





*A special place in  
Mt Barker's rich history*



## *Parkindula Homestead*

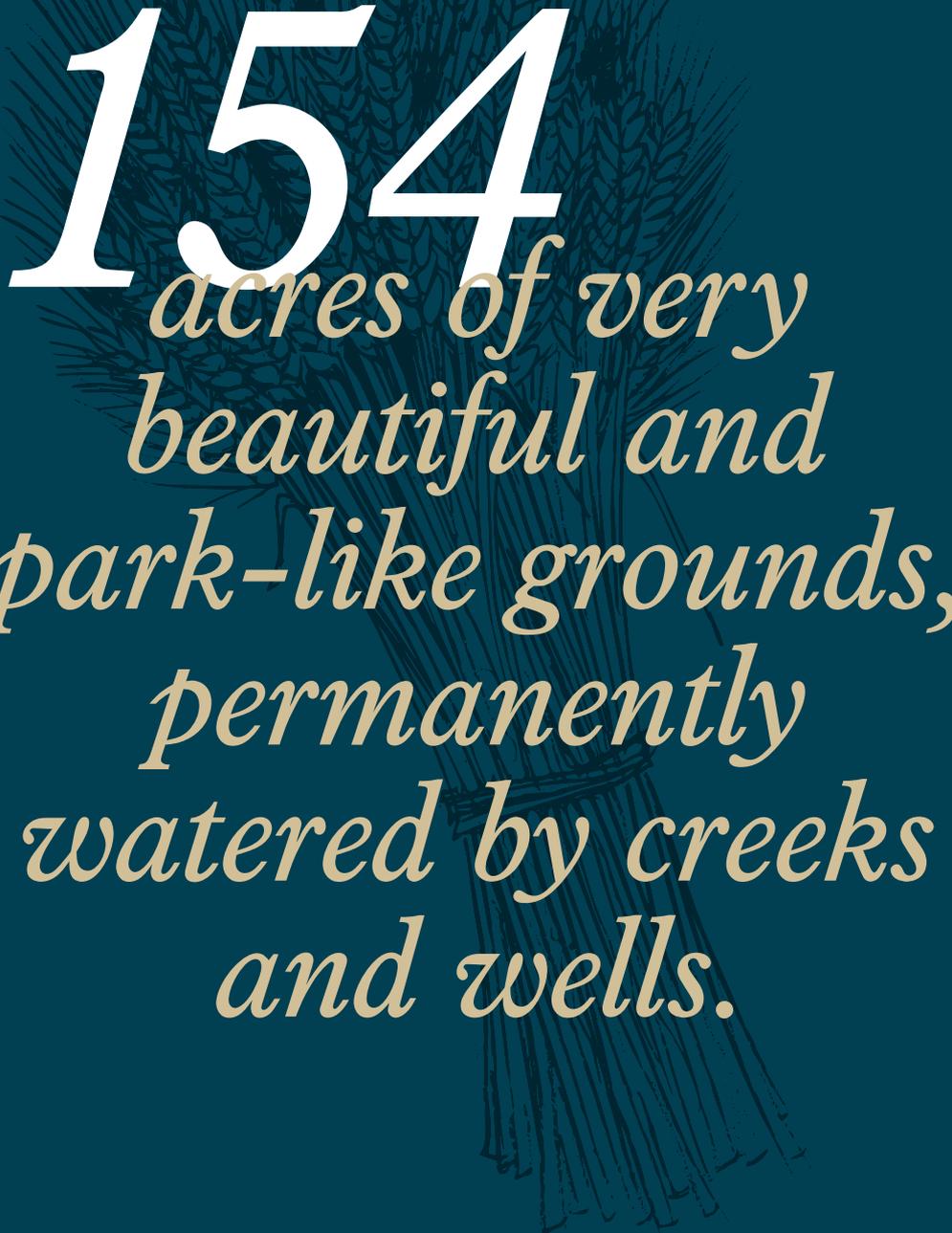
*Mt Barker has always been a warm, welcoming place – and the Parkindula Homestead holds a special place in its proud history.*



From the earliest days of land surveys and sales in Mt Barker in the 1840s, it's been described as a place of 'picturesque appearance, extensive views, rich land, (with an) abundance of excellent water, (and) is not to

be equalled in the province'.<sup>1</sup> Parkindula Homestead first became an impressive part of the Mt Barker landscape some decades later and, along with the township, has borne witness to the growth of a

strong, vibrant community. As you plan your future in Mt Barker, we hope you enjoy sharing these glimpses into the past. Parkindula Homestead. If only its walls could speak.

A bundle of wheat stalks is positioned in the background, centered behind the text. The stalks are dark and detailed, with visible grain heads and stems. The bundle is tied with a thin cord near the bottom. The entire scene is set against a solid dark teal background.

154

*acres of very  
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# 1800's *The early years*

In the 1800's Mt Barker was not only a thriving agricultural district with sheep and cows grazing on rich pastures, and crops of wheat, barley, oats, maize and potatoes, it was already also a popular spot for visitors and had its own inn and hotels, a police station and local court, churches, banks, school, grocer, draper and two flour mills.<sup>ii</sup> A daily line of mail coaches was the communication link with Adelaide for a Mt Barker population of about 1,000.

By the 1860s, grapes were being grown in the region for wine production too, though apparently the 'variable climate' led those who thought they knew to predict that the area would never be a reliable wine-growing region.

Time has shown they couldn't have been more wrong!

The potential of Mt Barker was not only recognised locally, but also back in the epicentre of the Empire. The land on which Parkindula now stands was originally granted to two Englishmen – John Davenport of Oxford and Henry Davenport of Westminster – in August 1850. By March the following year, the absentee landlords had found a willing tenant in Henry Palmer. The enterprising yeoman of Macclesfield leased the land for £20 per year (with the first year discounted to £10 as Palmer was required to fence the land) and established a farm. It was an arrangement that lasted several years, before Palmer purchased the 80 acres of land for £200 from the duo.

In March 1861, The Adelaide Observer, a respected newspaper of the day, noted a sale of stock 'on the farm of Mr Henry Palmer, two miles from Mount Barker at Spring Gardens...The above are for absolute sale, the Proprietor being about to give up farming'<sup>iii</sup> and in May of the same year it was reported that John Crimp, coach builder, purchased some of the land 'together with all houses' for £1,500.<sup>iv</sup>

Spring Gardens is the site of the Parkindula Homestead and it is thought the Homestead was established around the late 1860s by prominent auctioneer Frederick Stone, who settled there with his wife Annie, daughter of one of the district's most significant early landowners and industrialists, Walter Paterson, by 1870.<sup>v</sup>

As the small community that had settled into the township of Mt Barker and on farms surrounding it prepared to celebrate Christmas in 1887 and ring in the year 1888, the owners of the 'very valuable and beautiful Estate known as Parkindula' were preparing to move – Parkindula was to be sold before the year was out.

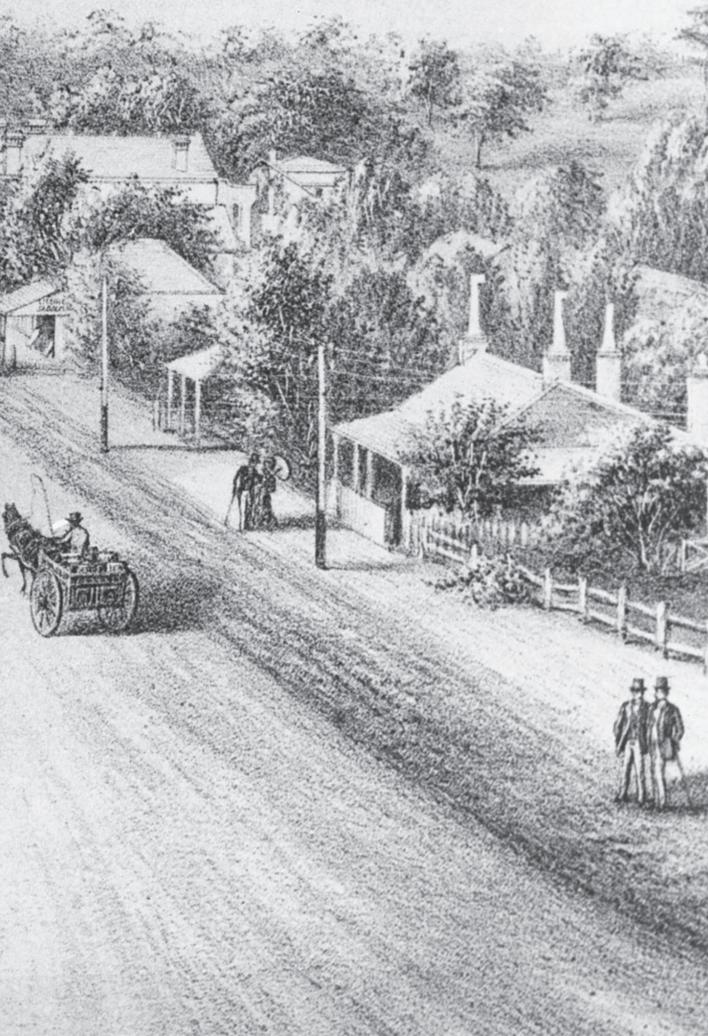
On page 12 of The Adelaide Observer, the notice of a sale 'By order of Mrs. Stone' described the property as '... 154 acres of very beautiful park-like grounds, permanently watered by creeks and wells. The grounds are well fenced and subdivided.'<sup>vi</sup>



Engraving of Main Street, Mt Barker c1881.

*“... the district greatly exceeds in richness any part of Australia I have seen...”*

*Captain Charles Sturt, 1838<sup>x</sup>*



‘On the property there is a well and substantially built house containing 12 rooms, stables and outbuildings,’ the notice went on, hinting at the extent of what was, in local terms and for the times, a substantial property.

In the early 1900s, the Mt Barker district was continuing to expand – with the first high school, first boarding school, a new post office and more and more people joining the community. In 1883, the railway line from Adelaide to Strathalbyn was laid connecting the burgeoning community to the capital.

In 1907, Parkindula was up for sale again, with the voice of the town – the Mount Barker Courier<sup>vii</sup> – spruiking news of a ‘well-built modern stone house’ with a ‘hall, pantry, dairy, storeroom, man’s room, carpenter’s and blacksmith’s shops, stable, coach house, cow and hay sheds and

outbuildings’<sup>viii</sup> for sale by a Mr Peter Peterson. Though the advertisement refers to a home with seven rooms, it may be referring only to the dwelling’s main rooms and it is the extent of the other developments on the site that hint at the role Parkindula may have played in an expanding community relying on horse and cart for transport and as part of a thriving agricultural community.

Parkindula was an important horse stud complex, with impressive stables constructed in local stone in the 1870s, whose function went beyond agriculture to encompass leisure pursuits – it was closely associated with the Adelaide Hunt Club with chases organised by Robert Barr Smith starting at Auchendarroch and moving onto Parkindula then to Eden Park.<sup>ix</sup>

# *Calling Parkindula home,*

The Parkindula Homestead has been a much-loved home to many over its rich history and many of the families have been very active in the community. It seems fitting then, that in the 21st century, this beautiful homestead is once again a centre for community development and activity.

Each of the owners of Parkindula; each of the families who have lived there have left a little of themselves and their own history at the Homestead. Though the passing of time has made fine detail hard to find, it's a pleasure to briefly introduce some of the people who have loved and lived at Parkindula Homestead.



# Homestead Residents

## *Frederick Stone*

was an auctioneer, money lender and collector of debts – and just shy of his 30th birthday when he married Annie Paterson in August 1858. Frederick is reported as living in the old Police Station at Mt Barker a few years' earlier (in 1854), and dealing in stock, but he went on to establish the beautiful Parkindula, which would be his final home. Parkindula included 'a substantial residence with a large fruit garden. It is in close proximity to a shopping place on the Mount Barker & Strathalbyn Railway, (and the) value of the property including House Land & Furniture (was) £6,500'.<sup>xi</sup> He died aged just 53 years in April 1882. His wife Annie stayed at the property for another five years before it was sold.

## *Peter Peterson*

purchased Parkindula and lived there with his wife, Mary who he married back in 1868, and their three children. He'd previously been the manager of the late TR Bowman's Campbell House Estate located between Meningie and Coorong in South Australia, for more than 29 years. The move to Parkindula signalled the end of his active station life though it would appear he stayed busy making improvements to the property. The Petersons sold their home in 1909, and it was noted that the property had, by then, a dairy, storeroom, man's room, carpenter's and blacksmith's shops, stable, coach house, cow and hay sheds plus other outbuildings. A variety of fruit trees, flowers and shrubs all formed a garden around the home.

## *Arthur Bromley Blades*

was born in 1886 in Adelaide and together with his wife Agnes raised their children at Parkindula, which he purchased in 1909. The Blades' family were known as townspeople, due to their commitment as Red Cross workers and members of the local Christ Church. The Homestead was the scene of many fetes, 'partial teas' and entertainments held in support of the Red Cross and church, with the events keenly documented in the local press. In 1916 they sold Parkindula and left to take up residence in Belair, located in the south eastern foothills of Adelaide, at the base of the Mount Lofty Ranges.

### *Oscar Propit Lines*

Parkindula would have been a lively, busy household when Oscar Propit Lines and his wife Olive May lived there with their six children between 1916 and 1919.

From a farming background, Oscar was 'one of the first to pioneer the development of pasture improvement, concentrating chiefly upon subterranean clover and lucern, and as a result was able to gain prominence as a breeder of fat lambs'.<sup>xii</sup>

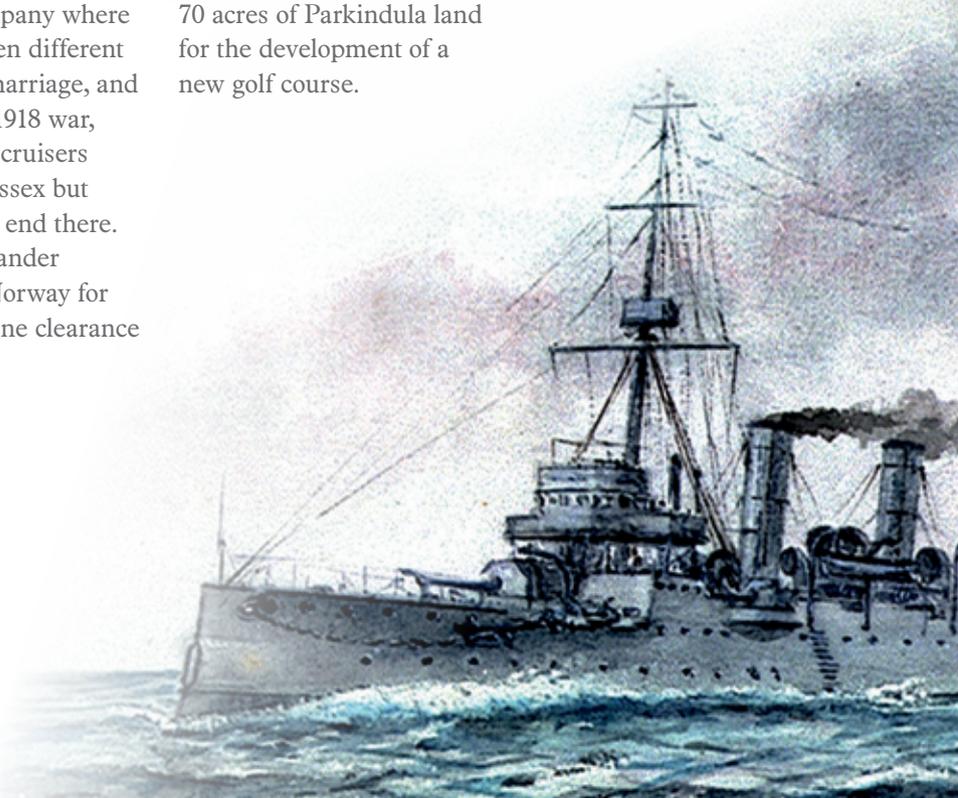
Despite the big family, Oscar found time to be active in the community too – and was associated with the agricultural bureau and the rifle club. They headed to Woodside after leaving Parkindula.

### *Commander Robert Cunninghame Warden OBE (Order of the British Empire)*

didn't arrive at Parkindula until he was in retirement. He was born in July 1874 at Hexham, Northumberland in England; was educated at Hexham Grammar School and it wasn't until he was in his late 30s that he married Matilda Gertrude Mabel Fisher (in 1912). It seems a career at sea had delayed romance, and the First World War would impact early married life. As a young man, Robert Warden had joined P & O, a British shipping and logistics company where he served on seven different ships. After his marriage, and during the 1914-1918 war, he served on the cruisers Charybdis and Essex but his service didn't end there. Post-war, Commander Warden was in Norway for two years as a mine clearance

officer, superintending the clearing of the North Sea barrage and in 1919 Lieutenant Commander Robert Cunninghame Warden was awarded an Order of the British Empire for valuable services in commanding. Retirement came soon after – as did the move to Australia. Having purchased Parkindula in 1920, the couple took up residence in 1923 and, in a demonstration of a different kind of community spirit, Commander Warden offered 70 acres of Parkindula land for the development of a new golf course.

Not surprisingly, he was made an honorary life member of the golf club! As well as maintaining a sheep stud farm at Parkindula for several years, Commander Warden was also a member of the local hospital board, the agricultural society and had been president of the returned soldiers sub-branch. He also served as Vice-president of the Shiplovers' Society of South Australia.



# 2018 *Restoration*

*Parkindula Homestead has been standing proud for more than 150 years and, throughout the decades, has undergone a number of restorations.*

Originally constructed in the latter half of the 19th century, the property has evolved over time. In fact, looking at the property's features suggests it was a work in progress for many years.<sup>xiv</sup>

The house was constructed of local stone and red-brick dressings, with a hipped roof with gables and other design features prominent in the late 19th century. The footprint is also likely to have changed over the years with the house being extended.

The surrounds have also changed focus through the years – from being the venue for hunts and garden parties in the 19th and early 20th centuries to boasting fruit orchards and productive fields. But the avenue of trees along the driveway has held-fast, providing a ‘significant entry point to one of Mt Barker’s remaining outstanding rural properties.’<sup>xv</sup>

Peet Limited acquired the Parkindula Homestead in 2014 and has since worked towards restoring it to its original glory. The building is heritage-listed and will be used as both a sales centre and community hub whilst the land estate Bluestone, Mt Barker is developed around it.





Renovated Parkindula Homestead, 2018.

# *Acknowledgements*



Original lead light which has been retained within Parkindula Homestead.

Parkindula's colourful history has been documented through the decades. The historical information in this booklet has been gathered from numerous sources including research undertaken by preservation consultant Peter Donovan of Donovan and Associates who traced ownership records of the property and delved into the personal histories of the early owners.

A wealth of detail was diligently compiled by then-local school teachers Jean Trigg and Marjorie Robertson in the 1950s. The pair had collected information from local archives, diaries held by

local residents, clippings from the Mount Barker Courier and other newspapers, together with oral histories from residents. The History of Mount Barker Wiki page, which was created based on a transcript of the teachers' original unpublished manuscript, made available by Don Goldney of the Mount Barker branch of the National Trust of South Australia, together with documentary material collected by Dick Mills, proved an invaluable reference. Covering everything 'Mount Barker' their research helped set the scene for what was happening in the district when Parkindula Homestead was built.

## References

- <sup>i</sup>“A Traveller”, ‘Mount Barker: To the Editors of the “South Australian Register”’, The South Australian Register, 27 January 1847, p.2
- <sup>ii</sup>Dutton, Francis 1846, South Australia and Its Mines: with an historical sketch of the colony, under its several administrations, to the period of Captain Grey’s departure, T. and W. Boone, London.
- <sup>iii</sup>‘On the Farm of Mr. Henry Palmer’ (advertisement), The Adelaide Observer, 30 March 1861, p.1.
- <sup>iv</sup>General Records Office: Sections 2903 and 2910, 30 May 1861, purchased by John Crimp. On 11 June 1866, Frederick Stone purchased both sections from John Crimp for £1,000.
- <sup>v</sup>Pope, Anna & Booth, Claire 2004, DC Mount Barker Heritage Survey: Part 5: Local Heritage Recommendations: Mount Barker to Wistow, report commissioned by the District Council of Mount Barker, Heritage Online.
- <sup>vi</sup>‘By Order of Mrs. Stone’ (advertisement), The Adelaide Observer, 24 December 1887, p.12.
- <sup>vii</sup>The newspaper was founded as The Mount Barker Courier and Onkaparinga and Gumeracha Advertiser on 1 October 1880 by sole proprietor Charles M.R. Dumas from an office on Gawler Street. Published each Friday, the 4-page edition sold for three pence.
- <sup>viii</sup>‘For Sale. “Parkindula” Mount Barker’ (advertisement), The Mount Barker Courier and Southern Advertiser, 11 October 1907, p.
- <sup>ix</sup>Pope, Anna & Booth, Claire 2004, DC Mount Barker Heritage Survey: Part 5: Local Heritage Recommendations: Mount Barker to Wistow, report commissioned by the District Council of Mount Barker, Heritage Online.
- <sup>x</sup>Sturt, Charles 29 August 1838, letter to George Stephen, Acting Governor of South Australia, re ‘Overland Journey from Sydney, New South Wales’, cited in Oriental Herald and Colonial Intelligence: containing a digest of interesting and useful information from the British Indian residencies and the eastern nations, Vol. 3, No. XIV, pp. 149–152.
- <sup>xi</sup>JL: Stirling of Adelaide 17 March 1884, letter to the Hon RC Baker MLC with a valuation for the Mount Barker property. State records of South Australia, GRG 84/9/29 File 2776, Succession Duty Records.
- <sup>xii</sup>‘Mr O.P. Lines’, The Chronicle, 27 August 1936.
- <sup>xiii</sup>[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astraea-class\\_cruiser](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astraea-class_cruiser)
- <sup>xiv</sup>Donovan, Peter 2018, ‘History of Parkindula’ commissioned by Peet Limited. Donovan & Associates, Blackwood.
- <sup>xv</sup>Pope, Anna & Booth, Claire 2004, DC Mount Barker Heritage Survey: Part 5: Local Heritage Recommendations: Mount Barker to Wistow, report commissioned by the District Council of Mount Barker, Heritage Online.

Historic records housed by the National Trust, District of Mount Barker Council and South Australia Heritage Places, together with heritage research conducted by Anna Pope and Claire Booth, all provided important contributions to this narrative.

The stories appearing in the various newspapers of the day have also captured for posterity the evolving history of Parkindula and the people who called it home for decades. The National Library of Australia’s ‘Trove’ database was mined for major and incidental events throughout the property’s early history.