest corner of Whitmore Square. The last of the efficient street tram services in Adelaide (except for the Glenelg line) ran on 26 November 1958 and were replaced by buses that, for the local service to the western suburbs, began on 3 February 1957. (State Library of South Australia: B5036)

The shed of the monumental works of O.H. Dutton and the adjacent cottages with the iron awning verandah – once very common, as were flagged drains in the middle of lanes, some of which survive – were razed for McNiven's premises. By 1930 Kennett Extension Ladders had erected the building that today adjoins the former McNiven factory to its west.



*Business and dwellings on the corner of Sturt and O'Brien Streets, 1928. (State Library of South Australia: B4777)*

A long-lived family business in Whitmore Square, Electric Power Tool Services, was begun by Sam (Savas) Dontas (who was born in Greece), who first worked in his father's electrical shop in Hindley Street. In 1952 Sam moved to two cottages on Whitmore Square and conducted business from one until he bought the auctioneers Kearns Brothers' building (formerly another general wares dealer's site). Sam's daughter, Marissa Peach, understands that Australia's defence forces took up the Dontas Toaster designed by her father, which baked 21 slices of bread at a time, in the 1940s.

Number 181 Sturt Street had an interesting series of occupants. From the 1920s the building was the home and shop of the herbalist Mahomet Allum who 'took over the chemist shop from Sydney Cooper the singer'.<sup>43</sup> The low-relief mortar and pestle on the finial arch of the façade speaks of its original purpose. By 1955 the property was run by the café owner E. Steiner. Its occupiers over time included Hilti Fixing Systems for brickwork and concrete from the late 1960s into the 1970s and Asio's Restaurant in the 1970s. Until recently it was Nanyeta's Gypsy Taverne and then an educational headquarters for Australia's Romany population (mainly Czech and Slovak people).

One industry in particular, though not always situated locally, was a large employer of the city's western population. The ever-expanding Holden's Motor Body Builders with its works on the Gilles and King William Streets corner employed hundreds of South West residents, especially post-World War Two migrants. In the Great Depression, which began in South Australia in 1927, some work was available for the inexperienced as 'dent knockers and solder wipers' recalled Alan McKenzie.<sup>44</sup> After Holden's merged with an American firm, General Motors, skilled and trainee workers travelled from Adelaide to the company's huge factories at Woodville and then also at Elizabeth.

Numerically, the main South Australian settlers in 1836 were English and Scottish, who were soon followed by migrants from Ireland and Silesia in Germany. From then through to the major migration of continental Europeans after World War Two, people of European descent had established businesses in the South West. In the 1930s Ciprano & Company, mosaic manufacturers, were in Winifred Street; and by 1941 Mr Milazzo, a statue maker, lived in Little Gilbert Street. The later migrants who came to the South West were predominantly Italian and Greek. By 1950, one corner of Bailey and Gouger Streets was home to Borgia Brothers' large macaroni factory (now the Wing Chun Academy).

'Little' Con Bambacas is a second-generation Greek-Australian whose father came to Australia from Asia Minor in 1924 when he was 16 years old. He soon obtained work at the Broken Hill Associated Smelters at Port Pirie and then bought a general grocery store at Terowie. Taking sheep skins and salvage metal to sell in Adelaide, he returned north with fruit and vegetables and trucked these supplies to Wirrabara, Peterborough, Gladstone and other centres. He moved to Adelaide in 1941 and established a greengrocer's shop in Sturt Street. When 'Little' Con Bambacas first worked in his family's store as a 14-year-old in 1951, the rear of the building retained a bakehouse with its wood-fired brick oven, horse stables and large slate slabs on which the former owner, a baker, had rolled his dough. The Bambacas shop remains a family business in Sturt Street.

Although migrant families steadily moved to suburban areas, Adelaide remains a central hub for many of their interests. The Federation of Italian Migrant Workers and their Families Workers' Centre (FILEF) moved its headquarters from a western suburb to open in Lowe Street in 1986. For seven years during the 1970s FILEF ran a multicultural preschool centre – the first in South Australia – at Mile End. In Lowe Street FILEF continues its educational and cultural programs, including professional development for teachers of Italian and for carers of elderly Italians. FILEF was born from a desire to unite the interests of Italian-Australians and to encourage a common discussion of issues affecting their community. Culturally, FILEF also endeavours to encourage a recognition of Italian identity within multiculturalism and away from those 'points of expression [that] tend to be stereotypical', such as nostalgia for folkloristic music and emphasis on cuisine.<sup>45</sup>



## *Migration settlement*

The second and main influx of Greek people to South Australia began after World War Two and the homeland civil war (1946-1949) and continued into the 1960s. The concentration of new Greek migrants in the South West and the scarcity of accommodation in the 1950s saw two or three families sharing two-room cottages: they developed a close and supportive community where 'every Greek person was an "uncle" or "auntie"' according to 'Little' Con Bambacas. The children only later, if fortunate, met their grandparents. As Gerasimos 'Gerry' Patitsas observed, when shared accommodation was very difficult to obtain for single Greek migrants in the 1950s, the building on the corner of Selby Street which had operated as the Red, White and Blue Hotel from 1850 to 1863 provided rented rooms (but vacancies there were not easily found).

The national census in 1971 showed that Greeks were the largest group of overseas-born South Australians (48%). To 1966, 79% of Greek-born people lived in the Adelaide metropolitan area, and by 1986 their concentration had peaked at 91%. But from the mid 1990s the diffusion of Greek families from the South West to the suburbs, particularly those with young children, increased.<sup>46</sup>



*The Bambacas family's original fruit and vegetable shop, Sturt Street. Like many delicatessens, it was a supplier of the very popular Amscol ice-cream made by the former Adelaide Milk Supply Co-operative Limited. (Courtesy of 'Little' Con Bambacas)*

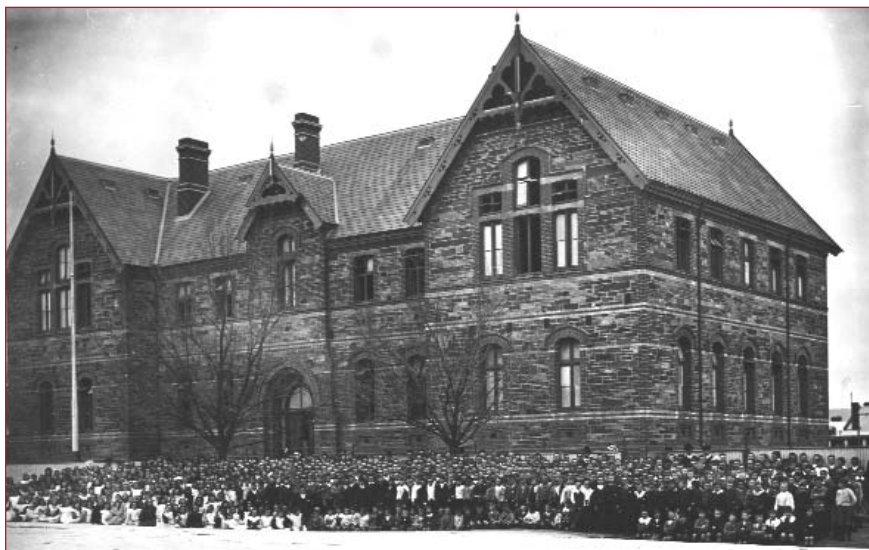
## *Some population statistics*

The South West residential population over the decade to 1976 declined by 52.5%, with the dwelling occupancy declining from 2.9 to 1.9 persons, the largest loss being of young people.

In 1978 the residential population of the South West was about 1200.<sup>47</sup> Twenty-three years later the total population was 1030 (670 Australian-born, 351 overseas-born and nine Indigenous people), the greatest number in the 25-34 year age group. In 2001 about half of the overseas-born residents were pre-1986 arrivals in Australia.

In 2001 the South West had a higher share of the city's population born in Greece and China (excluding Taiwan), and the highest percentage of home-speakers of Chinese, Greek, Spanish, Indonesian, Japanese, Arabic and Hindi languages.<sup>48</sup> The homelands of many residents arriving from the 1970s were Hong Kong, Malaysia and mainland China, a goodly proportion being tertiary students.

## *'Galvaniser of the community' — Sturt Street School*



*The Sturt Street School community in 1907. (State Library of South Australia: B3356)*



## *'Galvaniser of the community' — Sturt Street School*

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The Workers' Educational Association (WEA, established in South Australia in March 1914) had its first major centre in South Australia in two attached houses on the corner of Morphett Street and South Terrace from the late 1950s. But with the need for larger quarters the WEA moved to Angas Street in 1984. As important as the WEA has been to the area, the community's incisive educational influence was Sturt Street School from the time of its opening in 1883.

The City Model School (Sturt Street), from 1883 to 1885, became a Public School, a Model School, and a renowned Practising School (from 1930) and Demonstration School (1961-63), then a Primary School. The practising and demonstration schools, with single classes of 5 to 14-year-old children, specialised in training teachers for one-teacher schools in Outback and rural South Australia.

Ken Gutte was a Demonstration Assistant at the school from 1959 to the end of 1963. He recalled that in the late 1950s Greek children began to swell the school, not just in a trickle but in large numbers. Although classed as a 'new arrivals' school, Sturt Street had no special classes nor language centres or materials with which to help demonstrators in their work, yet staff and trainee teachers learned remarkable coping skills. In the early 1960s the school encouraged Greek-born parents to join the School Council. A Special Literacy Unit (Primary) was established only in 1981.

Ken came to live in Gilbert Street some years ago to be near to his voluntary educational work at the Adelaide Remand Centre in Currie Street: there he contributed 12 years work until the establishment of an organised government-supported program. He recalled that Sturt Street was 'a very caring school', uniquely with few behaviour problems.

But teachers' dilemmas increased when student numbers declined suddenly in the first terms as families moved to the Riverland to pick fruit and returned with their children from seasonal work in March or April.

The occasional problems were usually resolved swiftly. Once when a printing works in Gilbert Street was broken into and equipment removed, the school was asked to solve the riddle. So Ken decided to teach about Caxton and the printing press and the children were asked to bring from home appropriate items for display. Thus almost every missing part was returned, 'no questions asked'.

## *'Galvaniser of the community' — Sturt Street School*

Sturt Street School galvanised the community, not only through its community evenings (euchre was popular), its trophy-winning student fife and drum band and the after-hours special classes held at the school by ethnic communities, but also by its place in developing multicultural understanding. In turn, the valuable experience of trainee teachers was spread widely within the State school system.

Out of school hours, the children were able to roam the city depending on their family strictures. Indeed, Ken Gutte and the other teachers were careful not to keep many of the boys in after classes because a large number were after-school newspaper sellers. 'Little' Con Bambacas was a paperboy on various city corners and also delivered on his bike. He sold the *News* at Scots Church (on the corner of Pulteney Street and North Terrace) and the *Sunday Mail* at Wests cinema in Hindley Street, running home at 11 p.m. through the back streets. Doug Thomas, who says that he 'failed plasticine in Grade 7' at Sturt Street School, but who succeeded in various businesses, learned some home economy early when he compared the £1 12/- he earned as a 14-year-old for three hours' paper selling opposite the Central Market with the £1 7/6 he received during a 48-hour-a-week pre-apprenticeship with a South West manufacturer. He told his father, 'It doesn't equate'.

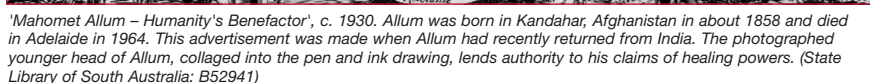
Student numbers dropped dramatically at Sturt Street School in the early 1960s. Ken Gutte remembers that 'It was not uncommon for children to come to school and say, "I'm leaving next week. They're bulldozing our house."'. The commercialisation of the South West and the consequent reduction of residences led to declining patronage of corner stores and other services, including those of the school. The school survived until 1996, however.



But after a concerted campaign by the local residents the State Government plans to reopen the buildings for community facilities in 2004.

*Children of Sturt Street School in about 1957-58. (Courtesy of Gerasimos Patitsas, who is pictured in the front row second from the right)*

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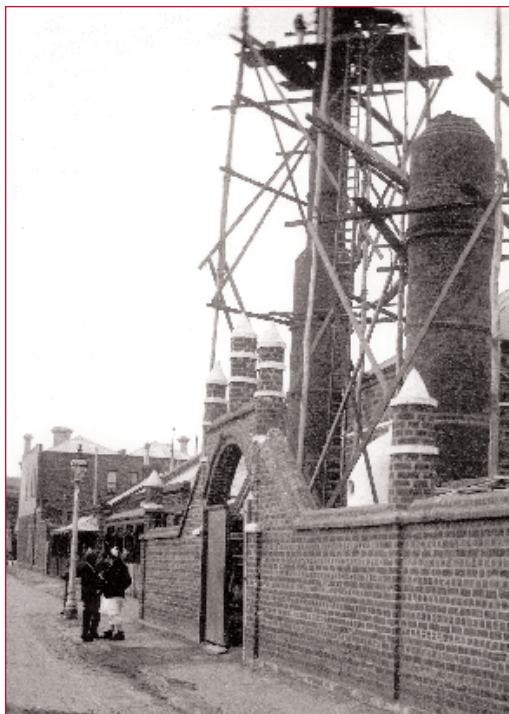


## *When the North came to the South West*

The Adelaide Mosque plans were approved in 1887 and the building, financed by Afghans mainly from Oodnadatta and Alice Springs, was erected over 1888–89. Not until 1910 did electric lighting become widely available in the streets of Adelaide. The South Australian Gas Company had introduced gas to the city for general consumption in 1863. The streets where mains gas pipelines were not laid remained lit by kerosene. But at the close of 1868 the City Council's agreement with the company 'to light such lamps as might be fixed on the line of their mains' fell to objections by rate-paying citizens. For a brief period the streets 'remained in darkness': a gas-rate imposed in 1869 allowed the street lamps (as seen here in Little Gilbert Street) to be again lit.<sup>50</sup>

Walter Lockett's father, a coach builder who lived in Gilbert Street, made 'wagons that the Syrians used to go through the country selling drapery'; and his grandfather, John Lockett of Logan Street, made the iron work on top of the four minarets.<sup>51</sup> ('Syrians' was a catch-all term like Afghan for Indians, Pakistanis, and Afghans). Charles McDermott, who worked in the boot trade, moved to a three-room cottage at 14 Arthur Street with his family in 1908. When almost 81 years old in 1985, his daughter, Annie McDermott, left her cottage (the family owned numbers 14 and 12): she recalled the

Chinese men with 'bags on the end of sticks' and 'Assyrian women with bundles carried on their heads' street-selling drapery and clothes, and the street gas-lighter doing his evening rounds on his bicycle. Annie also remembered 'many Afghan merchants living in the area', some walking with 'a snow-white lamb' on a lead, several 'spending time in the city stocking up on goods before heading off on the camel runs'.<sup>52</sup>

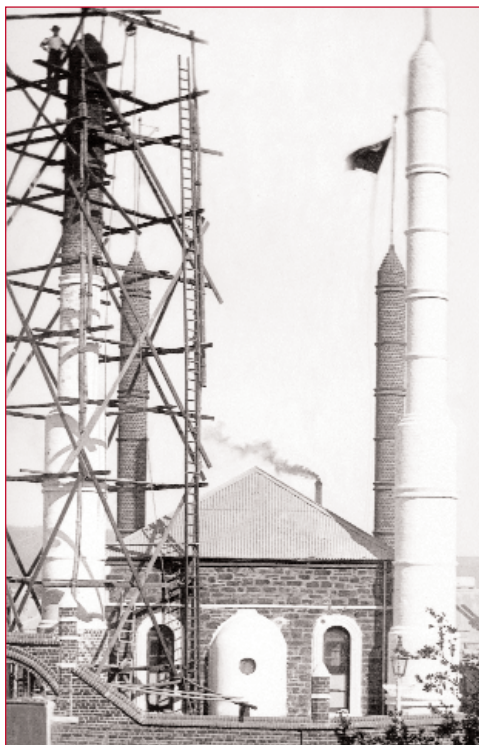


*The Islamic Society of South Australia  
Adelaide Mosque in Little Gilbert Street,  
photographed during 1903 when the minarets  
were erected. The row of late 19th century  
two-storey buildings in the background on  
the corner where Austin's store operated,  
remain today. (Courtesy of Stewart's  
Adelaide Collection)*

## *When the North came to the South West*

In the 1890s the Adelaide Mosque was termed the 'Afghan Chapel', but its true identity was soon absorbed into Anglo-European consciousness. The congregation, then about 100, comprised many former camel drivers and workers on the Great Northern Railway to Marree. Hadji Moolah, aged about 70 years in 1891, was in charge, and he accommodated many elderly men in Little Gilbert Street cottages near the mosque, where he and his wife also lived. The occupation of some of these retired men in the mosque's garden building was 'Indian mat-making'.<sup>53</sup>

A major religious observance in July 1890 saw more than 80 Afghanis and one Hindu worshipping at the mosque.<sup>54</sup> By 1903 there were up to 30 worshippers resident in Adelaide.<sup>55</sup> Sail canopies on three sides of the mosque today extend its accommodation, which increases to several hundred worshippers on festival occasions. Two of the four minarets were rebuilt about three years ago. Followers of Islam resident in the South West numbered some 21 in 2001, ten less than in 1996, whereas the largest non-Christian group counted in the national 2001 census followed Buddhism.



*Adelaide Mosque, Little Gilbert Street. A peacock was once kept in the Mosque grounds – perhaps as an alarm guard or a reminder of the worshippers' homelands? The English bond brick wall of alternating headers and stretchers, a strong method of bricklaying, was perhaps chosen for its more attractive character and approximation to Islamic decorative ceramic work.*

*The Council's rubbish destructor chimney in Halifax Street is visible working in the distance. Before motorised collection, Council garbage collectors watered their dray horses at the troughs at local hotels and elsewhere, sharing this service with the brewery trolleys and passenger carts. (Courtesy of Stewart's Adelaide Collection)*

Lundie Gardens in the South Park Lands, where the first Australian city's memorial to the 'Australasian Soldiers' who fought in the Dardenelles (as it is inscribed) was unveiled in September 1915,<sup>56</sup> was an extended garden and playground for the children of the South West. But the whole West and South Park Lands were their domain for forays in 'bird nesting' (competing to gather the best and most varied eggs), 'monkey nut' gathering and 'dead marine' collection (for pocket money from the local bottle'o – empty bottles were so named because they were returned to marine dealers [bottle yards] for recycling), 'yabbing' in the creeks and family picnics. As well as 'sleeping out' with their families during stifling summer nights, football, cricket and other less organised adventures were encouraged by these unimproved expanses of public land that they shared with milking cows until the late 1960s.

Relief from summer nights was also got from sleeping on the grass at Whitmore Square. There, John Adey recalls, in the summer evenings of 1943–44 St Luke's Church

... would have their weekly community sing-a-long. They'd hang a large white screen from a branch of a tree and trundle out a huge magic lantern, and a small foot-peddle organ. All the kids would sit on the grass and we'd have community singing until 8.30 pm, the words of the hymns and songs projected onto the screen ... As the war was still in progress, Whitmore Square was peppered with deep open air raid trenches.

The Rev. Shaxted initiated the monthly 'Lantern Service' where the whole proceedings were screened and the rector's address was illustrated by lantern slides. St Luke's Open Air Services were conducted in 'the days when the Parish was a close residential area'.<sup>57</sup> This characteristic of the community has not been lost.

The West Terrace Cemetery (and beyond) was also a place for hide-and-seek, for honing slingshot skills against the birds, and 'tadpoling' in the creek. It is as well the last resting place of several generations of South West families. Ken Gutte tells of the city's Flower Days in the early 1960s during the Adelaide Festivals of Arts. The Sturt Street School children were asked to bring flowers for a floral carpet and Ken thought, 'Where on earth are my kids going to get flowers from? They didn't have gardens ... hardly any back yards'. On Monday morning the school was 'inundated with flowers' – strangely, in circular pattern: they 'grew' in the West Terrace Cemetery, but 'we didn't ask where they got them from!'.

The foundation stone for the Kindergarten Union of South Australia's (KUSA) first Nursery School was laid in 1936 at Grey Ward Free Kindergarten (founded in 1908) and the school opened in 1937 at 29 Selby Street.



## *Children at play*

John Carmichael wrote that despite 'the efforts of many individuals and organisations, the area had remained conspicuous for the extent of poverty and poor housing.'

KUSA had put its efforts and limited finances where the need seemed greatest and where its theories about best practice in pre-school methods would be put to its most severe test ... At Grey Ward the attendance rate increased significantly after its conversion to a nursery school. Within a year of the change Grey Ward reported an attendance rate of 95% – an unprecedentedly high rate given voluntary attendance and the susceptibility of young children to illness.<sup>58</sup>

The present WestCare courtyard at the end of Millers Court was once part of this large kindergarten, KUSA's first that was purpose-built for the practice of Maria Montessori's educational methods. Children are now provided for by the Grey Ward Children's Centre (formerly the Lavis Free Kindergarten) in Wright Street.

World War Two brought an additional ready-made play space, according to John Adey, when

... round air raid shelters made of reinforced steel and concrete water pipes, about 5 feet in diameter, were placed up against the stone cemetery wall, from South Terrace to the cemetery gates. They were fitted with wooden slatted benches cut to fit the round pipes and ran the length of each section of pipe. Oleander bushes were planted in front to hide them from West Terrace.

House yards being small or non-existent, the important street games included shooting marbles on the way to school, 'black rabbit', 'red rover all over' and the more organised boys' 'honour' fights in a small



*These children from the Molloy, Harper, Nunn, Potter and Adey families (from left to right) are blowing soap bubbles under the side verandah beside the northern garden at the Grey Ward Nursery School, 1941. (Courtesy of John Adey)*

park underneath a mulberry tree in Edward Street (when it was open to Wright Street). The mulberry tree served another purpose – as a rich resource for children's silk-worm rearing. Imaginative concert programs and other performances were held by children in the various laneways, besides playing cricket and football there with warehouse walls being particularly useful boundaries or goals.



## *'One red and one black eye'*

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Australian Rules football ruled, though by the early 1960s the Malta United Soccer Club had a firm base in Brown Street. Like many South West children, Bernie Smith, who lived behind St Luke's Church when a youngster, and Doug Thomas, who grew up in a cottage on West Terrace, went together to gymnastic sessions at St Luke's. They paid their one penny to the church's Grey Ward Boys' Institute (established a short time before 1922 by the Rev. D.J. Knox) and, while Herbie King played the piano, they leapt the horse, swung from the rings, and performed 'figure running' (a slalom-like race between chairs and other hard obstacles) – all fine exercise for these aspiring football players. Bernie Smith played 55 South Australian Football League matches for the West Adelaide Football Club from 1945 to 1947 and then for Geelong until 1958. He was the first South Australian to win the Brownlow Medal (1951) in the Victorian Football League. Doug Thomas is the long-time current manager of the red and blacks – the West Adelaide Football Club.

From the late 1920s the City Council sought to prevent organised Sunday football competitions on the Park Lands. In 1948 the football, soccer and rugby clubs were warned that playing matches in the Park Lands on Sundays would result in the loss of their leases. Steve Hamra, patron of the Sunday Independent Football Association, defied this ban, and the Association opened its season with four matches in the South Park Lands, the main game being that between the Rossi Rovers and the Cedars of Lebanon Football Club. The police attended these matches to seize the 'Sabbath defiling criminals' but the captains were shepherded away by Bert Edwards, whose stand on Sunday sport would again sweep him into the Council for Grey Ward.<sup>59</sup> Steve Hamra, then a furniture manufacturer on West Terrace, was manager of the Lebanese club, for which he played. According to Doug Thomas, as Hamra owned the cricket ball, bats and stumps, he also captained the cricket team! Hamra's truck was instrumental in making Richmond Oval the new home for the West Adelaide Football Club: it pulled out the box thorns covering the vacant lot and carted couch grass cut by machete from the Mile End Railway Yards to be planted as the playing field for the first League matches at Richmond in 1958.<sup>60</sup>

The West Adelaide Football Club was a reconstructed team founded in 1892. It trained in the South Park Lands, all its League players well-known locally. To the late 1930s they lived mainly in Wright, Sturt and Gilbert Streets. Westies' supporters, who more often than not played in teams with highly localised allegiances such as St Luke's, the Whitmore Squares, the Brunswicks and the West Adelaide Ramblers, gathered to listen on Sunday mornings in

## *'One red and one black eye'*

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Whitmore Square when their idols discussed the previous day's matches. Sport and religion did mix: indeed, Westies might well have once been dubbed 'The Irish Eighteen' for its numerous Catholic players.<sup>61</sup>

The Club committee met at the Bushman's Hotel in Wright Street, then run by Carl Hundertpfund, a strong Club supporter. In 1837 John Stewart bought the site of the future hotel; and from December 1838 Thomas Maslin operated the Queen's Arms Hotel there. Late in 1904 the hotel's name changed to the Bushman's Club Hotel; in 1952 to the Gothic Hotel; and in recent years to the St Andrews Hotel.

The various football teams' playing grounds off South and West Terraces were 'as rough as bags' and had to be marked for every game after the players had cleaned away the cow dung. 'Little' Con Bambacas remarked that 'If West won, our shop had a busy Sunday. They'd all come round and buy the *Sunday Mail* ... be so happy – we bought bung fritz from Turner's Butchers and sold tons of it! They were very religious about their sport'. J.F. Turner, a butcher operated on the corner of Lowe and Gouger Streets. In the early 1890s a barter grocer, J. Gow, operated on the Lowe Street corner opposite. On the site next to Turner's imposing building (existing today), where stables existed formerly, the butcher built a bacon-curing factory in 1945.

The graded teams of the Brunswick footballers were a 'training ground' for Westies. The Brunswick Juniors 'knocked around' George Beckoff's ham and beef shop on the southeast corner of Gouger and Brown Streets and had supper there after games.<sup>62</sup> They trained by Sir Lewis Cohen Avenue in the South Park Lands, where Westies Colts (the League Club's under-age team) also trained until about 1947: their changerooms – a green iron shed with chip heaters – were erected by the Council. A former local resident and Council mace-bearer, Ronald Bailey, was one-time honorary secretary of the Brunswicks, who nicknamed him 'Roaster' for his disciplinarian coaching.

## *'The King of the West End'*

Albert Augustine (Bert) Edwards was the publican of the Duke of Brunswick Hotel from March 1916 to September 1924 from where he organised the Brunswicks. The teams played in the Patriotic League, the competition formed when South Australian Football League ceased matches in 1916 because of the impact of World War One. Thereafter, to the end of the Great War, a combination of League, parkland, and amateur clubs played Patriotic League matches in support of both the football tradition and Australia's fighting forces.<sup>63</sup> Edwards was a controversial chairman of the West Adelaide Football Club (1921-22), a Club president, and Club patron in 1930.

Elected in 1917 to South Australia's House of Assembly for the electorate of Adelaide, Edwards remained until June 1931 when a court conviction caused him to lose his seat in Parliament. From 1914 to 1931 Edwards also held the City Council's Grey Ward for the Australian Labor Party. He regained his Council seat in 1948 and held it to his death in 1963.

Not for nothing was Edwards known as 'the King of the West End'. Indeed, he was a paramount influence as a former Lord Mayor of Adelaide recalled in 1984:

... in the city proper the interests of the less privileged people were very thoroughly looked after by Councillor Edwards and Councillor Morris ... Edwards was quite a remarkable man. He was a great debater ... he'd launch forward for ten minutes with a very strong voice, very excellent English, and he would hold the complete attention of the whole room ... I can recall on one occasion – it may have only been a few months prior to his death – the Esso Oil Company had applied to demolish some [quite good] cottages and put a petrol station on the corner of Wright [and Morphett Streets] – and a number of us, Dick Nicholls ... Murray Hill who was a land agent and myself strongly supported the Esso case ... Edwards had a lot more foresight than we did and he was bitterly opposed to their demolition ...<sup>64</sup>

Shirley Cocks, a long-time South West resident, described Edwards's 'great booming voice'. He no doubt used it when he called in some outstanding 'debts' for the South West's needy with the Central Market stall-holders, claiming 'You owe me a bag of potatoes' or whatever was in season and possible.<sup>65</sup> Edwards gathered baked produce from Balfour Wauchope Pty Ltd for the Salvation Army; the boot of his sky-blue Studebaker sedan was filled in wintertime with mallee roots for the area's needy; and he brought cakes from Gehlert's Gouger Street store to his own old school, St Joseph's, in Russell Street.

## 'The King of the West End'



Bert Edwards (centre) with June and Ken Fischer at St Patrick's Church, Grote Street in 1952. June (née Hocking) grew up at 177 Gilbert Street during the 1930s. Her maternal grandmother, Irish-born Hannah Dunn (later Coffey), lived at 62 Whitmore Square where June lived after her mother died in 1941. (Courtesy of June and Ken Fischer)

## Afterword

'Sly grog' (out-of-hours supplies for dry throats in response to the statutory closing of bars at 6 p.m.), two-up gambling and brothels were 'services' once readily found in the South West. Alongside these activities was the South West's strong support for child health and development – particularly in the period that condemned sub-standard housing – that went hand-in-hand with an emphasis by church and school on the sporting skills of co-operation and competition. Present moves to encourage young families to settle in the area will revitalise this earlier spirit of the South West. The example of social concern set in the past is continued by the area's active community associations and by the residents' will to retain the significant character of a constantly evolving 'corner' of the city of Adelaide.

Full titles of references abbreviated in the Endnotes can be found in Further reading.

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