

6 ... farmers' daughters toiling up steep hills, with buckets of water, through the midnight hours and midday sun.

Bush Fire at Willunga 1874: When a raging bushfire scorched a wide area and burnt out several families, Mr Hopkins wrote to the editor of the SA Register 'the favour of recording its obligations to so many ladies for their untiring efforts, both day and night, in the abundant supply of food and drink for the famishing and weary men engaged in battling with the fiery elements... where men were known to be among the hills and could not be reached by horses and carts, men on horseback and on foot as well as females, put forth all their energies to reach them.... The deep sympathy with the exhausted men was seen in farmers' daughters toiling up steep hills, with buckets of water, through the mid-night hours and midday sun — speaking volumes of the daughters of Australia.'

7 Miss Thorne's ease and naturalness, blended with earnestness and eloquence, commanded attention while she imparted instruction.

Miss Thorne preaches at Willunga: Miss Thorne's appearance at the Oddfellows' Hall, at 35 High St, was unusual - she preached a sermon! Although woman preachers were controversial, she was a well-known Bible Christian preacher, and people from other churches would eagerly attend her sermons. When she preached at the opening of what is now the Inman Valley Uniting Church, the violent thunderstorm on that day was attributed by some parishioners to God's ire at a woman preaching. Willunga's Thirza Middlebrook undertook preaching for the Primitive Methodist Church on the local circuit and was invited to preach in places such as Gawler, Glenelg, Meadows and Strathalbyn, and at important events in the Church.

8 ... the echoes in the township of Willunga reverberated with the report that Gold had been discovered in the burying ground attached to the Wesleyan Chapel.

Gold fever at Willunga: When the Adelaide newspapers reported the discovery of gold at the Methodist graveyard, great excitement ensued. The recollection that the alleged gold discovery was on private property meant that "several persons very prudently resolved to return home, and try their

success in their own gardens, among the potatoes and cabbages." It turned out that the daughter of the grave digger had found a gold nugget and told her father that it had come from the disturbed earth of a recently dug grave. Her father, a former gold digger, threatened the little girl with punishment if her story could not be verified. A kindly well-wisher, who had clearly been more successful at the gold diggings than the grave digger, apparently planted five gold nuggets to save the little girl from punishment. Other attempts to find gold in the area yielded nothing.

9 ... we noticed a large collection of ornamental writing, the work of Mr. Bassett's scholars, and a large magic square, which excited considerable admiration, was exhibited by Mr. Bassett.

Bassett Exhibitions at Willunga Show: Willunga Shows, begun in 1856, had exhibitions ranging from livestock and farm produce to slate carving, wicker-work, preserves, wine, meat and agricultural implements. In the 1860s, it was held in and around the Oddfellows Hall at 35 High Street. The master of the Bassett Schoolroom, built at 17 St Judes Street in 1862, would have encouraged his students' entries of writing, needlework, maps and pattern work. Ornamental writing was popular, as handwriting was important for people carrying out business and decorative writing enriched illuminated addresses, cards and scrapbooks. A magic square is a grid with each cell containing a different number, where the sum of the numbers in each row, column and diagonal is equal.

10 He was fascinated by a display of stuffed birds, including a white cockatoo, behind the bar.

Willunga Hotel Memories: In 1868 James Castle relinquished his license of the Bush Inn and built the Willunga Hotel at 5 High Street, next to the general store he had opened in 1850. Later, the Quinn family owned the hotel for fifty-two years until 1947. When her husband died in 1904, Dora Quinn ran it single-handedly until her daughter and son were old enough to help. Martin Dunstan remembered being sat on the counter and given a raspberry drink by Molly Quinn and being fascinated by a display of stuffed birds, including a white cockatoo, on the top shelf behind the bar. Willunga Hotel has now expanded into the adjoining store buildings at number 3.

Willunga National Trust, February 2019

PO Box 429 Willunga SA 5172
willunganationaltrust@gmail.com



Willunga's Street Stories

The bronze strips found on Willunga's High Street footpaths reflect the interesting heritage of the area and were created in 2018 by the City of Onkaparinga in collaboration with the Willunga National Trust.

You may explore complete stories about each quote and the history of the area at

Willunga Now and Then
www.willunga.nowandthen.net.au/

Use the titles at the beginning of each paragraph to search within the site.



Willunga National Trust 0123a

Visit Willunga Courthouse and Slate Museums
61 High St, Willunga SA
Phone 08 8556 2195 for opening times.

1 *When there were no prisoners in the cells, the courtyard was a perfect playground for the children, sunny and private.*

Family life at Willunga Police Station: A 1923 resident remembers the Police Station and Courthouse at 61 High St as a children's paradise. The area by the creek, covered in golden wattle, was a favourite playground and the children used to seize hold of a handful of willow fronds and swing out over the creek and back. A path used to bring the police horse to the creek to drink was a narrow tunnel through the green. Many of the police constables who were stationed at Willunga were married with children and the family would live in the four rooms attached to the Police Station and Court House. Mounted Constable Tuohy, decorated for his bravery during the rescue effort at the Star of Greece shipwreck in 1888, lived there with his wife and eight children. The family left their mark at the Court House with several inscriptions on the walls!

2 *Off goes John Hart's team up the hill as cheerfully as if bad roads were unknown. To human beings who have not only ears to be deafened but bones to be dislocated, it is frightful.*

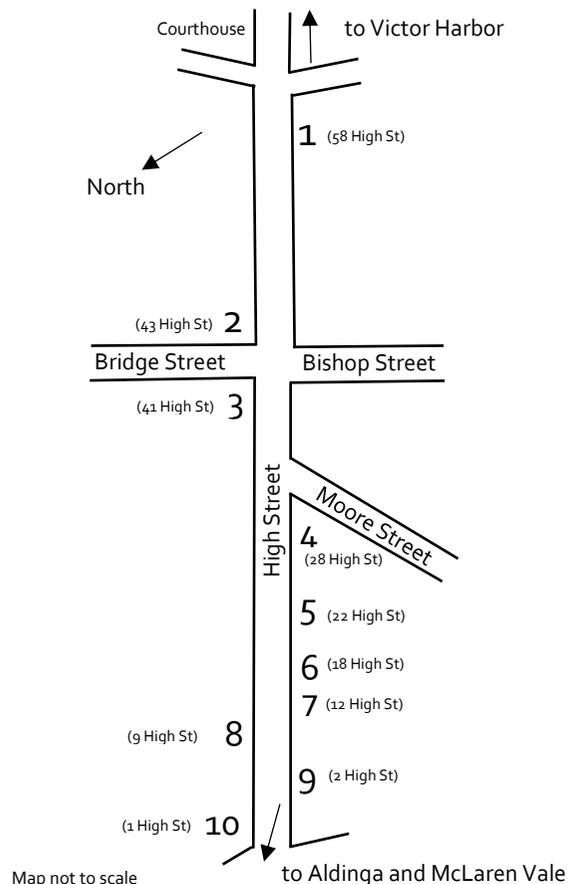
Early transport: The first Europeans travelling to Willunga followed the trails of the Aboriginal people. Without bridges and suitable roads, bullock drays were used to transport passengers and goods, taking a week between Willunga and Adelaide, except in the winter time, when it was necessary to walk. Building bridges, embankments and cuttings created gentler gradients that horse teams with coaches could negotiate. The Willunga coach service was established in the 1850s, and the drivers were noted for the extraordinary skill in handling their teams, but also for their good humour, patience and consideration for passengers. Coaches took four hours to do the journey from Adelaide, with four changes of horses.



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3 *On Sundays the population turn out in their best attire - plug hats, black coats and pants, new bonnets, bright skirts, and all the rest of it.*

Church life in Willunga: In 1844, before the arrival of Cornish miners and their families, about half of the church-goers of the town were Anglicans, with smaller groups of Catholics, Wesleyan Methodists, 'Other Protestant Dissenters' and Church of Scotland. Initially religious services, sometimes led by family members, took place in homes or in meeting places, with people travelling long distances to participate and socialise with their brethren. Church buildings in the Willunga area were amongst the earliest built in the colony and were basic structures with plain furnishings.



4 *The first football played in South Australia was at Willunga...taught to the young men by an early settler named Cheesman who brought with him from England a round football*

Willunga Football Club, early days: The Willunga Football Club was established in 1874, and is recognised as the second oldest continuous football club in South Australia. Prior to this, William Cheesman reportedly taught the young men of the district to play football and it is thought that these were the first football games played in South Australia. Hendrick Stanbury (Taffy) Waye represented South Australia in State football – He worked in the family blacksmith shop in Willunga and was recruited by Sturt in the SANFL, winning the Magarey Medal in Season 1903. Taffy would drive his horse and cart to Adelaide from Willunga each week to play with Sturt.

5 *Willunga is going to be one of the jewels set in the railway necklet of South Australia...perhaps a turquoise of a curious slate colour.*

Opening of Willunga Railway: In 1915, the Willunga railway line was declared open and the people enjoyed a gala day. An ordinary train left Adelaide at 10.00am to transport excited city dwellers and then at 11.00, a special train steamed out carrying VIPs. The first goods train carried materials for a running shed, engine driver's cabin, goods sheds and coal stage for the Willunga terminal. The line was closed in the late 1960s and now there is a linear recreation park along its route. The remains of the 25,000 gallon water tower stands on Aldinga Road at what was the terminus of the line.



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Willunga Walks Mobile App

Download the Willunga Walks mobile app and take a self-guided trail to explore dozens of interesting places around the town at your own pace - available for iPhone, iPad and Android devices from the Google Play and iTunes App stores.