



CROP SCIENCE SOCIETY OF SA INCORPORATED

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NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the September issue of the Crop Science Society of SA newsletter

In this month's newsletter we explore:

- 2020 - The year of change and resilience
- South Australian Government new Landowner Information Service Initiative, delivered by Rural Business Support
- The 'Heritage of Eight Lower North Towns', with a focus on Clare

We hope you are keeping well. Please contact us if you have any requests for content or information.

Many thanks
Craig Davis
President, Crop Science Society of South Australia



2020 - The year of change and resilience



An exert by Tom Robinson, Grain and Cattle farmer from Hoyleton SA, and CSSSA board member.

Who would have thought that South Australia could be staring down the barrel of its third below average rainfall year in a row? April gave us so much promise, giving us the false hope of a good rainfall year. Rainfall in June and July well below average for most of the state made fertilizer and chemical decisions tough for growers.

For us on our farm this year, cropping rotations have been the standout difference in crops. Wheat after a legume or canola looks great, wheat after a cereal have struggled in the low moisture and high disease pressure situations. Canola after a legume has been a fantastic option too, as the canola has accessed the deep moisture the legumes could not.

This year so far has been one hell of a ride for everybody due to Covid-19, and it has been a real shame that a lot of conferences and crop walks have had to be cancelled. One of the fantastic outcomes of this is the online webinars, meetings, conferences, and crop walks for people to attend from the comfort and safety of their own home. I am personally fortunate enough to have been a part of many great online meetings with farmers from all around the world attending, learning and sharing together. Just in one day, I had a SANFTA webinar in the morning, a rotational grazing



webinar from North Dakota USA at lunch time, then a regenerative ag webinar from Ohio USA very late that night.

In August, with the easing of restrictions, I was fortunate enough to be able to attend the Mid North High Rainfall Winter Walk. Kenton Porker has some fantastic research on crop emergence timing, flowering timing and grazing timing. We are very fortunate in South Australia to have passionate researchers like Kenton, that are able to think outside the box and deliver some amazing projects that will improve our farming systems.

The weather has turned on us again, warming up quickly and pushing crops along. Yesterday's weather (07/09/2020) was hot and windy, 30 degrees and 40-50 kmph winds, this will surely have a negative effect on the crops. The hay season has started here, with crops being cut down, and canola slowing its flowering. Harvesters are sneaking out of their winter hibernation, as too are the blue tongue and sleepy lizards, the snakes won't be far away. Let's just hope that "Jack Frost" will stay away this year.

The silly season is here, cutting and baling hay, shearing, windrowing canola, moving livestock, spraying pulses, and then finally just as everybody is tired, harvest will start. I am reminded all the time by family, "it's a marathon, not a sprint" and the season will be done.

Maybe next year... it might rain!

New service delivers help with resources exploration, mining queries

Rural Business Support will offer a new service across South Australia in 2020-21 – free, factual and impartial information for landowners, farmers and community members who have queries on resources exploration, mining and quarrying.



The new Landowner Information Service is an initiative of the SA Government, delivered by Rural Business Support and supported by organisations in the primary production and resources sectors.

The service is a 12-month pilot and will provide easy-to-understand information to individuals or businesses affected by activities conducted by resource companies. Its focus is to help landowners and community members make informed decisions through access to information about their options, rights and responsibilities.

CEO Brett Smith said RBS was engaged to operate the service because of its trusted track record in offering free, independent and confidential services to primary producers and small business owners in rural areas.

"We understand that, for some landowners and community members, it can be an anxious and uncertain time when trying to navigate the resources exploration and mining process for the first time," Mr Smith said.



“So, we will be working with them to help them understand what the technical information means and how to liaise with companies seeking land access.

“RBS works impartially with all parties in delivering this service, ensuring landowners are informed and have access to the information they need at the right time. The service is not authorised to provide legal, commercial, compensatory or financial advice and does not advocate for landowners, which is consistent with our other programs.

“It really is about helping people to understand the process by explaining it in easy-to-understand terms and being available to answer questions on topics like land access, consultation stages and regulation. If people have very specific queries about the Mining Act or legislative or regulatory requirements, RBS will know who to refer to for specific advice.”

RBS has appointed Port Lincoln based [Brett Klau](#) to the position of Landowner Information Service Officer. Mr Klau will be working across SA to deliver the service, either face to face, on the landowner’s property, at one of RBS’ regional offices or at a mutually agreed convenient location.

Brett has significant history and experience in regional SA, and interests and skills that span both the agricultural and mining industries. He has spent 30 years in liaison roles with companies focused on grain, fertiliser and insurance and his background in engineering means he is well placed to understand and communicate technical detail.



Landowners, farmers and community members can register their interest to access the service by contacting RBS on 1800 836 211 or visiting the Landowner Information Service page at www.ruralbusinesssupport.org.au

An expert from 'Survey of the Heritage of Eight Lower North Towns - Clare'

Prepared for the State Heritage Branch of the Department of Environment and Planning by Rob Linn, Jane Linn and Chris Lane of Historical Consultants Pty Ltd, RMB 671 Cherry Gardens Rd, Blackwood FWD SA 5157 and John Gratton and Alistair Tutte of Hames Sharley Australia, 254 Melbourne St, North Adelaide, SA 5006 Funded by the State Heritage Fund

<https://data.environment.sa.gov.au/Content/heritage-surveys/Lower-North-Eight-Towns-Heritage-Survey-General-1990.pdf>



Edward Burton Gleeson was physically a big man. He had large ideas too. He came to South Australia with his wife and family in July 1838 from India and immediately looked to make his mark in this new country. Family legend has it that he took out a sweepstake in India and brought a fortune with him. He first purchased land at the foothills of Adelaide, in present-day Beaumont, and set himself up as a wealthy farmer. Whether through inopportune investments or rash speculation Gleeson was said to have been bankrupted in early 1842- he was not alone for the 'hungry forties' caused a severe depression in the infant South Australian economy. He certainly put money into the overlanding of stock from the eastern colonies for resale and purchased sheep for a breeding programme. Like a number of other respected individuals who also put their money into livestock at this time, the venture went bad when bills were dishonoured.



With some existing funds he invested in land in a survey taken out by John Morphett and Peter Horrocks some two hundred kilometres north of Adelaide. Horrocks and Morphett took out a Special Survey of 6,000 hectares in December 1839 on the Hutt River. By 1841 Gleeson placed stock there, purchased sections 41, 42 and others, totalling 200 hectares, and by 1843 had established a station homestead. In 1842, Gleeson had the village of Clare laid out on section 40 and part of section 42.

There were others like Gleeson who saw this district as a sheepwalk, a place in which large pastoral holdings would be the standard. George and Charles Hawker established themselves north of Gleeson's run at present-day Clare and named their run Bungaree. John Hope acquired property at Clare in 1844 and William Robinson took up Hill River station in 1846. These men dominated Clare's early years. Largely through their own labour they built their homesteads, dug wells, constructed dwellings and fenced their properties. They were the first wave of British settlement. They shared much in common. Often even farming implements did the rounds. Their patriarchal view of local society was heavily modelled on a British ideal of the landed gentry.

Whether to safeguard these men's flocks, or to bring a semblance of civilisation to the local people, the Adelaide government established a police station as early as 1841 at Bungaree. It was moved to Clare itself in 1848 and the fine building and Court House which housed the police and magistrates was a magnificent example of a symbol of law and order, based on its British forebears. In 1848 also the Clare Inn was first licensed. It was claimed to be stocked with 'the best assortment of wines and spirits etc., with good accommodation for travellers, good stabling and enclosed paddocks, at the most moderate charges'. And it was more than a mere hostelry for there were also quantities of 'drapery, hardware, slops, tea, sugar, tobacco, etc., which will be sold at the lowest Adelaide prices'. Moreover, the licensee, one Dennis Kenny, was perhaps one of the more astute, if not prophetic, voices of early colonial inn keeping. It was not enough for Kenny to just describe the attraction of his establishment- he foresaw the need for tourist accommodation for newly-weds:

"The undersigned also begs to bring to the notice of young married people, the pleasure they would enjoy by coming out of dusty Adelaide to Clare, where they could appreciate the sweets of their honey moon in all its pleasing delights ...

So lovers affianced, your election make soon,
And spend with friend Kenny your sweet honey moon,
With good cheer to enliven, good wines to regale,
And a clear, purling stream in a green grassy vale."

As Kenny regaled his prospective clientele with blarney Edward Gleeson was steadily building up his land holdings. He had named his homestead and property Inchiquin, a reminder of his native Ireland. The house and its outbuildings was known locally as the 'Government House' of Clare. It was a working station property, but its stone buildings, and, later under another owner its ballroom, were the natural place for the community's society to meet. Gleeson worked tirelessly for his town, just as the Angas family did for Angaston. He was the first Chairman of the District Council in 1853; first Mayor of Clare in 1868; first President of the Northern Agricultural and Horticultural Society in 1857 and of a similar local society in 1867. He was full of the town he created and his own place in it.

Yet even as Gleeson, the Hawkers, Hope and other pastoralists felt they were recreating the 'Old World' of noblesse oblige in Australia, the very town that should have provided those who tugged



their forelocks was in fact spawning its own class of leaders. This dynamic evolution would form the shape of Clare and its public, private and civic buildings.

Clare's earliest dwellings are now virtually non-existent. A small stone cottage, in ruins, on Edward Street, with its huge chimney and primitive construction is one of the very few reminders of what the homes of local workers were like. One person, reminiscing about Clare at this time, thought that until about 1870 most of the houses were very inferior and extremely rough. Initially this section, at Edward Street, was granted to Thomas and John Magor and John Mitchell, miners of Burra, in October 1848. Thomas Magor owned the land until 1866 when William Roscrow a farmer brought it under the Real Property Act. By 1874 a hut is recorded in the local assessment books, but the building could date from the ownership of Magor; it resembles those built by the miners at Burra itself.

If the details of early Clare houses are scanty, it is not the case for the churches in which many of the settlers worshipped. The earliest remaining buildings of this kind are the Anglican church and the Uniting Church, former Wesleyan, chapel. The roots of Clare's Methodism were in Burra. Some of the Cornish miners at that place were zealous in their Wesleyan faith and established strong links with Clare. Some even felt that the Burra mines would not last forever and, like Thomas Magor mentioned above, purchased land, built their huts and set out with 'a robust faith and a determination to build chapels in which to meet for fellowship, worship and instruction in the Word of God'. A small chapel was built at Spring Farm outside of Clare and from here grew the local Methodist cause. At the town, the Wesleyans met for class meetings in a cottage as early as 1851 and by 1855 were holding services in John Maynard's house. William Roscrow, who purchased the land on section 85 from Thomas Magor in 1866, 'had a passion to see a Wesleyan Chapel erected in the Clare Township'. It was he who purchased the corner block in present-day Victoria Street and gave it to the Wesleyans for their chapel. Edward Gleeson, an Anglican himself, but the town's most prominent citizen, presided over a meeting that discussed the possible erection of a chapel. The business proceeded apace and by July 1857, the building was ready for its first service. Rev. Butter preached 'three most impressive sermons' during the opening ceremonies and local adherents gathered to witness the proclamation of their faith. Within another nine years this plain, simple chapel was too small and on 22 July 1866 the foundation stone of a church, of gothic revival style, was laid.

The jovial, portly demeanour of Gleeson was at many meetings at Clare. He was as active in the establishment of the church of his own persuasion, Church of England, as he was with the Wesleyans. On 27 February 1850, Gleeson, with a number of other notables including Reverend J.C. Bagshaw; CH. Watts; G. C. Hawker and J. Maynard, proposed that a Church of England be erected. Later in that year, Gleeson's wife laid the cornerstone for St Barnabas' and by January 1851 construction was in progress. Gleeson was appointed a trustee and Church Warden. The Diocesan Assembly, meeting in January 1853, were informed that St Barnabas' had been completed during the last year. The church is sited on a large allotment of glebe land. It is of simple, rectangular design - without the pretensions of neo-gothicism constructed of local stone with four lancet windows on each side. The ceiling is of a panelled form with an infill of diagonal matchboard. In 1874 a chancel and vestry were added.

The growth of the township, though, was relatively slow. In the 1850s Clare was described as 'a very small place'. Businesses were few, and at the time did not include either a butcher or baker and



largely catered to the needs of the pastoralists. The decade of the 1860s was a time of growth for the town and one writer recalled eleven storekeepers, twelve hoteliers and an array of other workers including barmen, ostlers, bootmakers, butchers, saddlers, chemists, brewers, tailors, tinsmiths, greengrocers, auctioneers, bakers, postmasters, bank officers, lawyers, cabinet makers, photographers, watchmakers, carriers, painters, builders, implement manufacturers, blacksmiths, wheelwrights, carpenters, millers, hawkers, teachers, dressmakers, milliners, gardeners, mail drivers, doctors, clergy, teachers and a group he defined as 'prominent people' .

Even though Gleeson and other of his pastoralist colleagues, called by one critic 'ignorant and purse proud mushrooms', were tirelessly involved with the evolution of Clare, its main activities were being formed by a new group of townspeople. There were those like Dr Charles Houlton Webb, a surgeon and publican, and William Lennon, an Irish Catholic teacher, who became involved in local government, politics and society. By the 1870s, Clare had ceased to be a pastoralists' town and was the service centre for an expanding agricultural hinterland. The expansion of the town, its trades and buildings could not have been accomplished by a group of pastoralists alone.

Perhaps the most striking remnants of this period in Clare's history are the Clare Hotel, the National and A.N.Z. Banks, the first town hall and others like the Institute and Court House. The Clare Hotel and the first town hall were claimed to have been designed by R. R. Page. The Clare Hotel, as we have noted, was first leased to Dennis Kenny in 1848. Dr Webb had also held its license from 1853 to 1856. The site and building were actually owned by the Roman Catholic Church until 1869. During the early 1870s the hotel was entirely rebuilt, probably during the time that it was the property of Edward Smith, a notable man of business. The first town hall was built on land apportioned to the Directors of the Clare Town Hall Company Ltd in February 1866. It was an enormously important private venture and a sign of the increasing prominence of townspeople as against the old pastoral regime. In 1875 this interesting edifice was purchased by the Corporation of the Town of Clare. A journalist reporting on the sale believed that 'the building is well worth the money, and when put in thorough repair the hall and offices will pay good interest'. The banks, moreover, were proof that the town was an established commercial success. Their solid two-storey design and their construction from fine stone provide an impressive statement about the importance of Clare to the financial institutions at the time.

While these civic and commercial buildings were evidence of the economic strength of Clare, the building of the second St Michael's Church was a monumental occasion for the local Roman Catholics and their Jesuit fathers. In 1844, Father Michael Ryan first came to Clare district at the behest of Bishop Murphy. St Michael's Catholic Church, built between 1847-9, was Clare's first major building. The land bought by the Roman Catholic Church as the site for St Michael's also contains the first burial grounds for the Catholics of the district. As Clare and its hinterland prospered so it became obvious that the small church would not suffice.

On 29 June 1873, the diocesan administrator, Father Reynolds, laid the foundation stone of a new church. This grand occasion was attended by about 300 people. The church was to be of Italianate design and would cost some £3,000. While work began almost immediately, the walls were only at first constructed to about 30cms above the floor level and there, apparently, money and work ran out. In November 1876, the congregation decided that the building should continue. Money was raised through many ventures. It was not until 1881 that tenders were again called to build the church to M. McMullen's design of some ten years earlier. A. Munro, the Kapunda builder, was the



successful tenderer. By January 1883, the church was completed and its tower has ever since dominated the skyline of Clare. As one reporter stated: 'This magnificent Church is believed to be one of the best outside Adelaide

Although the state of the town's churches and the story of its public buildings have been mentioned separately, they are part of a unified community life. This broader society depended on the strength of a local economy to survive. While the 1870s were a prosperous decade, the 1880s were not. During these latter years there were 'the highest number of insolvencies for the century, growing unemployment and people leaving Clare'. A number of the town's leading citizens established a vigilance committee to encourage new industries. While there were ideas and some of them put into action, few survived. Dr J. W. D. Bain was one of those who helped in many ways at this time as a civic leader.

Bain established a dairy factory in 1894, as well as working on numerous other public projects, and the local paper noted that 'It is fortunate we have in our midst men of means who are ever ready to take the lead in industrial pursuits, and stir up the apathetic by affording them substantial help and encouragement.

The local wine industry was given a great boost during this time as well. Elizabeth Milburn described the foundation of a long-lasting venture that utilised the buildings of the failed Clare Fruit PreseNing Company in a new manner:

"The Stanley Wine Company was set up in the old Jam Factory building in 1894 by four leading men, Mr. Christison JP (brewer), Dr. Otto Wien Smith JP, Mr Magnus Badger JP (solicitor) and Mr. J. H. Knappstein (agent and vigneron). The Company had been established to solve the problem of what to do with the products of the increasing number of vineyards in the Clare district and at the October 1896 Adelaide Wine Show it won first and second prizes for a light red of 1896 vintage. Many leading townsmen themselves planted vines; for example, Christison, Knappstein, Dr. Bain, Charles Kimber and sons, and R. E. H. Hope, son of John Hope and brother-in-law of Christison."

The opening of the renovated Stanley Wine Company cellars in February 1897 attracted an enormous amount of attention. The local press praised the farsightedness of the men who formed the company. The extensive machinery was described as well as the additions to the old Jam Factory. Speakers heaped praise on the capacity of the land of the Clare district which 'was equal to any purpose'. The wine that would be produced, claimed Mr Christison, 'would gladden the heart of man.

By the turn of the century the town of Clare was no longer run by just a pastoral elite. Gleeson died in 1870, as did Dr Webb, and much of the old confrontation ceased. A group of educated and successful businessmen and professionals, as well as farmers and graziers, had helped to bring the economy to a new high.

One facet of the life of Clare that was seldom neglected was the education of children. Schooling, indeed, was at times a contentious issue. In the early 1870s, for example, there had been a polarisation of the townspeople over the appointment of the first public school teacher.^{1 09} Another school of the 1870s was situated in what is now 'Windy Brae' at 21 King Street, the one-time home of Dr Otto Wien Smith, one of those who helped form the Stanley Wine Company. From 1877 to 1886 the property was owned by Dr J. W. D. Bain, the prominent townsman. During his ownership, the property was leased as a school and dwelling by Elizabeth Anne Steele. Miss Steele,



claimed R.J. Noye, was a teacher from Bungaree who 'built a "commodious seminary" .110 This seminary was actually owned by Bain. The property was no longer used as a school in 1887 and was rented in 1890-1, and later purchased, by Wien Smith.

The State primary school was opened in what is now the Local TAFE College and was built in 1879. This building was too small for modern needs and in 1971 the primary division moved to the former high school built in 1925.^{11 1} This later school had been agitated for by locals since 1918 and when, in June 1925, the building was formally opened, even the Premier 'congratulated those who had worked to get such a fine building erected'.

By the time this school opened, Clare was the service town for a relatively affluent agricultural and viticultural district. The pathfinding ventures of the prominent townspeople had, in fact, brought their rewards. The area, too, was a noted tourist destination, even as Dennis Kenny predicted in 1849. Writers described 'charming homes', 'beautiful views', 'and a totally delightful picture'. The local government by the 1930s believed that it was a 'picturesque mid-northern town...surrounded by fertile hills and valleys ... and is noted throughout the State for its ideal and healthy climate'.

Perhaps the town's successful economy caused a degree of development over the years. As traders, hoteliers and businesses expanded so they demolished, re-built, or renovated or modernised their buildings. This has, naturally, been an on-going process. Clare has relatively few examples left of its earlier buildings. This could be because much of the quality of its first houses, for example, was described in the 1940s as being very poor. A Housing Trust official who visited Clare in 1944 said that 'Clare was like all old country towns- it had many hovels and sub-standard houses'.

Yet the town is full of tradition, if not of early buildings. The role of the pastoral families-like the Hopes, Hawkers and originally Gleeson- has over the years joined with the names of townspeople- such as the Knappsteins, Wien Smith, Christison-and produced a vital life.

