

THE HENLEY AND GRANGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY JOURNAL

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THE HENLEY AND GRANGE

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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J O U R N A L

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COMMITTEE, 1982

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GENERAL MEETINGS, REMAINDER OF 1982

General Meeting -

Friday, 20th August

Annual General Meeting -

Friday, 19th November

MEMBERS

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Mr. D.J. McCarthy	Mr. G.R. Willoughby
Mrs. R. McCarthy	Mrs. A.M. Willoughby

SINCE THE 1981 JOURNAL

The 1981 Journal was distributed to members present at the General Meeting on 1/5/81, and was favourably commented on.

At this meeting, Mr. John Simons, Chairman of the River Torrens Committee, discussed, in a most pleasant and informative manner, aspects of the history of the Torrens, and preparations and plans for the Torrens Linear Park.

We were very gratified to hear, at the July meeting (31/7/81), Mr. Michael Duigan outline the Western Region Heritage Project. The results of this investigation have now been published in book form, and the Corporation of Henley and Grange has presented a copy to the Society.

The Annual General Meeting was held on 6/11/81, in the main staff room of Henley High School - the venue of all meetings of the Society during the year.

In conjunction with the meeting, a display was held of historical photographs relevant to the region. 30 photographs had been splendidly enlarged by Mr. Jim Spargo and Mr. Brenton Norman of the School's Senior staff, and captions supplied by Mr. Malcolm Starling, Senior Master in Art. The photographs were arranged by the President and Mrs. Willoughby, on display boards made available by the school. The exhibition, which remained on display in the school foyer throughout the following week, aroused great interest, not only among members of the Society, but among staff and students.

Mr. Bob Badenoch was the guest speaker at the meeting. It was good to hear details of how a local bakery functioned, and of Carnival days.

The President, Vice-President and Treasurer were re-elected, as were committee members Messrs. Glen Ralph and Noel Newcombe and Mrs. Dorothy Triggs. Mrs. Betty Edwards, who had served the Society well during its first two years, did not seek re-election as Secretary, and Mrs. Audrey Willoughby was elected to this position. Mrs. Edwards continues as a committee member.

We had been informed at the end of July that the room on the north-west corner of the Town Hall would be made available to the Society but, because of delays in construction work in the Corporation offices, it was not until January that the key was handed to us. The Corporation also presented the Society with items of office furniture, and a selection of former Council Chamber chairs.

Since then, Society members have generally tidied and re-arranged the room, re-painted the walls, and provided curtains. To paint the walls, two Saturday morning working bees were arranged by David McCarthy and Noel Newcombe. All officers and committee members have helped in this re-decorating programme, assisted by Edna Newcombe, Nell Hasenohr, Alan Leonard and John McCarthy.

At the Vice-President's suggestion, the Society has begun work on a Chronicle project, to compile and publish a survey of dates and events in local history - a comprehensive project, to be completed before the State Jubilee in 1986.

Donations to assist the Society's work have been received from the Corporation of Henley and Grange, the Henley Grange and West Beach Women's Service Association Inc., and Mr. Tim Ferrier.

At the general meeting of 19/3/82, Mr. Alan Laidlaw took us, verbally, on a tour of the Grange of forty or so years ago. Extracts from his talk, transcribed from tape, and printed in this Journal, form the basis of a historical tour well worth repeating by car or on foot.

On 27/4/82, the President, representing the Society, gave a talk on local history to a gathering at the Temple Uniting Church. And on 13/5/82, he spoke (and showed slides) to an audience of over 200 members of the 'Thursday Group', in the State Administration Theatre, on 'Henley and Grange in Retrospect.'

We were pleased to have as guest speaker at the May meeting (14/5/82), Mr. Ron Nash, Town Clerk of Henley and Grange during 30 years of very rapid developments. His talk gave many valuable insights into some of these developments, particularly those of the 1950's. (Our own recently purchased recording apparatus was used for the first time at this meeting.)

The Church of St. Michael and All Angels, Henley Beach, invited the Society to contribute to an exhibition being organized for their Jubilee Celebrations at the end of May. The Secretary and President arranged, in the Church Hall, an exhibition of selected historical photographs and photo-copies of other material. (Display screens again by courtesy of Henley High.)

St. Michael and All Angels produced an excellent history to mark the Jubilee. A copy, donated by the Church, has been added to our ever-increasing collection of local history material.

Now that the Society has its own room, a start has been made with the classification of material held. A sub-committee held two discussion meetings concerning this project, which is now well under way.

The Society can, we feel, look back on a year of consolidation and progress.

A HENLEY BEACH BAKERY

(Story and description based on material kindly taped for the Society by Mr. Bob Badenoch.)

Badenoch's Bakery and Grocery Store stood on the north-east corner of Henley Square, where the Commonwealth Bank now is.

Mr. W.R. Badenoch purchased the business from the Farrant family, in 1917, and it was carried on by his son, W.R. Badenoch junior.

Incidentally, when the latter was employed, as a metal worker, in Port Pirie, he had two room-mates who, each in his own way, achieved distinction - Raphael Cilento (later Sir Raphael, a famous medical scientist, and father of the actress Dianne Cilento), and a young man named John Biddle, who became a very well known and highly respected teacher at Woodville High School. All three were members of the Solomontown Debating Society.

W.R. Badenoch junior married Betsy Spencer Moulds, whose father managed a vegetable garden in Aldgate, owned by East Bungaree Station, and from which vegetables were transported by train for use on the station. Their children were Bob, Mal and Mavis.

Back to the bakery - .

The bakery ovens, known as Scotch ovens, were roughly 12 feet by 15 feet, and had a capacity of 230 loaves. They were wood fired, using stringy bark and cut mallee (not mallee roots.) The furnace was at the side of the oven, and the oven floor was of fire-bricks.

The only mechanical contrivance was a 'Dough-it' machine - a 'monstrosity', a large circular mixer powered by a 5 h.p. motor. Above it was a tank of water for use in mixing. This water had to be kept at a constant temperature. In winter, kerosene tins of water, heated in the oven, had to be added, and in summer, blocks of ice from Johns' butcher shop.

The dough was scaled off, cut and moulded - all by hand. Moulding was a 'real art.'

Before baking, the floor of the oven had to be 'scuffled.' This was done by rotating a wet chaff bag on the end of a kauri pole, 12 or more feet long, to clean the fire-bricks. Bert Busbridge was particularly good at scuffling. Among his skilled baker-colleagues were Edgar Whitbread

and Brent Jacka.

And the end result? Bob Badenoch is certain that bread made by the old method, and baked in a wood-fired oven, was the best of all breads for flavour.

Much of the bread was delivered to homes - to the back door first of all, then, under the exigencies of war-time, to the front door or front gate.

This method of distribution, particularly when deliveries were made to the back door, was exceedingly wasteful of time - with not many more than 100 deliveries per day made by each carter. With front door deliveries and war-time zoning, many more deliveries could be made.

Bread carters employed by Badenochs (who were, before zoning, only one of four bakers delivering in what was then a small 'island community') included Ernie Lanyon (who had the north run, to Kirkcaldy, Grange and Estcourt House), Cliff Jeffries and Ralph Lavis.

Apart from a Chevrolet car which had been turned into a van, horse-carts were used. The two wheeler carts had very tall wheels - most uncomfortable in the rain! Some northern parts of Military Road were really only passable by horse-drawn vehicles - pot holes could be very deep!

The Chevrolet van, incidentally, rested on blocks for eight years from 1939 on, because of petrol rationing. But, none the worse for this experience, it must ultimately have covered hundreds of thousands of miles.

The horses were regarded with affection, and as individuals. Laddy knew every bread round and every grocery round. And, in flood time, his services were often called upon to pull the family car - Rugby, Chrysler - from the broad torrent pouring over the concrete road. Tom was called Old Tom as he lived on to 25 years of age. And no check rein could hold Mick when he sighted cabbage leaves left beside the road by Noel Newcombe's father.

The horses were stabled behind the Badenoch home in North Street.

Groceries were also delivered to the door (twice a week), and for years T.G. Mather carried out this task with efficiency and distinction.

Apart from bread, various other yeast goods, and pies and pasties were made. And prices? Bread was 4d. a loaf. Pasties could be delivered to Manser's Henley Primary School shop for 2/6 a dozen. Wages, of course, could be not much more than 2 pound a week.

Pies and pasties were also delivered to Vic Bergemann's Henley jetty kiosks, which were eventually swept away by storms.

Among memories of Depression days were the problem of accounts that many honest people just couldn't pay, the checking of ration tickets for bread and groceries, and W.R. Badenoch's kindly action in making a shorter working week rather than putting men off.

Just after the war, in 1946, disaster struck.

Bob Badenoch was holidaying at Victor Harbor when police informed him that the Henley Beach bakery was on fire. Although roads and cars were more primitive then, the journey back to Henley took a bare hour. But the bakery had been completely destroyed.

The bakery was re-built, and the wood-fired ovens were replaced by oil-fired ovens. But these were not extensively used, as the Badenoch brothers were beginning to concentrate, particularly at the Trimmer Parade Golden Bloom bakery, on producing wholesale small goods (cakes, pies, pasties.)

The Henley bakery was in full swing, however, at the time when the Henley and Grange Carnivals were at their height.

For the procession, the firm would spend at least a couple of days beforehand decorating the carts. On the day, the horses had beautiful brass-mounted harness. Between 200 and 300 dozen buns would be made and distributed from the carts.

Onto Ernie Fielder's tip-truck would be loaded a piano, and the Badenoch brothers would be joined by as many musicians (first-class musicians, too) as could fit on the truck.

People would line the whole of the route of the procession - from the Grange jetty, along Seaview Road to Henley Hotel, and back along the Esplanade to the Henley jetty - and would throng the square and surroundings afterwards. There was much to entertain them.

Bakery business could be brisk. On one perfect Carnival day (about 75° on the old scale), food seemed to be running low. Using all available manpower, 600 to 700 dozen pasties were baked and sold in about two hours.

Carnival time brings back happy memories, but so, too, do Sunday nights in the Square, with the Hindmarsh band, and community singing.

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AROUND GRANGE IN THE '40s AND '50s

From the transcript of a talk given by Mr. Alan Laidlaw.

Moving to Grange

During the Depression years, I was managing branch butcher shops on Jetty Road, Glenelg, for William Angliss & Co., later for A.W. Tiver.

Irene and I married in '37, and by '42 we had the two eldest children, John and Anne. My wages were 5 pounds a week and we were paying 30/- a week rent on a house. Well, it didn't leave a great deal to spend for bread and butter.

A business was advertised in Grange. It appeared in the paper - a business in Grange, to take over the remaining four years of a five year lease on a Grange butcher shop. And this appeared to be the opportunity for a young man, or a young married man at least, to start out. So I came across, and I accepted the business for a four year lease, to start with.

At 5 pounds a week, there were no motor cars, so I pushed a bike from Glenelg across to Grange, daily. Tapleys Hill road, of course, wasn't a sealed road. It was a metal road, with potholes everywhere - but you'd miss two and hit one.

But I think the worst of the journey was reaching the junction of Tapleys Hill Road and Grange Road, where both sides of the road were smothered with red sandhills and boxthorns, and if the boxthorns didn't go through your tyres, you can bet your life the three corner jacks made up for it.

This was a daily experience. However, we managed it for several weeks until a house became available at Grange, and we moved into Sturt Street, Grange.

We remember our first years there, when John and Anne were children. My wife would come, and put the children in the playground, and help me with the shop-work.

Our Grange shop was a little shop, and Staker Brothers were operating a fairly old and established business in Grange Road. But we'd made a start.

Fort Street

However, to begin my talk on the Grange of those years. I'd like to start at the northern boundary, our Fort Street boundary.

The site of the old Cable Station was on the corner of Fort Street and the Esplanade. A concrete floor used to mark the place, but today there's a car park there.

On the opposite corner was what we called Jarrah Cottage, built by the Gilbert family. The outside walls all consist of jarrah.

On the opposite side were the Barclays, and then Mrs. Kelly.

The Grange Recreation Ground

As we go down the hill from Fort Street, we come to the Grange Recreation Ground.

In those years the oval was a grassed area of about a third the size of the present day oval, and bounded by the narrow Military Road.

There was an old sand-pit, being filled with rubbish. By 1945, it was pretty well filled in. At this time we formed a committee of five men, called ourselves the Progress Association of Grange, and began to re-define the oval.

By 1947, we'd held several gymkhanas and raised money where we could in association with the procession held annually on Australia Day.

When we decided on a post and rail fence, we didn't have sufficient money on hand. So I took it upon myself to sell posts and rails at 10/- a post.

When I approached Mr. Bert Noblett, he said, 'I wouldn't give you ten bob for a post, but if you organise your new pitch, I'll pay for the material.'

We appreciated this help - though, of course, later on the donated pitch was torn up when the new turf pitch was put in.

Money was running out, so we had to do something.

When land in Woodville Road was purchased for the erection of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, the owners and trainers of trotters in the western

districts, who had pretty well all trained their horses in that area, knew they would have to leave.

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital was built during the 1950's. When they were told to quit, I was talking to one of the owners, and casually said: 'Well, would you be interested in the Grange Oval, as you've nowhere to go?'

He took me up on it, and another two or three owners inspected the oval, and measured the circumference. It couldn't have been better for their purpose.

We had a quick meeting the following Sunday morning, with 30 of their members, and established a committee of representatives of the Council and the trotters, and away went the trotting.

They measured the track, laid sand and metal, watered it and rolled it, and in a short time had the track up to trial pitch.

The trials went on for some years. Then the Royal Show Society cancelled trotting at Wayville, which meant that the trotters had to move out to the new ground at Globe Derby Park. There was a move away from Grange Oval, out to Days Road, for trotting exercises.

So that was the end of our committee. We handed the oval over to the sporting clubs and said, 'It's yours, and make the best of it' - which they have done.

Mr. Cyril Baxter, an enthusiastic cricketer, soon took over where we left off. The present-day club rooms carry Cyril's name. He did a mighty job.

Terminus Street Corner

The C.W.A. had three cottages on the corner of Terminus Street and Military Road. Each cottage could accommodate a family of 12, so it was a wonderful thing for families from the Outback and far-reaching areas to bring their families down and spend a fortnight at the beach. I remember some of those children standing outside the old Seaview Road shop, and saying: 'Oh, look at that big lake!' They'd never seen the sea in their lives. It was a wonderful thing for them.

In the early fifties, you remember, the escalation of land values came in very quickly. These cottages could not maintain the pressure of

the expense. The land had to be sold, and now there's a group of town houses erected on that old one and a half acre site.

On the opposite corner was Mr. Reg Hollard's fuel and grain store, with a one-hand petrol pump at the side, and the riding school with horses at the back.

I think that area, one day, could be - will be - the new Grange Railway Station; because I think a great deal of attention is given to crossings and level crossings with the volume of traffic today. But that's just my opinion.

On the Grange Esplanade

If we leave Military Road, and go up to the Esplanade, we come to something which you're all very familiar with - the Marine Mansions. They are wonderful buildings, wonderful homes created by a young Englishman in the 1880's.

I remember a story about a family that once lived there. There was a grandma, and she was caring for a four year old grandson. They'd just done the round of the shops; and anyone who's done the round of the shops in Grange knows just how tired you are when you get home. Gran had just come in. She walked across to the front windows, and opened the slats. It was the time of the afternoon when the water was right out - it was low tide. She just casually said: 'Oh, my word, the tide's out.' And the little one piped up: 'Yes', he said, 'and I'm tired out too, nan.' That was years ago, but I still remember it.

As we come south, Mr. Stan Richardson lived next door to the Marines. Stan had an area of land fronting his place, and at the time those interested in Surf Lifesaving at the Grange were taking the first steps towards forming a club. Stan offered this piece of land in front, subject to Council approval, for building a club house in the area.

Hughie Frost was working with his father at the Grange Hotel. Hughie came across and rounded up four or five members of the club, and said: 'I'm holding a meeting of the Surf Lifesaving Club in just a moment.'

Five of us turned up for this meeting. They wanted 100 pounds, to start building the club house. Five of us put in sufficient to cover the 100 pounds, and that was the real start of the Grange Surf Lifesaving Club.

Today, we look at the building, and its admirable. They've taken over the whole of Richardson's property, and built a beautiful dark brick building which houses their boats and all other requirements.

They've been operating now for 25 or 26 years, and you have a Life Saving Club which is as good as any other club in South Australia - their performances in South Australia are remarkable.

Next door lived Mrs. Knight, who let half of her house to Mr. and Mrs. Day. When the ladies went shopping, we often used to joke: 'Well, we're in Lapland. We have Day and Knight together!'

Coming south again, I think many of you will remember Jackson's bakery and a little mixed store. The place has since changed hands several times, and is now broken up into three or four flats. In one of these flats the notorious Ronald Biggs is said to have housed himself - hidden himself.

Next came the Tea Rooms. This property was acquired by the Brewery when they extended the Grange Hotel. They demolished the building to make way for their Ocean Lounge. I think that was in the early Seventies.

Car park and jetty

If you go across the road, you can see a car park. I'll call it a car park, but it's always been in the back of my mind that it's a town square.

In 1948 that car park was a high white sandhill surrounded by a galvanised iron fence. I always pictured that sandhill being removed. If you wanted people to come to the Grange, you had to get rid of that sandhill and make a town square.

At the time, Tapleys Hill Road was being widened and re-surfaced, as was Meakin Terrace, which is a branch road coming into Tapleys Hill Road, linking up with Devon (Frederick) Road and Jetty Street. It seemed certain that Jetty Street would be the main way to our jetty, that people coming to Grange would use Jetty Street.

Council was approached, and we bought that land from the Williams family - I shouldn't say 'we bought it', but I was a member of Council at that time.

Now we had to do something about that sandhill. It was at the time when land values were really active, and houses were going up in great numbers. Contractors were yelling their heads off for sand. So we arranged for a contractor to remove the sand, and in return to level and landscape the area, as you see today. We gave the sand for the levelling.

For some time it looked as though the publican was the only one who was getting any percentage out of this. But, as it turned out, the '53 storm changed things. It wrecked our jetty, tearing away planks and decking. And the Marine and Harbors Board were very doubtful about spending money on repairs. So we used this area of land as a lever against the Board to gain money to repair the jetty.

After several talks, this happened. They came back and rejuvenated the Grange jetty. And I think it's as good as gold, as good as ever it was - so we did some good there.

Now, even though the block is used for hotel users - well, good luck to them - I think some of our visitors to the Grange use it, and find comfort in leaving their cars there.

Along Jetty Street

If we go east along Jetty Street, we come to where stood one of the old Grange family homes. The Member of the House will remember this - it was the Randall home. Mr. Bruce Randall, Bob's grandfather, lived there. Bob, no doubt, will be able to put me right here, but I think I used to count about 20 steps up to the front door, to the verandah. It may have been 24, but that's near enough. Yes, Bob's been up there more often than I have. It was a beautiful old home. And in its place are the high rise flats you see today, the Grangeview Flats.

Across the corner was the Galligans' Deli. The Galligans left there in 1946 and it was taken over by Rapsons. Unfortunately, we heard that Thomas died just recently; it was a shock to everybody. Thomas Rapson had had one of the oldest businesses - it would be the oldest business - in Grange. I moved to Huxley's shop in February 1946, and Thomas and his family came in May in the same year.

Mr. Huxley's butchers shop was next to Galligans Deli. Hux seemed to want to do other things all day and be a butcher the rest of the

time. A bell used to be left on the counter, and, if you wanted service, you'd have to take that bell across to the door of the hotel, ring the bell, and get your service.

If you go downhill, Johnsons had the local mixed business, and in behind them Mrs. Dempster had a rather large bungalow home, living with her mother and two daughters. Northey Brothers purchased the property on the death of the mother, and established those four or five shops along the front which are now the Sea Range shopping centre.

Along Jetty Street again we come to St. Clavers Hospital, where Sister Nash was in charge for a number of years.

There is a Catholic church now at the corner of Jetty Street and High Street, on the site where Jacksons used to stable their cart-horses. There was a big red sandhill there, and, when the old horses came home sweaty, they used to love to roll in this sand. It was good to see them.

If you go north along High Street, of course, you come to Fishers' old home. This was opened up, in the early 1950's, I think, by the Junior Red Cross, with Sister McDonald in charge, until it was taken over by the Church of England as St. Laurence's Home. It was quite small to start with, but the number of inmates has increased, and the buildings have become much more extensive.

I'll leave Jetty Street now, except to mention Grange Cottage (Sturt House.) It's a matter for congratulation that it's now being cared for so well, and promoted as an interest to both local people and travellers. It's putting Henley and Grange right on the map.

Grange Road

Coming south again. I know so much about Grange Road because I spent five years there. I took over Stakers' old shop, and had the pleasure of serving people who are in this room tonight, for those years. I have a lot to be thankful for in my life.

The place hasn't altered a great deal, but there's one little thing that I'll always remember - the area of roadway between Seaview Road and Military Road. The sand was covered with old railway sleepers; that's the only way you could get through. It was narrow, and you could just get through. I still remember those sleepers.

The foreshore

I would like to come back to the Marine Residences. This young Englishman, we're told, came out here, and arrived at Grange - or South Australia - in the 1880's, and he decided to build those eight three-storey homes. I was given to understand that these people had built similar homes in Brighton-le-Sands, in England, and had good experience and expertise in this sort of thing. But the question in the back of my mind is this: why was it so near the sea?

When he built those eight homes of such immensity, surely he would allow for a foot-walk, a carriage way, an esplanade, sand dunes, and the beach. But today, there's only the width of the roadway between that building and the sands.

This leads me on to mention that at Henley and Grange, in my experience, we lost 30 feet of foreshore (esplanade) in less than six years. In the 1948 storm we lost 12 feet of our esplanade - commencing on the northern side of the Henley Outlet, and continuing on through to a point 100 yards or so south of Grange Road. That was the year that Glenelg lost its jetty, and the Barcoo broke her moorings and finished up on the sands at West Beach.

In the 1953 storm there was a similar tide running, but a greater velocity of wind. That storm cut into the esplanade in the very same spot, and took 18 feet in most places. Part of the roadway went, for instance, in front of Del Monte.

Well, there was 30 feet gone in less than six years, and the question is: what had happened before the turn of the century, and in the earlier years of this century? If we can lose 30 feet in such a short time, whatever was our esplanade like in those years?

I've thought a lot about this, particularly since the '53 storm, when we visited the area next morning as a rehabilitation committee.

Beach areas around Australia have been belted by storms; and many areas have rehabilitated the sand. But, if the sand can't be got back in time, boulders can be placed in position - boulders rather than walls, which can so easily collapse in storms. We decided to use boulders.

As we had no money we approached the Playford government; and they came to the party with 200,000 pounds, which was to be spent mainly by the Councils responsible for storm damage repairs between Largs Bay and Marino. And a very significant portion of this was spent on Henley

foreshore repairs.

We got flack from everywhere. Big boulders were coming in. They were unsightly! They were ruining our foreshore!

I've always thought back over the last 28 years those boulders have been there. Those people who objected to the idea at the time must be thankful today for the way in which those boulders have helped protect the foreshore. They've broken the waves, they've helped in every way.

I remember, when they were doing the work, a lorry backed in with one boulder on it, and tipped it down into its special place in the sand, just by another stone. That boulder weighed 7 ton. Of course, our trucks in those years were not as big or well-equipped as they are today. That was a heavy stone.

So, ladies and gentlemen, this is the thought I'm going to leave you with, and the question I'll leave you with, if anybody should know or be able to find out: What was the extent of our foreshore before and at the turn of the century?

Buildings like the South Henley Hotel and those Marines at Grange. Such properties are well over 100 years of age, and they would in no way have been built on the foreshore as we see it today.

But I'll leave you with an old saying, and it's this -
We must have good knowledge of the past to understand the present.

From the transcript of a talk given by Mr. Ron Nash.

Appointment as Town Clerk

In 1950, I was appointed to the position of Town Clerk, Secretary of the Local Board of Health, Overseer of Works, Building Inspector, Health Inspector. One job. As someone said at the time - one of my employees - it was a big little job. It wasn't really that big, because of the size of the town at that time.

The office was then at the corner of Seaview Road and North Street. That was the general office, which you'll no doubt see more of, as it's going to be your headquarters. It was at the Seaview Road level, and quite small. Then, down four steps to the foyer level, was the Town Clerk's office - where the public toilets for the Town Hall now are!

Two experiences early in the piece -

In the very early days, I had occasion to go down to Military Road, where I'd received a complaint about a woman burning some rubbish out in the street. I told her who I was, and about the complaint, and she said: 'Oh, so you're the new Town Clerk. Is this all you have to do? I suppose they pay you a thousand a year for this.' At the time I said, 'Yes, I wish it was a thousand.' In fact, it was 730 pounds, which wasn't too bad in 1950, though I'm happy to say it improved in the years that followed.

Shortly after that incident, I was out on some of my building inspection work, and going along the Esplanade at Henley South. I saw some building going on which I didn't know anything about. So I went in and asked a lady there if she had a permit for the work - a sleep-out type of thing. She said: 'Yes'; and I said: 'Well, I don't know about it, but it could have been before my time.' It was Mrs. Winwood, the wife of my predecessor. It was ^{rather} embarrassing to me at the time. I did check on it, and found it was a permit issued about six months previously. Anyway, they did have a permit.

Glass-houses

An important part of the job at that time was some supervision out in the Reedbeds area, which was covered with market gardens and hundreds of glass-houses.

The Council had a special interest in these glass-houses. Although the Building Fee on them arguably would have been perhaps 7 pounds 10/-, because of their area, the Council had made a special fee applicable to them, which was one pound each. So it was very important to the Council to really keep track of how many of these glass-houses there were, and where they were.

This wasn't really very easy. We had a plan showing where the things were, but the Bulgarians and others out in that area had a great habit of sort of shifting them over - understandably, I think, because of the growing conditions.

In any one year, they would move them from here over to there. This would upset the plan, and one had to determine whether this was a new glass-house or whether it was an old one shifted over, and so on. This was part of my job at the time.

Early modern subdivisions

There was, of course, very little development at that time - in 1950 - certainly very little east of East Terrace, or really White Street, near here. All this area was virtually unoccupied. But one or two houses were starting to be built across Henley Beach Road, in the William Atkins Estate. One of the roads there is called Yeomans Avenue. Mr. Yeomans was a predecessor of mine in the job.

Adjacent to this area, on Henley Beach Road, the concrete road had been constructed because of the floodwaters. At this time the road was in remarkable condition, and it remained so until the Highways Department pulled it up. It was all very well re-inforced. It seemed a pity that they didn't just build over the top of it. Anyway, it was pulled up, and buried mostly in the creek along here - along Cudmore Terrace.

Some further subdivision had got under way by 1951. The Council had changed from an Annual Value system of assessment to Land Values. The thought was that, if people had to pay high rates for vacant land, they would get on and do something about it, and develop it.

This, I think, had some effect, but it was certainly with mixed blessings, because the subdivider just did the strict minimum of developments, in piecemeal fashion, as he thought he might be able to sell a few blocks.

Of the subdivisions at that time, the main one was in the area more or less bounded by Grange Road, Wright Street, Marlborough Street and Mitton Avenue. Grange Road was all right, as that was a main road, a Highways Department road. But not the rest.

People, of course, bought these blocks at a reasonable price, I think, at the time. They wanted to build, which they did - and the next thing they wanted was some roads in the area. There just weren't any, so we started to put something down for them. In the main, it was cinder roads, constructed of cinders from the Gas Company and other places. These did a reasonable job, but you can imagine that on a hot summer's day vehicles going along these roads would kick up a dust and there would be black soot everywhere. Mother wasn't very happy with her washing those days. And, in the wet winter time, the centre of the road may have been all right, though even that was not very good.

That was one of the problems. The development went ahead of Council finances - the development within those areas where there were no roads and no drainage provided - and the subdividers weren't required to provide those in 1951, or indeed until 1955.

West Beach

The West Beach area was partly subdivided in 1929, but in 1950 there were still only four houses there. There was the one right down south, which was built by a Dr. Wells. There were the Lodge and Hill places in Rockingham Street, and one house way up in the sand-hills, near what is now Burbridge Road, and occupied by Mrs. Gray at that time. Mrs. Gray was a bit of a character. I didn't really know her very much, but I know she kept a pack of dogs there, together with some goats. She also had, I think, a shot-gun standing by.

That particular spot, of course, was later levelled out with other parts of West Beach. Adjacent to the house was a large sand-pit, and the sand-hill where the house stood was pushed down into the sand-pit, and levelled to form part of the seaward end of Burbridge Road.

Near Mrs. Gray's house, on the hill just south of it, there was another Gray. Bruce Gray was living there on a public road, and though I don't personally think he was doing any harm at all, people objected to this. They claimed that it was, after all, a public road, and he should be moved. Eventually he was moved, down to Military Road at Grange, just north of the Grange Oval, and there became known as Saltbush Bill. He had a riding-school there, together with his dogs and little dog-cart. He used to take the dog-cart, with four or five dogs pulling it, shopping up in the Grange area.

West Beach had been partly subdivided in 1929, and there had been metal roads put down in several of the streets. When I first knew it, these roads were barely 10 feet wide - because of the encroaching sand. They were just rough metal roads with large sand-drifts on each side of them.

I used to get quite cynical, sometimes, in later years, when we had complaints about the sand from the beach drifting up and coming into people's houses. You know, it's really only going back to where it's supposed to have gone, where it always used to go.

Down on the beach were the old bathing shacks - dozens of them, all conglomerate shapes together with their little outhouses. The goings on that went on there at times were rather staggering.

Trams

The tramways used to run down through the area, across the Viaduct, which had become filled up by that time. They emerged out to Henley Beach Road, and then down Seaview Road as far as Marlborough Street. It was a very good service, and appreciated particularly, I think, by all the visitors to the beach, as were the trains. It was with some misgivings that the public accepted the change over to the buses instead of the trams. Left behind, of course, were all the tramway lines, and quite a big job ensued to take up these tram lines and re-instate the roadways.

Trains - and Military Road

In 1950, of course, the train was still running down Military Road. About this time there was a controversy going on about oil-burning locomotives. Apparently coal was short at the time, and so many of these locomotives were converted to burn oil. They used to make quite a lot more noise and give out more smoke, I think. One person in particular, who lived opposite the Henley station, near the Ramsgate Hotel, had an amplifier rigged up in his home, and he used to scream out to the train-drivers: 'Turn that off' (whatever was causing the noise.) And he wrote to Parliament and other places about it.

Later, there was a controversy about the removal of trains from Military Road. Those of you who recall those trains will remember that the train line was along one side of the road - the eastern side - and of course there were all those various crossings over streets. It was claimed to be very dangerous right along that area, but I don't know of any serious accidents which took place.

It was canvassed that buses would do a better job - this was one part of the argument. And of course at that time, and earlier, was mooted the proposal about a new train-line right through this area where we are now. When the controversy was on about the removal of trains, statements were made such as: 'Well, of course, it won't be long before we have that new train out there.' The proposal was to electrify the train-line right through to Glenelg, and everything was going to be wonderful.

However, there was quite a furore created about it - public meetings and that sort of thing - and eventually it was decided that the train would go.

This was a great disappointment to many traders in the area, who rightly, I believe, complained that they would lose business. The train-line had been so handy to the beach. And people would never walk from the proposed new train-line to the beach. And buses weren't convenient.

And there we are. It was done. And it left the question of the train-lines still being in the roadway. An argument went on for a long time with the railways people concerning the removal of the line and the eventual re-instatement of the road.

The Council were at most times in a position to do something about the terrible condition of Military Road. It was generally just a metal road, with great holes in it, often filled with water. But it was always claimed, and perhaps it was a good excuse: 'Well, we can't do anything while the train-line's there.' This went on for quite a while. We did little parts of it - a bit of bitumen on the western side of the roadway.

But eventually the train-line went, as a lot of things do. Council didn't receive any great compensation. It tried to claim that, because the train-line was there and held up development of Military Road for so long, the Railways Department should build a new road. This didn't really work, though the Council eventually received some grants from the Highways Department for the reconstruction of the roadway.

The 1953 storm

1953. The storm on the 18th May. I didn't have to look up any records to find that date. 18th May, 1953. I'll just never forget it.

It was a day, in fact, when I'd started some holidays. With children at school, the May holidays are always a good time to take a couple of weeks off.

It all happened on the very day that I started. We had been a bit worried about storm or sand erosion generally along the foreshore and, on the way up to the city, I called in and had a look at the seaward end of Henley Beach Road, where there was a hole in the wall. We had it plugged up with sand bags, and I said to myself: 'Oh yes, I think that might be all right!' So off we went to town.

We were away quite a long time, and I was coming back at about 5 o'clock in the evening, down the Henley Beach Road. I thought that, as it was blowing hard, and dark, I'd better have a look at that wall and see how it was going.

I drove straight down to the sea-front, and why I didn't go straight over the top I'll never know. There were no lights, and the storm was raging, of course. The section where that hole in the wall had been was long gone; and the toilets opposite there were almost gone. There were no street lights, no warning lights, no barriers or anything else.

It was the first day of my annual leave, but I knew that I would have to do something about all this. I took the family home, got them settled in by the fire, and went off to do some work.

It was quite a job, too. There was no mobile radio in those days. It was a matter of getting around to find as many men as I could from here, there and everywhere, from my knowledge of where they lived at the time. I eventually got a few out, to put barriers up, and lights. And I called the police, who came down and helped things out.

The storm raged all night, as no doubt you all know, and it was quite a sad sight in the morning, to see what had happened. There were some quite amazing sights, really, along the beach.

From the wreckage of the shacks which I'd mentioned earlier all manner of objects were scattered on the beach.

What was particularly interesting to see, I think, was the remains of the concrete bathing boxes which were down near Del Monte, along the sea-front. These had been built by Mr. Yeomans, and constructed of a kind of concrete. Apparently the idea was, for the bathing-boxes anyhow, to go out to the Islington workshops and collect all the old steel frames of railway carriages and things like that, and these had been built into the concrete walls as re-inforcements. I think in many of them there was more steel than concrete. Perhaps that was the problem. But these, of course, were an entire wreck.

After the storm, I was appointed to a Government Committee, together with other clerks along the sea-front, to investigate how a government grant of 200,000 pounds should be spent by these councils. Following that work, I was presented with an album of photographs showing the storm damage in all areas. And I'm sure that will be of interest to the Society.

Further subdivision, and roadways

In 1955, there was a new Town Planning Act, and subdividers from that time were required to construct roadways when they were subdividing their land. The roadways, however, were required only to be 24 feet wide and four inches deep. Developers being what they are, I suppose they don't spend any more money than they have to, and this is what happened.

There were some advantages to the Council. There were more subdivided blocks and some roads. But the roads, unfortunately, didn't last very long. I don't think there would be any of those roads still in existence. They've all been reconstructed, necessarily, since that time.

About 1953, the Housing Trust became quite active down in the Henley Beach South area, and more subdivision took place from then on. I think that the Council must be very appreciative of the work that the Housing Trust has done throughout this area - at Henley Beach South, and then shortly afterwards at West Beach, and then a bit later in the area just adjacent to here.

The Housing Trust carried out its requirements under the then Town Planning Act, with some additions. They provided some contribution towards storm water drainage in the Henley South area. Council became committed for quite a large part of that cost - in fact, they still are, in the way of annual maintenance requirements. But the Housing Trust also went a little bit further than some other subdividers in the provision of roads.

At that time, a process known as soil stabilisation was carried out, which was a new thing. It involved mixing the existing soil with cement, and making a composition type of road. We all thought that was quite wonderful at the time, but unfortunately that didn't last long either, and again the Council became committed for very large-scale reconstruction after that time.

THE REMINISCENCES OF LANCELOT HURCOMBE

[The following reminiscences were written between 1962 and 1964 by the late Lancelot R. Hurcombe.

There are manuscript and microfilm copies in the State Archives.

These extended extracts are printed with the kind permission of Mr. David Hurcombe, son of the writer.

Some omissions have been made, and some of the extracts very slightly edited.]

Memories of days, places, and things that happened in earlier days.

For the benefit and perhaps the amusement of the ones following on.

September 2nd, 1962

Before age overtakes and memory lapses, I would fain put on paper events of days past, some good, some not so. My father was an Englishman from the County of Gloucestershire. He was married before leaving, and (according to records in the Archives Department of South Australia) he was 23 years of age. Leaving the port of Plymouth on the 23rd March 1855 in the sailing ship Velocity, he arrived on the 25th June 1855.

On arriving in the state, he entered in the employ of a Mr. Gray who at the time had a considerable amount of land to the south of Fulham and the north of Glenelg. This land was always subject to floodwaters from the Breakout Creek, which creek connected to the River Torrens. At the present, the floodwater outlet to the sea follows fairly closely the direction of the old Breakout Creek.

My father was married three times. There were six children by the first marriage, one to the second, and four to the third. One brother of mine (Milton Charles) died in convulsions when a baby. Clive Davis was my elder brother, then Milton, Pearl Rubena, and finally yours truly (Lancelot Reginald Hurcombe, born at Henley Beach, December 4th, 1899, in the reign of Queen Victoria.)

PHOTOS ON NEXT PAGE

Flooding on Henley Beach Road (before the
Outlet Channel was constructed.)

Storm damage near end of Henley Beach Road
(photo taken on 21/5/1953.)

[Cover photo

Kelsey's Corner, Seaview Road and
Main Street, about 1900.]



In those early days there were no made roads (I am told) but only tracks leading through reeds and rushes. It was because of these that the district was known as the 'Reedbeds.' This is a name that is now dying out, and probably future generations will never know it as such.

After a time my father started a horse bus service from Adelaide to Henley Beach. He was given the mail contract for the whole route. I have distinct memories of being up on the front seat of the bus and seeing my father throw up the mail bags onto the loading platform in the G.P.O., Adelaide. We entered from Franklin Street, opposite to the north west corner of Victoria Square.

To let the folk know the bus was coming along, father had a whistle which he blew now and again. This whistle was about three or four inches long, and if I remember aright was made of brass.

If they wished, passengers could purchase blocks of tickets. These tickets measured about two inches by one inch and were perforated so that they could be torn off.

As time went by the business must have prospered, for two horse buses were put on the run. When I grew older I came across one of the account books and judging by that a considerable amount of money must have been handled.

Father drove one bus and a step-brother of mine the other.

Some years must have passed and the horse tram system was put through to Henley Beach. Instead of getting out of transport like he should have done, father ran in opposition, the upshot of which was he tried another route, but to no avail. He finally did his money in and when he died in about 1912 or 1913 he was a poor man. He was 80 years of age when he passed on through a stroke.

Earliest of my memories are of sitting up on the seat of the bus. Others are of father going into the Henley Hotel for a tot. I was so small I can remember looking up at the counter, what a long way up it was. He always purchased me a bush biscuit, then he would take me out to the sandhill opposite where he would have a yarn with a Billy Lewis and/or a Crimean War veteran named (or called) Jim the Fisherman.

Jim had two^{or} small boats and did a little fishing to support himself. He lived in a tent in a hollow of the sandhills. Billy Lewis on the other hand lived in what was known as a bathing box. With a small lean-to he lived here with his wife and they brought up two children here, a boy and a girl. Other than these, South Henley at the time was completely bare of habitation right through to Glenelg.

Henley at this time was lit by kerosene lamps mounted on posts, not very close either. Each night would see Billy Lewis going on his rounds and climbing up his ladder and lighting the lamps. Next morning he would go around again, put out the light and clean up the glass.

Our house was about seven or eight chains back from the beach, perhaps a little more. Our nearest neighbours were a member of the Gray family. Nice folk but pretty well to do. One thing I remember about Mr. Gray was when father passed on, the Gray family wrote a letter of condolence to mother, and said among other things that nobody could point the finger of scorn at father. Pride? Perhaps, but one of the nice things to remember. Next to Grays towards the beach was the Thompson family, then there was the Henley Hotel on the seafront.

Opposite to my old home and right along there was fairly thick brush, boxthorn and sheoak trees, and over at the back of them was open grazing paddocks.

Out in one such there was a wild life reserve. This would be south of my old home and stood nearly alongside of the present Henley Beach School. It would cover about four or five acres and was surrounded by a high boxthorn hedge. It was made by one of the Whites, another old district family. As a lad, others and myself used to crawl through the hedge and get inside, which was forbidden. Inside was a series of mounds for rabbits, snakes and other earthbound life. Another part was covered with lakes and undergrowth. Rather weird and exciting to get in there. The reserve was always known to us as Jerusalem.

Further over again there used to be a rifle range (I am told) and in his early years I believe father used to be the marker on the range. This would be almost alongside the floodwater outlet on the north side and on the city side of Military Road.

After having to give up his bus services, father started to keep cows and pigs. I well remember if the pigs happened to get out of the sty it always seemed to be on a Sunday. What a scramble there was to catch and put them back, to the disgust of mother.

And now I tell of the background of my mother.

My mother was the daughter of F.C. Davis. Australian born, mother was one of a family of seven. I cannot be sure if F.C. was Australian born or English born, but his wife, my grandmother, came from Penzance in the County of Cornwall. The family (my mother's family) were evidently well to do because the family were educated for some time by a Mr. West, a private tutor. Their original home was the 'White' home on the north side of Henley Beach Road, and east of Tapley's Hill Road.

Her grandfather (my great grandfather) was Abraham Hopkins Davis who arrived in the state shortly after the state was founded.

His home stood on the south side of the Henley Road, near what is now the flood outlet. It was named 'Nankarie', and is still standing at the present day (1962.) It has a slate roof and now must be quite a good age. It was first called (that is, the whole estate) Moore Farm, and the bridge now known as Kidman Bridge was, when I first remember it, a timber frame and was named Moore Farm Bridge. I remember seeing a large mound of earth at 'Nankarie' with a deep ditch around it. Mother told me this ditch used to be filled with water and the mound would be a mass of flowers. Early landscaping perhaps, but she said it was quite a sight.

A.H. Davis owned quite a bit of land (by what I was told) and the house and land occupied by his son F.C. was owned by A.H. However the father and son had a quarrel, and the outcome was that F.C. and his family were turned out of their home. They found a home in Tapley's Hill Road, just in from Henley Beach Road. Fulham Methodist Church stood on the south west corner of the road junction and the new home was next one on. For many years it was Fulham Post Office.

Mother told me that owing to the quarrel between father and son, and the son and family having to leave their home, my grandfather cursed the land and said he hoped nothing further would grow on the place. As a schoolboy I can remember seeing the fruit trees stunted and bearing very small fruit, and some none at all. Imagine me, in my mind's eye seeing in the result of the fearful curse, the unproductivity of the land. Of course the true reason was that the land and trees had been neglected. At the same time I have the feeling that mother felt the curse had had some effect. I cannot be sure whether the father (A.H.) and the son (F.C.) ever became reconciled, but I have the feeling that it was not so. I imagine that A.H. must have been a very stern man.

On the other hand, the son, F.C., appeared (by the look of a photograph) to be a kindly sort of a soul. He and grandmother had a family of seven. Five girls and two sons. The eldest was Alice, then my mother Catherine Mary, not in order the others were Agnes, Louie, Edith, Walter and Edmond. Life must have been a little hard in the new home, and I feel caused no little bitterness in my grandparents' outlook on life. It meant that the son (F.C.) had to find other means of providing for the family. F.C. by the way stands for Frederick Charles.

So, I understand he took lessons in the making of pickles and preserves, from a man I think named Mr. Chance. However, misfortune dogged him for a time. He injured one of his hands through falling into a glass-house frame. But finally his luck changed. He succeeded so well that he

was able to send exhibits to the Exhibition of Philadelphia in America for which he was awarded a bronze medal, and a certificate for liqueurs.

I have often wondered what Abraham Hopkins Davis thought of all the misfortunes and changes that had been wrought by the squabble between father and son.

A.H. by the way was in the printing business in Fleet Street London, prior to migrating to Australia. I have in my possession the name plate of his business premises. If it comes to my descendants then they will know where it came from. A brass plate with the name A.H. Davis. (My memory may have failed me. I always thought that my mother said A.H. Davis was a printer in Fleet Street, London. However reading his obituary in the Archives Department I read that he was a bookseller in partnership with another man in London.)

My grandmother must have been adversely affected by the change of fortunes, for I have heard my mother say, grandma was often worried and short-tempered.

After the decease of their parents my mother and her sister kept the Post Office in a building immediately in front of their home. What a change to their previous life in their other home. In those days mother had had horses to ride on. I have the bridle that she used to use. In those days it was fashionable to ride side-saddle. I have oftentimes wondered how they managed to stay on their mounts. What days of leisure and peace they must have been.

Back to the Fulham home. It was a house with a slate roof and standing up in front of the ridge were two small garrets. In the ground under the floor were underground rooms. These were subject to fill with water in the flood season. This was understandable when we remember that the Torrens River flowed past the back of the property, distant about two chains from the rear of the house.

North of the house and rear of the Methodist Church was a small square of land surrounded by a picket fence and painted white. This was the White family vault. How many remains it held we never knew. This remained here until just a few years ago when the remains were removed and interred in (I think) West Terrace Cemetery, and the land was resumed. I have often wondered, of all the passers by in their motors, how many knew of the existence of the vaults.

Prior to the opening of the electric tramway from Adelaide, the Methodist Church at Fulham had a brick porch on the front. Many times we played 'Puss in the Corner' and other games in it on our way from school.

When the electric trams were put down it was considered that the porch would be dangerous and it was taken down. I understood the land on which the church stood was given to the Methodists by one of the White family. Also I seem to remember being told that Mr. White also had the bricks made of which the church was built and these were made at a place just west of where Davis Bridge now stands. I remember, myself, seeing a whole lot of part bricks in this place. Methodists were allowed the use of the Church and property as long as services were held, and I remember that in later years services were held there only once on a Sunday. Finally it was closed and the property reverted back to the White estate. The pews, which were made of solid cedar, were given to Henley Methodist Church, and they were still in service when we attended the last service and the closing of the old Henley Church.

My mother was a great worker in the Fulham Church and often told me of the great times and wonderful services and meetings that they had there.

Opposite to the Church, in my schooldays, on the south east corner there stood a blacksmith's shop. It was owned and worked by a smith by the name of Joe Walker. My brother, Clive, went to work for him when he left school. Fancy a blacksmith there today. The business consisted mainly of shoeing horses and putting iron tyres on the wheels of carts and waggons.

On the north west corner from the Church lived a William White, in my young days. I remember my father taking a cart and horse up there for loading a load of hay. Riding on top of the load was a thrill I can still remember.

South from the Church and on the opposite side, just this side of where Davis Bridge now stands, was the School where I used to attend.

In those days there was no school at Henley Beach and none at Lockleys. The only school between Henley and the city were Fulham School and one facing Henley Beach Road at Mile End on the corner of Taylor's Road. This has now been built on and made much bigger. It can be seen from this that old Fulham School served a fairly big area. It was made up of two rooms built of brick and a shed joined on the back. The teacher's residence was joined on to the side of the school. Children were compelled to go to school at the age of seven in those days, and this is the age that I started. For some time we used to walk to Fulham School from Henley and walk back again in the afternoon.

It was while I was a fairly new pupil that I had my first ride in a motor car. It came about like this. Some high government official

(I have the feeling that it was the state Premier at the time, Tom Price *) came to school on an official visit. He was driven down in his car by a chauffeur. All the pupils were given a ride in the car from the school to Henley Beach Road and back. I remember it was a red car having high seats at the back. Need I say what a red letter day this was for us.

Opposite to the school stood three small cottages and the back of these was the start of grazing paddocks, which stretched across to what is now South Henley. At the back of the school was further open land. South from here was a lot of sandy waste that never seemed to grow anything. This stretched across to Marion Road and is now occupied by the Adelaide Airport. The road that connects West Beach across to Tapley's Hill Road used to continue on to Marion Road. When the Airport was built the road was closed.

East from 'Nankarie' and some distance from the back of the school in my young days was the 'Reedbeds' Rifle Range. The targets were set in the sandhills and the firing took place from the side of the Henley Beach Road.

Further east from here there stood one house (occupied by a member of the White family.) Between 'Nankarie' and what is now Rowell's Road, this was the only house on the side (the south side) of the road. Looking at White Park and Kooyonga Golf Links now, can you imagine this to be so?

Immediately opposite to Rowell's Road was a big sandhill of red sand. On the other side was another series of sandhills. It was explained to me in later years that this is why Henley Beach Road takes the curve at this particular spot. The carts and drays used to take the easiest way through the sandhills in the early days.

The stables for the tramcar horses were at what is now Torrensville, but in those days was always known as Thebarton. These stables were situated next to Henley Street (not Henley Beach Road.) The stables themselves stood back a chain or so from the road (which by the way was made of metal and not so very smooth at that.) Sitting in the tramcar one could see all the horses in their stalls.

* It would have been the Premier, Thomas Price. He was Premier and Minister of Education from 1905 to 1909. Lancelot Hurcombe would have started school - at the age of seven, as he tells us - in 1907.

On the run from Henley Beach to Adelaide the horses were changed here and a new pair harnessed up and hooked onto the tram. In those days the trams used to enter the city of Adelaide by way of Hindley Street. Alongside what is now known as Bakewell Bridge was a level crossing over the South Line railway. This was protected by heavy timber gates and these were opened and shut from the signal cabin which at this time (1962) stands underneath the bridge. Henley Beach Road then continued up the hill to Hindley Street. Half way up the hill another horse was hooked onto the tram and the tram was pulled up to West Terrace by three horses. Here the third was unhooked and returned to the small stable half way up the hill. The tram then proceeded down Hindley Street and turned north into King William Street. Only a few yards in King William Street was the terminus and the horses were put onto the other end and the return journey begun.

The trams were double deckers, and riding on four wheels they were inclined to bob up and down when in motion. The driver was out in the open and controlled the tram by means of one hand brake on each end. Sometimes on going around a loop to pass another car, the car would run off the line but if possible it would keep on going until it ran on the line again.

The service was not very good. Off hand, if my memory is right, about a car at intervals of about one hour. Of course at busy times like holiday times (Christmas time and so on) one would see strings of trams coming past my home. I say strings, by which I mean a line of single cars packed with folk going down to the beach. Writing this I have a mental picture of the colour of the hats and umbrellas I would see while I stood by our front fence and watched the trams go by.

On the corner of West Terrace and Hindley Street stood a house which the Gray family (our next door neighbours at Henley) moved into when they left Henley Beach. This stood on the south east corner on entering the city. At the present time a P.M.G. building is standing there and there is no trace of the old building. Sometimes my mother would visit the Gray family and then later walk down to King William Street thro' Hindley Street.

On the corner of North and West Terrace or rather opposite, in parklands and south of the present railway lines, there stood the Adelaide Cattle Market. I well remember my father taking me up there when he sold pigs. He used to take them up in a cart that had once been used by my step-brother as a milk cart on his round.

The said step-brother lived on a property on the corner of South Street and what is now East Terrace at Henley Beach. East Terrace (Henley) was at that time just a sandy waste, along which cows from my step-brother's dairy were driven from the grazing paddocks.

The paddock belonging to my old home would be about four or five acres of land. The home and the paddock were rented from the White family. The rent was paid to representatives in Adelaide. The house was well built but was just four walls more or less. It contained four rooms and each had cement floors.

Let me now tell of strange happenings that befell the family while we lived there. I myself would be about eight or nine years of age and I have still got vivid memories of what must have been most nerve shattering for the ones older than I. For what reason I have never found out but at frequent intervals in the daylight and in the night, somebody would throw stones on the roof of the house. Nobody was ever seen, but the culprit whoever they were, knew the movements of the family. I can remember my father having the local policeman in the house. Crash on the roof came a stone, up jumped the cop and opened the door for my father to go out first. Why he did this I do not know. Was he polite, was he cowardly, did he know who the culprit was? I do not know, but nobody was found. Detectives from the city were brought down but to no avail.

Father watched one day behind a tank and soon after his back was turned a note was found with the words 'Look at old man Hurcombe watching behind the tank.' Another note asked when he was going to get out of the house.

Another time my mother was just going inside from the yard when she heard the front door bang shut. During her few minutes absence the intruder had been inside and banked pillows up around a chamber and made it look as though there was a body in the bed. You can imagine how nerve wracking this would be.

My father owned a double barrel muzzle loading gun, and on one of these stone throwing occasions he threw open the front door and fired out down the pathway and over the road. Fortunately for us traffic on Henley Beach Road was not like it is now, or some innocent person may have been killed.

This trouble went on for about (if I remember aright) two years. During this time the fanlights over the front door and windows were broken, and plants pulled up out of the garden. If they did want to get my dad out of the house, they had another think coming to them, because he had too much backbone to be browbeaten like that. The trouble finally stopped but I never knew who were the culprits. Our house was somewhat isolated with hedges of prickly pear down one side of the paddock and thick brush, bushes and trees on the opposite side of the road and this formed a good place for hiding. Looking back over the years it was rather a weird experience I should not like to happen again.

Another frightening thing I can remember. Our house was lit by a kerosene lamp and one night while sitting at the table the room was lit by a brilliant flash of light. Father went out to see what was the cause of it, as it was a calm evening. He found nothing to account for the flash and came back inside only to have the silence shattered by an explosion. Next morning's paper brought the news that a meteor had fallen and I believe struck the earth up in the Far North. I wonder if one of those in the Museum is one that fell that night.

Nearby the old home stood a dead tree. It was never alive to my memory, but my mother told me of a friend of the family who said that in his young days he had placed a horse shoe in the fork of the branches of that tree while it was growing and the tree had eventually grown over it. If ever the tree was cut up he asked that if the horse shoe was recovered he would like to have it back. I can remember seeing the tree being blown to pieces with dynamite and mother had the horse shoe and took me, a child, with her to return it to Mr. Chinnick. I can see now, the old grey haired man receiving with pleasure that which he implanted in the fork of the tree in the days of his youth.

My old home still stands today, only it has been built onto. Standing on the back verandah and looking north we could see the trains passing on the way between Grange and Seaton. Further again in the distance could be seen the towering masts of the sailing ships in the Port. . .

Connected to our house was a building we always called the dairy. My parents kept cows at one time and the milk was set in the dairy for the cream to rise or be separated. This dairy was lined with matchboard and insulated with seaweed, and at one time this caught afire. Axes were used to get to the seat of the fire which was put out before too much damage was done. This was fortunate because the nearest Fire Brigade was at Adelaide and at this time was drawn by horses.

Further back from the dairy and out in the paddock stood the big shed which had been the coach shed and stables when my father had the bus services.

There was an underground stream of water running through the property. We had two wells, one was out in the paddock a short distance away and the second one was near the house. Both wells had a Douglas pump fitted to them.

North west of our house and outside of our paddock was what we always called the plantation. This was an area that had been planted with pines and other native trees. One could tell they had been planted because they were planted in lines and similar distances one from the other.

Between our house and the beach was what is now East Terrace, but what we always knew as the lane because it was sandy and the cows were always driven along it. At certain times of the year it would be covered with lupins. When in flower they were a beautiful colour of blue.

Further west was Military Road. . . .

Speaking of the flood outlet, when the new bridge was built, I wrote to the Highways Department and asked for the new bridge to be named after my grandfather. The letter was referred to the West Torrens Council and they wrote a letter to me to say A.H. Davis was the first Chairman of their council and the bridge would be named after him and a plaque would be affixed with the name thereon. This was done.

Similarly, many years later, when South Henley was being developed like it is now, it was mentioned in a paper that the streets were to be named after the councillors of the Henley and Grange Council. This annoyed me, so I wrote to the Housing Trust who replied that it was a matter for the Henley Council to name the streets as they wished. They (the Trust) had forwarded my letter in which I had asked that my father's name be given to one of the streets. They did not have the decency to reply to my letter, but one of the streets was named Hurcombe 'after one of the early pioneers of the district' - this was a quote from one of the papers. So now I can feel that the two pioneers are to be remembered in the districts in which they lived and worked.

Henley Beach then was more or less a one horse town. The nearest shops were in what is now Henley Square, but what was known in those days as Jetty Street. I can only think of two shops being down there. Ralph's Grocery Store and Kelsey's Store. The Ramsgate Hotel was there and, now I think a bit, Johns' Butcher Shop.

The only meeting place for the district was known as Correl's Hall. This place is still standing on the northern side of the square. I can remember being taken to a concert in the hall.

At one time of his life my father went to the gold diggings (just what time I do not know.) The field he went to was at Teetulpa, in (I understand) the north of South Australia near what is now Peterborough but if my memory is right was known then as Petersburg. He did not do much good at the diggings, but I remember we did have a small nugget of gold about the size of sixpence, and father had a pair of sleeve links made from other gold which he had recovered from the earth. What eventually happened to these things I do not know.

It comes to my mind to tell of the old horse tram terminus. This was marked by an old stone building containing seating around the wall and lit at night time by an oil lamp. Around the old walls, whose mortar

was crumbling (when I knew it), were initials of various people who carved their names thereon. The old shed stood on the south west corner of Henley Square and Seaview Road.

The present two storey buildings standing there at this present day were built for the M.T.T. in roughly about 1909 or 1910. The Henley Kiosk facing the sea was built at the same time. They were built when the electric tram services were put through to Henley Beach and were put up, I presume, to popularise Henley and so bring the traffic on the trams.

Another thing that was done was the formation of the Tramways Band. The band travelled from the city to Henley in a car that was known as the toast rack type. It had all the seating running from side to side. The tramcar holding the band was illuminated with coloured electric globes outlining the shape of the car.

In the early times of the band's existence the band would form up in the square. The band was led by a big tall man, dressed in a resplendent uniform topped by a big helmet on his head. The drummer wore a leopard skin apron, and he often gave a display with his drumsticks.

A little later in time, a band stand was built in front of the kiosk and then the band gave their recitals in there. This band rotunda was later moved to where the present sound shell stands, then later again was taken down and replaced by the sound shell.

Earlier years saw the day of January 30th (the holiday) always taken up by the Henley Beach Regatta. What a red letter day this was. Yachts from other clubs attended, and the day was given over to sailing, swimming, greasy pole, and duck hunt events on the water, while on the shore athletic events were held.

The greasy pole consisted of a pole suspended out over the water. It was tapered, being narrower on the bottom in which a feather was placed. Now the pole would be liberally greased, and the contestant had to slide down and pluck the feather from the bottom of the pole before plunging into the sea. If successful he would be awarded the prize, perhaps two or three shillings.

The duck hunt, on the other hand, involved a man in a small boat. Dressed in a coloured costume, over a swim suit, he would row out from the jetty. Two or three minutes later, two more boats, with a man in each, would leave. The event was for the second lot of rowers to catch the first one (who was called the 'duck') within a prescribed area and time. At the close the 'duck' usually shed his costume and dived over the side into the sea. The two hunters would do likewise, and the prize went either to the 'duck' for evading capture, or to the hunters for catching the 'duck'.

Another feature of the holiday was the arrival from Port Adelaide of a small vessel called 'Defiance'. For the charge of 1/- per person one could go out for 'a trip on the briny'. This was very popular.

In those days we used to wear straw deckers, or 'boaters'. In windy weather these would sometimes blow off one's head and into the sea. But, like some, I always had to have what was known as a hat guard fastened onto the hat at one end and the other end of the cord on the lapel of my coat.

Cafes or delicatessens, as we know them now, were unknown in those days. The nearest approach would be the tea rooms, of which I can only remember one in Henley. Instead, on the beach were stalls, which were made of timber supports and covered with hessian. This was on the south side of the jetty. Here one could purchase rolls and saveloys, sandwiches and fruit. Others had coppers of water boiling to which the folk would bring their teapots to be filled for a small charge. This would be at holiday times only. On the north side of the jetty were the sideshows, Cheap Jacks and Ocean Waves.

The beach itself was invisibly divided off into zones for bathing - in one section the womenfolk, and males only in the other sections. As a lad I can remember some other boys and myself undressing on the beach, only to have the local police getting on our backs for doing so. Things were strict in those days in some things and not in others. Witness that pubs were able to open late into the night.

Along the beach above normal high water mark were a number of bathing boxes in which folks would undress and go in bathing, but in a storm and a high tide one would see these bathing boxes often torn off their stumps and being rolled and tossed in the surf.

In these storms the sandhills were cut back and looked like cliffs. These sandhills were covered with different sorts of bushes. Also there grew on them plants we knew as red runner, grandpa's beard and the white currant. Alas, they are no more. Sacrificed to progress.

Henley Beach in those days had a steam train service. Now there is no sign of it. The real end of the line came right down to Henley Beach Road. It joined Military Road at Grange and followed it along to Henley. It only ran as far as Woodville, where one had to dismount and wait for a train to Adelaide or to the Port. After unloading the passengers, the train would push back out into the Woodville railway yards and the engine would then be taken around on another line and put back on the other end of the train. This was then pushed back to the station to collect passengers for the return journey. Stations on the route were Albert Park, Cross Roads (now Seaton), Golf Links, Grange, Kirkcaldy, Jetty Road (now Main Street) and Henley Beach.

Henley Station was only large enough to take one carriage and the rest of the train was in the yard. If the carriage happened to be what was known as a side loader (that is, there were no steps to the ground) the guard of the train was provided with a step ladder which he would bring for the passenger to descend to the ground. Tickets were issued by the guard on the train and he would come along the train to collect the fare and give out the tickets. Stations were the same at Henley, Jetty Road, Kirkcaldy and Grange, but at the others one had to get down to the ground via the steps.

To take the electric trams over what used to be covered with water in flood time at Henley, a viaduct was built. I, as a lad, after school and on Saturday mornings, would go over and watch the pile driver drive the long piles into the ground which eventually took the beams and sleepers and rails for the trams to run on. These piles were, I think, driven in up to 20 feet or more down to what was considered to be a firm foundation.

The viaduct was high enough in the middle of the length for a man on horseback to ride underneath without dismounting. I can remember seeing this. Years of flooding brought down silt which was left and built up the land so that in the end one could not even crawl underneath. Can you imagine this to be so? Well, I have witnessed it. Many times I have crouched under the viaduct while a tram went over the top. One would see the piles move quite appreciably as each set of wheels went overhead and return to position after the tram had passed over.

A single line was first put thro' to Henley with loop lines. One of these loops was put in midway on the viaduct. Later the line was duplicated.

The first electric tram ran in 1909 and was driven by the wife of the Premier (Tom Price.)* With a number of other children we went out into the paddocks to watch the event. The first trams were roughly the size of old horse trams.

Three narrow boards ran across the viaduct, and during flood times when the road was covered it was common for a man to ride his bicycle over the viaduct. If he met a tram he just got over onto the other set of tracks.

* Mrs. Price drove the first electric tram in Adelaide. When the electric tram service to Henley Beach was inaugurated, Mrs. Rowell (wife of the Chairman of the West Torrens District Council) drove the first car, assisted by the General Manager of the M.T.T., Mr. Goodman.

I have mentioned the paddocks and the flooding. One of our neighbours had a flat bottomed boat which they would take out on the floods looking for and shooting wild ducks. One time, one of them took me out, and when out in the middle of the water started to rock the boat, much to my terror (being about 8-9-10 years of age and unable to swim.)

Oftentimes the floods would cover the tram line up around Lockleys and the trams would cease running and the old horse bus would take over again. I can remember being sent home from school early (in the horse tram days) because the flood was rising, and going home then in a horse bus because the water was coming into the trams. On the way home we saw a cart that had gone off the road and was partly upset in the water.

'Swaggies' in those days were quite common. They would be walking along the road with their blankets tied up and carried on their backs and a billy can in their hand. Where they came from or where they went I never knew, a sight the present generation will never know.

Another thing I have seen a camp of military personnel on the site of the present day Henley High School, and on the same place at another time the sight of hundreds of 'Native Companions' standing in the receding flood waters. This indeed was a lovely sight. Mushrooms were gathered out here too, and many a time I have seen my brother pick a four gallon tin full.

In those days the Hunt Club used to meet in the district and we often used to watch the hounds and the red-jacketed horsemen ride through the paddocks.

In other places I have spoken of the floods at Fulham and Henley. In a heavy flood the banks of the river would break at Holbrooks Road Bridge and the waters sweep across the land to the south, cutting the road just above Lockleys.

About 1920 or 1921 was one occasion and the floodwaters had surrounded (amongst others) my girlfriend's (my one and only) house. In trying to go to work at Mile End on my bicycle I fell off in the water. Seeing I was soaking wet, I had no intention of going on to work. Instead I waded on through the water to see how Elsie and family were faring. The house was surrounded but the water had not entered in the house.

Twice in different years their house had had to be vacated until the floodwaters had receded. One year's flood brought a drake across the paddocks and the current of water brought him into my future father-in-law's shed, and the drake was swimming around the chopping block. Said Charlie (my F.I.L.): 'You won't get out alive from there'; and he finished up for dinner the next day, much to the disgust of Elsie's mother.

The river would sometimes break the banks at Rowells Road. At that time the only bridge over the river in this road was a swinging footbridge, and this was a favourite spot for my cousins Ruby and Dora Rowell and Pearl and I to go catching fresh water crayfish. At least the others did, but I was only allowed to be a spectator of proceedings. I can remember well though how they would entice me onto the swing bridge and then jump up and down and make the bridge shake and swing to my terror.

The Torrens eventually found its way to the Port River. In flood it often caused trouble at Grange. Many times the train line would be covered with water and if too deep the train service would be suspended. Of course, the Port River being subject to the tides, it would often sweep up to Grange. I have seen my brother catch salt water fish off a bridge at Grange. Can you imagine that happening today?

This brings to mind the time Grange was flooded. It happened that a high tide met a heavy flood and the water being unable to get away the place was flooded. I can well remember the houses having pumps installed to lift the water where it was impossible otherwise to drain it away. Later a long earthen bank was built north of Grange to prevent a recurrence. As far as I know that bank still stands at the present day.

Military Road was covered in one place almost daily by the tidal flow north of Grange and south from Estcourt House, but now has been built up to overcome this defect.

At this time of writing (1964) plans are now being made for the tidal flats to be reclaimed, blocks to be sold for building houses and boating facilities and a channel to the sea near Estcourt House. It hardly seems credible. Such is progress. . . .