#### **Dog Registration Source Sheet No. 45**

The control of dogs in South Australia was administered by the Commissioner of Crown Lands under the Dog Act of 1860. By the provisions of this Act, the province was divided into a number of districts based on the District Councils Act of 1858, for the purpose of regulating the ownership of dogs and alleviating the nuisance caused by them.

The Act compelled the owners of all dogs – with the exception of hunting dogs belonging to aboriginal inhabitants - to annually register them with the Registrar of Dogs appointed for each district either by the local council or, in the case of outback areas where there was no local authority, by the Commissioner of Crown Lands. The Dog Act was revised in 1867 to enable all corporate cities and towns to be declared districts for the purpose of the Act.

For the Corporation of the City of Adelaide the role of the Registrar of Dogs was performed by the Town Clerk from 1867 until 1874, after which the City Inspector and Licensing Officer was responsible for this function until 1973, when it was transferred to the City Treasurer’s Department. It is now performed by the Council’s Regulatory Services Department.

From 1867 dog owners were required to pay an annual registration fee of five shillings, and to fit a collar to the dog on which was stamped the registration and district numbers.

The Dog Act was further amended in 1884 to enable Registrars to annually issue dog owners with metal discs ‘on which shall be inscribed the date of the year and the registration number and district of the dog registered.’ The disc was supposed to be attached to the dog’s collar and any dog discovered not displaying a registration disc was ‘liable to be seized and destroyed as if unregistered’ (Dog Act, No. 329 of 1884). The Act also provided for rewards of two shillings and sixpence to be paid by Justices of the Peace to persons who destroyed unregistered dogs upon presentation of the dead dog’s scalp.

The Dog Act also required the Registrar for each district to keep an annual record, arranged in alphabetical order, of the names of persons who had registered dogs, together with the number of the registration disc issued to them. Persons applying for a dog disc needed to complete a Dog Registration Form on which details of the dog were recorded.

**Archival Sources**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Record Description** | **Date Range** | **Accession Number(s)** |
| Master Index [to Town Clerk’s Dockets and Special Files] | c1930 - 1976 | 2426 |
| Town Clerk’s Department Dockets | 1856 - 1976 | 2530 |
| Town Clerk’s Letters Received Books | 1862 - 1976 | 4182 |
| Index of Town Clerk’s Letters Received | 1856 - 1973 | 4183 |
| Town Clerk’s Department Letter Books – General | 1853 - 1924 | 602 |
| Town Clerk’s Nuisance Complaint Book | 1854 - 1884 | 620 |
| Notices of Abatement of Nuisances | 1881 - 1885 | 622 |
| Dog Registers [alphabetical lists of dogs registered] | 1891 - 1918 | 664, 665 |
| Alphabetical List of Dogs [Book] | c1871 - 1921 | 663 |
| Female Dog Index [Book] | 1924 - 1951 | 667 |
| Male Dog Index [Book] | 1924 - 1930 | 666 |
| Declarations with Respect to Duplicate Dog Discs | 1942 - 1959 | 668 |
| Dog Indexes | 1943 - 1976 | 2107 |
| Reports of the Inspectors of Nuisances | c1852 - 1870 | ECR |
| Town Clerk’s Department Newspaper Clippings - General | 1898 - 1971 | 283 |
| Impounding Acts [and amendments] | 1920 - 1935 | 3236 |
| [Dog Control Act – Unregistered file re By Laws] | 1954 - 1981 | 1197 |
| [Lost and found dog notes for notice boards] | 1981 | 1202 |
| [Sample three years dog registration disks – numbered and unnumbered] | 1979 - 1982 | 1186 |
| Dog Registrations | 1987 - 1988 | 5793 |

**Other sources**

Mayor’s Reports, Annual Reports and the Digests of Proceedings 1872 –

Neal Ransom *Collared – A History of Dog Registration in South Australia* (Adelaide, 2005).

**Further Information**

**City Archives:** Topham Mall, off Currie and Waymouth Streets, Adelaide 5000

**Counter / telephone enquiries:** 9**.**00 am to 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

**Search Room open for public research:**10.00 am to 4.00 pm Tuesday to Thursday

**Telephone:** +618 8203 7439

**Email:** [cityarchives@cityofadelaide.com.au](mailto:cityarchives@cityofadelaide.com.au)

**Web:** <https://cityofadelaide.com.au/cityarchives>