#### **Records Relating to Aborigines Source Sheet No. 54**

**Municipal Year Books**

From 1920 until 1938 the annual City of Adelaide Municipal Year Book contained a section entitled “Adelaide’s Aboriginal Names”. Initially, this consisted of a brief one-page description of Aboriginal place names in the Adelaide vicinity, but the 1935-36 Year book contained a much more expansive eight-page article written by Noel Augustin Webb entitled “The Place Names of the Adelaide Tribe”, which was based on the early works of Lutheran Missionaries in South Australia who had compiled a vocabulary of the language of the Adelaide Tribe.

**Town Clerk’s Dockets**

The Town Clerk’s Dockets were the Corporation’s prime administrative series of correspondence records dating from 1852 until 1976. The series was arranged in an annual single number sequence and controlled by a nominal Index to Town Clerk’s Letters Received (Accession 4183) which is set out alphabetically by the sender’s name, and annual Register of Town Clerk’s Letters (Accession 4182) which list the Dockets in ascending numerical order together with the date received and a summary of the subject dealt with.

Researching the Docket Registers and Indexes should identify specific items of information about issues which may have arisen between the Corporation and the City’s Aboriginal inhabitants. For example, the regular fortnightly reports to the Town Clerk from the Medical Officer of Health sometimes touched on Aboriginal health and housing matters, while those from the Park Lands Ranger occasionally contained mention of Aboriginal campsites or corroborees on the Park Lands. In general, though, references to the City’s Aboriginal population are few and far between in the Town Clerk’s records, and when their existence is acknowledged it is invariably in the context of a nuisance complaint (similarly, the Digests of Proceedings - which are the printed minutes of Council and reports of Council Committees - seldom provide any information about Adelaide’s Aborigines).

There are, however, some notable exceptions to this general lack of recognition in the records:

* **Town Clerk’s Docket No. 2658 of 1935 “Adelaide Tribe of Aborigines”.**

This record was the result of Town Clerk H. P. Beaver’s endeavours to expand the section of the Municipal Year Book dealing with the original inhabitants of the Adelaide plains. To this end he asked the Town Clerk of Moonta in 1929 to interview Amelia Taylor, the last surviving member of the Adelaide tribe who was living near the town of Moonta, in order to “glean some facts from her, relative to the Adelaide plains [and] the customs of her tribe”. In addition to a transcript of this interview, the Docket also contains extensive biographical information on the Lutheran Missionaries, C.G. Teichelmann and C.W. Schurmann, who in 1840 had published “a vocabulary and grammar of the Adelaide Tribe of Aborigines”. Much of this material was obtained through the efforts of Dr Edward Angas Johnson, the Corporation’s Medical Officer of Health and a former Member of Council, who said he was “desirous of enriching the records of the Corporation by particulars of the men who were so closely associated with the natives who occupied the site of Adelaide”.

* **Town Clerk’s Docket No. 1213 of 1970 “Erection of Memorial Cairns”**

Consists of a newspaper clipping regarding a proposal by the Aboriginal Progress Association to erect memorials at sites around Adelaide where local Aboriginal tribes had once lived.

* **Town Clerk’s Docket No. 477 of 1971 “Proposed Aboriginal Cultural Centre”**

Contains correspondence and other papers relating to Council’s decision to give moral support to the proposed establishment of an Aboriginal Cultural Centre.

* **Town Clerk’s Docket No. 190 of 1972 “Aboriginal Protest March”**

Comprises correspondence, reports, newspaper clippings and other papers relating to Aboriginal protest marches in the City during 1972 - 1976, and the establishment of an Aboriginal tent “embassy” in 1972 in the North Adelaide Gardens. This Docket contains much sensitive material, especially in regard to complaints by local residents and responses by the Council.

* **Town Clerk’s Docket No.558 of 1975 “Use of Flagpoles, King William Street”**

Includes correspondence with the National Aborigines Day Observance Committee concerning the flying of Aboriginal flags in King William Street.

* **Town Clerk’s Docket No. 486 of 1976 “Deputation re - Oval in Park Lands”**

Deals with an appeal by the Aboriginal Community Centre for a deputation to wait on the Council regarding the possibility of leasing an oval on the Park Lands for Aboriginal sports.

* **Town Clerk’s Special File No. 249B “Social Worker Reports”**

This consists mainly of reports submitted by the Corporation’s Trained Social Worker, Mrs Joy McLennan, to the Medical Officer of Health during 1944-45 with regard to Aboriginal families living in the City. The reports and associated documents, including several case studies, cover such areas as the families’ origins, health, welfare support, living conditions and recommendations for assistance.

**Administrative Services Department Files**

The following A-Files deal with the subject of Aborigines in the City:

* A15157 Lord Mayor’s File on Aboriginal Reconciliation and Associated Issues
* A14903 Reception - Aboriginal Flag Flying Ceremony
* A13499 Annual Flying of Flags
* A1302 Human Resources Department File - Aboriginal Employment Programme
* A2911 Aboriginal Welfare Services
* A10883 Consumption of Alcohol in Public Places

**Historic Photographs**

* Accession 1624 Item 1 Group of Aborigines camped on Park Lands c 1880s
* HP 1086 Photo drawing of Aboriginal Camp c1840s HP 1086

**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

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