

Mitcham Anglican Cemetery



The Mitcham Anglican Cemetery is the most easterly of the three cemeteries on Blythewood Road. It is one of the oldest in this State and is of great historic significance. Its 19th century character and aesthetic charm are still very much in evidence. The formal layout and lack of flamboyant headstones seem to reflect the social values of the colonists buried here - practical, hard working people who prospered by their own efforts, and in return gave generously to found many of our great institutions. Many of the early pioneering families were buried in this cemetery, some more well-known than others, but all made their contribution to the growth and prosperity of this State.

On 22 April 1854 two acres (0.8 ha) of 'Waste Lands of the Crown' were granted "*...unto the Right Reverend The Lord Bishop of Adelaide and his successors and assigns ... for ever UPON TRUST for the appropriation thereof as a place of interment for the Dead being deceased Members of the Established United Church of England and Ireland and for no other purpose whatsoever*". This land was on the steep, stony hillside running along the southern boundary of the village of Mitcham. On the same day another two acres adjoining it to the west were granted to three trustees for the burial of those who '*...had not been members of the Church of England*'. This is now the Old Section of the Mitcham General Cemetery.

Unlike the General Cemetery, which has been greatly enlarged over the years, the Anglican section has remained limited to the original two acres. It is still surrounded on three sides by hedges planted many decades ago; and the huge pines and cypresses - traditional trees of mourning - are landmarks in the district. They were probably planted in the 1880s. Virtually square in shape, the ground plan was set out on a simple grid pattern, with four main roads radiating out north, south, east and west from a central turning circle [see plan on back page]. The areas adjacent to the hedges, known as 'free-' or 'common ground', were set aside for the burial of infants and paupers in unmarked graves.

For 100 years the Mitcham Church of England Cemetery was controlled and maintained by members of the local parish of St Michael, with the Rector acting as its curator. Since 1953 it has been under the control of the Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Adelaide, with the curator and staff at the North Road Cemetery at Nailsworth being responsible for the administration and upkeep of the grounds. In 1981 the Church of England in Australia became known as 'The Anglican Church of Australia' - hence the name change of the Cemetery.

A group known as 'The Friends of Mitcham Anglican Cemetery' was formed in 1990 to assist with the maintenance, to research its history and to trace descendants of those interred there. Members of 'The Heritage Rose Society' also take an interest. They have propagated and planted a number of extra rose bushes to add to the existing old species that have survived there over many years.

The first burial, that of Mary Oldham, took place on 20th September 1853 (seven months before the Land Grant was gazetted). A memorial plaque in the central garden commemorates the 150th anniversary of this event. It was unveiled by Archbishop Ian George in September 2003.

The entrance to the Mitcham Anglican Cemetery is through these wrought-iron gates off Blythewood Road.

(Reproduced from *Letters from Mitcham*
Pamela Oborn 2002)



Since 1853 there have been some 2500 burials in this cemetery. Many of the early records prior to the mid-1880s were lost in a fire. In 1999 a computerised database was completed detailing who was buried where and when. Of the 80+ still unaccounted for, over half were infants. (It has been estimated that of all deaths in SA during the 1840s and 1850s, over half were new-born or still-born babies.) Copies of the print-outs have been deposited in the Mitcham Local History Collection, also in the library of the South Australian Genealogy Society. These records may be of assistance to you in tracing your ancestry.

The large numbers on the plan indicate a suggested route to view the following graves.

1* Tom Elder Barr Smith (1863-1941) The son of Robert and Joanna Barr Smith, Tom was named after his uncle, Sir Thomas Elder [see 8 & 6]. Like them he was a generous benefactor, particularly in the field of education, and in 1930 offered to finance the building of the Barr Smith Library at the University of Adelaide to house the great collection of books begun by his father. He devoted his whole working life to the family firm, Elder Smith & Company, and in 1921 succeeded Peter Waite as Chairman.

2* Peter Waite (1834-1922) Having trained as an ironmonger in Scotland, Waite emigrated to SA in 1859 and worked on northern pastoral properties. Through the innovative management of semi-add land, he built up an empire of sheep and cattle runs; and was the first to fence properties into paddocks and to set up permanent water supplies. Whilst Chairman of Elder Smith & Co. in 1913 he established the gift of his family home, 'Urrbrae', to the University to set up the Waite Agricultural Research Institute.

3 Henry Taylor (1815-1885) When St Michael's church opened in 1852 Taylor was elected as the first warden. He was landlord of the Brownhill Creek Inn, a popular meeting place for literary discussions and debates. Parts of the Inn still stand at the corner of Albert and Taylors Road, which was named after him.

4 Mary Oldham (1821-1853) She was the first person buried in this cemetery. Her husband, Nathaniel Oldham, a bank manager, married Ellen Maria Mulville in 1857, and several of their children died as infants. They lived at 'Woodside House', now Urrbrae Agricultural High School.

5 George Wilcox (1839-1917) George and his wife Annie lived at 'Eynesbury House', the ornate two storey mansion on Belair Road at Kingswood. He was a wealthy merchant, specialising in skins and hides; and was also a director of Hamley Copper Mine and of Apollo Soap Works (later Burford & Sons).

6* Sir Thomas Elder (1818-1897) One of four brothers from Scotland who were early entrepreneurs of the colony of SA. Thomas arrived in 1854 and established the agricultural supply firm of Elder & Co. In 1863 he went into partnership with his brother-in-law Robert Barr Smith [8] to form Elder, Smith & Co. With the enormous wealth from his pastoral holdings and shares in copper mines, Elder provided money to found the University of Adelaide and later endowed the Medical School and School of Music. He remained a bachelor, and his home 'Birksgate' was inherited by his nephew T E. Barr Smith [1]

7* Luther Robert Scammell (1858-1940) Luther trained as a manufacturing chemist and spent all his working life in the family business of F.H. Faulding & Co. This well-known S.A. pharmaceutical firm had been founded in 1845 by Francis Hardy Faulding but had passed to his partner, Luther Scammell, snr, on Faulding's death in 1868. The management of the Company later passed to Scammell's son, Luther Robert, then to his grandson Alfred Faulding Scammell.

8* Robert Barr Smith (1824-1915) Obituaries described 'Mr R. B. Smith' as an astute merchant, noted economist, a leading pastoralist and outstanding philanthropist. Of him it was said: "*There is hardly a religious, educational, philanthropic, or charitable institution to which he has not been a munificent donor*" He and his wife Joanna (sister of Thomas Elder [6]) lived at 'Torrens Park', now Scotch College.

9* Alexander Tolmer (1815-1890) A colourful character who arrived in SA in 1840 after service in Portugal with the British Army He joined the SA Mounted Police Department and became noted for his "vigorous pursuit of bushrangers". In 1852 became Commissioner of Police and initiated the famous overland escort to bring gold back safely from the Victorian fields. His home was opposite this cemetery.

10 Walter Gooch (1842-1918) Walter and his wife Elizabeth lived at 'Tooroo' in Belair. He is regarded as the 'Father of the Belair National Park', having played a very active part in securing the former 'Government Farm' for the people of SA. He was one of the Commissioners appointed in January 1892.

11 Catherine Maria Thornber (1812-1894) In 1855, following her husband's suicide, Catherine and her daughters, the Misses Thornber, ran a boarding school for 'young ladies' in their home at Unley Park. It had a high reputation, and many leading pastoralists sent their daughters there.

12 James Bragg (1803-1884) A simple metal cross with hand-punched lettering marks the grave of James Bragg. He was verger of St Michael's Church for 28 years from its opening in 1852 until 1881.

13 Johann W.T. Ehmcke (1817-1877) Born in Hanover, Germany, he arrived in SA in 1848 and worked as a builder and cabinet maker. He later set up a very successful timber yard and sawmill in Hurtle Square. He lived at 'St George's', now the Community Centre behind the Mitcham Library.

14 Private Henry Dawson Tutt (1891-1915) Henry, the son of George Tutt and Ann Maria Dawson, was born in Mecklenberg Street, Kingswood (later renamed Tutt Ave in his honour). He was a sidesman at St Michael's Church and played in the parish Football Team. When the First World War began he was one of the first to enlist in the 10th Battalion. He was killed in action at the landing on Gallipoli on 25th April - the first Mitcham casualty. His brother Albert was killed on the battlefield in France in 1917.

15* Lawrence Allen Wells (1860-1938) Lawrence, the son of a squatter was born 'Yallum Station' near Penola. He joined the Survey Department in 1878, and in 1883 was appointed Assistant-Surveyor of the Northern Territory and Queensland Border Survey Expedition. In 1891 he became the surveyor for the Elder Scientific Exploring Expedition mapping the "blank empty spaces" of inland Australia; and in 1896 led the Calvert Expedition. Many more followed. He served as chairman of the Land Board from 1918 until his retirement in 1930.

16 Archdeacon Albert Wyndharn Clampett (1860-1953) A clergyman from southern Ireland, he and his bride, Alice (nees Patten) arrived in SA in 1889. After serving in several country parishes he was appointed Rector of St Michael's Church at Mitcham in 1893 - a position he held for the next 46 years! He was very popular, played a very active role in Church affairs, and was regarded as "an eloquent preacher". His mother-in-law and sons are buried in adjacent plots.

17 Joseph Florey (1857-1918) A successful boot manufacturer who, in 1906, purchased 'Coreega', the large two-storey house on Carirck Hill Drive at Springfield. This was the childhood home of his son *Howard [later Lord Florey], a brilliant student and Rhodes Scholar. He later became Professor of Pathology at Oxford, and in 1945 was awarded the Nobel Prize for his part in the research and development of penicillin - the world's first antibiotic.

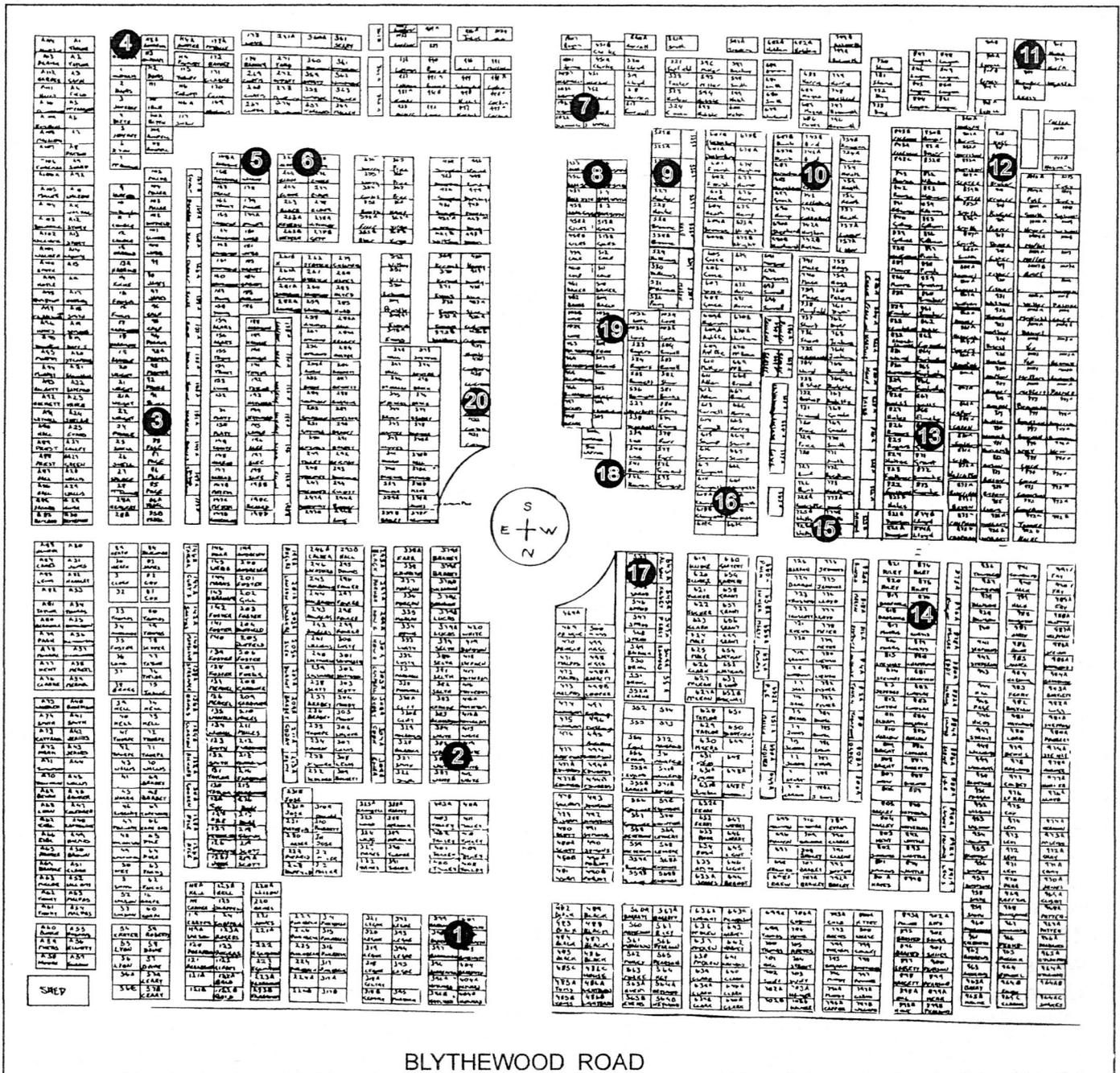
18* Sir William Mitchell (1861-1962) Philosopher respected intellectual and educational figure. He was appointed Hughes Professor of English at the University of Adelaide in 1894, was a member of the University Council for 52 years, and served as Vice-Chancellor from 1916 to 1942, then Chancellor until 1948. The main building on North Terrace is named after him. He married Edistoun Barr Smith (see **8**). Their son, **Sir Mark-Mitchell (1902-1977)**, a Professor of Biochemistry and General Physiology, served as Deputy Vice-Chancellor from 1951 to 1965, and was appointed the first Chancellor of Flinders University when it opened in 1966.

19 John Love (1827-1905) He arrived from Scotland in 1839 and became a wealthy pastoralist. He married Jessie Aitken Tennant, daughter of another prominent pastoralist. They retired to Clapham in 1874 and lived at 'Mitcham Lawn', an elegant mansion still standing in Barratt's Road. They were generous benefactors of St Michaels Anglican Church at Mitcham, and the Centenary Terrace in front of it is a memorial to them.

20 Daniel Cudmore (1811-1891) An explorer, and 'One of the Pioneers of 1837", he developed large pastoral properties around Yongala and Mt Remarkable. He died at his home 'Claremont', Glen Osmond (now part of the Waite Institute). His son, James Francis Cudmore, built 'Paringa Hall' at Somerton (now Sacred Heart College).

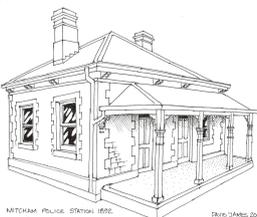
*John Healey (ed): *S.A.'s Greats: The Men and Women of the North Terrace Plaques* (HSSA 2001)

Mitcham Anglican Cemetery, Blythewood Road, Mitcham



Unlike most cemeteries, this one has neither row numbers nor numbers marked on the plots. This makes it very difficult to find a particular grave - even if you have the number and a plan! In very broad terms, the numbering starts near the top SE corner then zigzags north and south down and up the hill again, ending near the top SW corner. However, there are a number of anomalies due to the creation of extra plots. In particular the two rows along the eastern boundary bear the prefix 'A' (eg. A49): they were subdivided from a narrow strip of land purchased in 1927. Extra plots were also created by in-filling minor roadways and paths. These bear the suffix 'A' (eg. 203A) and are easily identifiable as they run north/south instead of the more traditional east/west. Future plans include the construction of memorial walls for cremated remains.

Enquiries and information regarding burials and leases should be directed to:
 The Curator, Mitcham Anglican Cemetery,
 North Road Cemetery, Cemetery Avenue, Nailsworth 5083
 Telephone: (08) 8344 1051



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