

Cultural History Report

# Tonsley





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# VOLUME 1

## 1. Executive Summary

The Tonsley Cultural History Study has been prepared by Martins Integrated and its consultant, Dr Sally Stephenson (historical researcher and oral historian) for the Department for Manufacturing, Innovation, Trade, Resources and Energy (DMITRE) and the Urban Renewal Authority (URA).

The site comprises most of the former Chrysler Australia Limited (CAL) and Mitsubishi Motors Australia Limited (MMAL) site, and a part of the Ragless family's property, *Tonsley*. It is located within the suburb of Clovelly Park in the City of Marion (Refer to Figure 3.5 on page 12).

The scope of this study was to record an understanding of the cultural and industrial history of the site as depicted by intangible heritage (stories and memories) and tangible heritage (structures, artefacts and ephemera), and to establish possible mechanisms for their communication and interpretation to the community at large as part of the new development.

The heritage values of the site have been researched and documented through a combination of formal and informal interviews with people and organisations who have a close association with the site, review of previous reports about the site, archival research, review of historic films, photographs and newspapers, and site visits.

We have consulted with individuals and organisations that have an association with the site including:

- the Kurna people, through the Living Kurna Cultural Centre
- the Ragless family
- former employees of CAL
- current and former employees of MMAL
- DMITRE
- URA
- History SA
- Mitcham Historical Society
- Mitcham Heritage Research Centre
- National Motor Museum, Birdwood

We have distilled the wealth of historical information on Tonsley into eight interpretive themes:

Theme 1: The Tonsley site represents the early settlement history of the Marion and Mitcham districts with mixed farming, market gardening and vineyards.

Theme 2: Tonsley is home to innovation and entrepreneurship.

Theme 3: Sustainability has been important in Tonsley's history.

Theme 4: Tonsley is a site for education, training, research and further learning.

Theme 5: Tonsley is one big family.

Theme 6: People of Tonsley have made a significant impact on the international and local communities.

Theme 7: Tonsley has provided extensive social, cultural and sporting opportunities.

Theme 8: Tonsley has a rich multicultural heritage.

Whilst the site's agricultural and horticultural heritage may appear to have little in common with its more recent industrial heritage as a site of car manufacture, our research revealed that there are many themes that encompass both phases of history, and which fit seamlessly with the proposed new development. This study recognises that cultural values are dynamic, and that the redevelopment of the site is an important chapter in the next phase of social and cultural development of Tonsley.

The report provides a detailed framework to maintain these cultural heritage values through adaptive reuse of the main assembly plant, new industries on site that link with the key themes, educational facilities, community meeting places, public art, landscaping, naming of the entire site and urban design elements, heritage trails, exhibitions, publications, web-based and digital projects.

We strongly recommend retaining the name *Tonsley* for the site as a whole, as used originally by the Ragless family. The family desired that the name be retained for the property. Furthermore, the name is so strongly associated with the heritage of the site, that to discard the name would be to discard the heritage.

We recommend a staged approach to implementing the interpretive opportunities. It is important to engage with local residents and former employees both in the short and longer term. The site's heritage and future use could be presented in the short term via a temporary visitors centre on site, exhibitions in local community venues and via the website. Other interpretive opportunities can be implemented in the medium and long term as the site is developed.

The recommendations for interpreting the site's rich history should be considered as part of the branding, identity, marketing and communications for the site, and in the brief for the architects, landscape architects and public artists engaged to work on the development.



# 2. Introduction

## 2.1 Project Background

The 61 hectare former Mitsubishi Motors Australia Limited manufacturing site at Tonsley will be redeveloped into a hub for high value manufacturing activities, bringing together industry, education, research and development, retail, residents and the community. DMITRE engaged Martins Integrated to undertake a cultural history study of the Tonsley site and to explore possible interpretive opportunities.

### 2.1.1 Study Area

The study area comprises the former MMAL site (as shown on page 25 of the Tonsley Master Plan Report, 2012), but reference is made within this report to the surrounding land and suburbs where relevant.

### 2.1.2 Previous reports

Two reports have been reviewed as part of this study:

- Tonsley Master Plan (Woods Bagot, 2012)
- Tonsley Redevelopment Community Feedback Summary (Kath Moore and Associates, 2011)

### 2.1.3 Authors

This study has been prepared by Martins Integrated and its team.

The following people have contributed to the preparation of this document:

- Quentin Gore: Project leader, interpretation
- Sally Stephenson: research, oral history, interpretation

## 2.2 Acknowledgements

Martins Integrated would like to acknowledge the contribution of a number of individuals and organisations, as follows:

- Andrew Christiansen, DMITRE
- Julie Kushnir, DMITRE
- Barbara Dickens, URA
- Allison Russell, History SA
- Betty Cobiac, Mitcham Heritage Research Centre
- Ju Phan, Art Gallery of South Australia
- Julie Hogan, Mitcham Historical Society
- Lisa McIntosh, Electorate Officer, Office of Alan Sibbons MP, Mitchell Park
- Matt Lombard, National Motor Museum
- Perry Langeberg, Senior Heritage Information Officer, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division, Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Ray Sara, Australian Manufacturing Workers Union
- Robert Case, former MMAL employee
- Robert Chadwick, MMAL employee
- Tonia Eldridge, State Library of South Australia
- Tony Bryant, Mitsubishi Staff Golf Club and former employee of MMAL
- Veronica Kooyman, National Motor Museum
- Many other people who generously donated their time and memories in formal and informal interviews, and are listed in the reference section.







## 2.3 Project methodology

Martins Integrated worked with representatives from DMITRE and URA to establish the key areas for focus and to provide regular reporting and updates throughout the project.

The Tonsley site was visited for familiarisation, with a walking tour of all the remaining buildings and through the former assembly plant and canteen with site manager, Mr Michael Trott. The remaining tangible artefacts, other than buildings and landscape, were discussed with him. The neighbouring Selgar Avenue precinct was also visited to view the remnant vineyard and fruit trees, and the sole remaining Ragless family home - *Wattiparinga*. A site visit to *Warriparinga* and the Living Kaurna Cultural Centre was also made.

Archival research was conducted on records at the State Library of South Australia, National Library of Australia, National Archives of Australia, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, The Mitcham Heritage Research Centre and the Art Gallery of South Australia. Desktop research using a range of newspapers, books, journals and magazines was also conducted.

Former employees of CAL and MMAL were asked whether they had any photographs, films or memorabilia from their time at Tonsley. Items that were identified were copied and returned to the owner, or donated to the State Library of South Australia. The State Library will catalogue, digitise where appropriate, and store the items in archival conditions, as well as provide access to anyone who wishes to see them. These items are listed in Section 4.2. To date, no artefacts, items and equipment from the Tonsley site have been discovered.

Formal and informal interviews were conducted by phone, in person and by e-mail with former employees of CAL and MMAL. Six formal interviews were conducted by Sally Stephenson and filmed by Daylight Breaks. These interviews have been transcribed for use in current and future interpretive projects. The interview transcripts and original recordings have been lodged with the State Library of South Australia as part of the JD Somerville Collection of Oral History. This will ensure the interviews are accessible to members of the public, and that they will be stored appropriately.

### Abbreviations:

AMWU:	Australian Manufacturing Workers Union
CAL:	Chrysler Australia Limited
DMITRE:	Department for Manufacturing, Innovation, Trade, Resources and Energy
MMAL:	Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd
URA:	Urban Renewal Authority (formerly Land Management Corporation)



Wattiparinga  
Creek

Figure 3.1 Aerial photo 1949, Wattiparinga creek, Tonsley.



### 3. Historical Outline of Tonsley

This section provides a brief summary of the indigenous and natural heritage of Tonsley and surrounding area, and of its cultural and industrial heritage from 1839.

For thousands of years, this area has been home to the Kaurna people. Whilst Tonsley is now best known as a centre for car manufacture, most of its post-settlement history was as a mixed farm. A range of farming activities continued on the property for 116 years from 1839 to 1955. Car manufacture occurred on the site for a relatively short period – 51 years from 1957 to 2008. Whilst car manufacture therefore represents less than a third of the history of the site since South Australia was established, it had an enormous impact on the state as a whole directly and indirectly.

This history is provided as a context within which to establish the historical themes of the site (Section 4) which in turn inform the interpretive opportunities (Volume 2 of the report).

#### 3.1 Indigenous and natural history

Tonsley, on the Adelaide Plains, is part of the country of the Kaurna people. The land was crossed by the ephemeral Wattiparinga Creek that runs into Sturt River north-west of the study area. Wattiparinga (pronounced Woddy-paringa) is sometimes spelt Watiparinga, and has also been referred to as Viaduct Creek.

##### Sturt River and the Kaurna people

The Sturt River (Warri-Pari) provided a transport route for Aboriginal clans moving from the hills to the coast. Plants and animals near the river provided food sources; the Kaurna took fish and yabbies from the river and hunted other animals such as ducks and other wild fowl, possums, kangaroos, wallabies and small marsupials. They used many plants for food, medicine and making tools, implements and weapons.<sup>1</sup>

The Sturt River south of Tonsley was a special meeting place for celebrations and rituals. Gatherings sometimes included other clans, as well as the Kaurna.<sup>2</sup> The Aboriginal people gathered at nearby Warriparinga (bounded by present-day Sturt Road, South Road and Diagonal Road), which is now home to the Living Kaurna Cultural Centre. This location is important as it marks the beginning of the Tjilbruke dreaming story. This area retains some of the original *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* (river red gums) along the Sturt River.<sup>3</sup>

Aborigines were reported as living in the district on a reserve in what is now Mitchell Park when the Ragless family arrived in the district in 1869 (see below for further information on the Ragless family).<sup>4</sup>

##### The significance of Wattiparinga Creek

The land to the north of Warriparinga was a 'law ground' for the Kaurna people.<sup>5</sup> Traditionally Aboriginal law was decided in councils of men who met on law grounds that were usually within the boundaries of a tribes' country. Law grounds were also used to put young Aboriginal men and women through traditional law.<sup>6</sup>

The Kaurna law ground may have encompassed present-day Tonsley, although this is not clear. It certainly included the upper reaches of the Wattiparinga Creek, which flows through Watiparinga Reserve at Eden Hills. The Reserve contains spectacular rock formations, and shelter caves that are thought to have been used by the Kaurna people.<sup>7</sup>

Wattiparinga Creek continues from the Watiparinga Reserve through Shepherds Hill Recreation Park before crossing present-day Ayliffes Road and then flowing through Ragless Reserve to cross South Road. There do not appear to have been any rocky outcrops further along the Wattiparinga Creek where it crossed the Tonsley property.

1. City of Marion website - Warriparinga: <http://www.marion.sa.gov.au/page.aspx?u=249>.
2. Personal communication: Sascha, Living Kaurna Cultural Centre, 15 June 2012
3. Living Kaurna Cultural Centre website: <http://www.marion.sa.gov.au/page.aspx?u=513>.
4. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p160.
5. Personal communication: Sascha, Living Kaurna Cultural Centre, 15 June 2012
6. <http://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/law/tribal-punishment-customary-law-payback.html>
7. National Trust of South Australia website: Watiparinga Reserve: [http://www.nationaltrustsa.org.au/index.php/places\\_to\\_visit/historic\\_buildings\\_museums\\_nature\\_reserves/adelaide\\_hills/watiparinga\\_reserve/](http://www.nationaltrustsa.org.au/index.php/places_to_visit/historic_buildings_museums_nature_reserves/adelaide_hills/watiparinga_reserve/)





Figure 3.2 Large gum in Selgar Avenue, outside the study area, but part of the Ragless property. Photo: Quentin Gore, 2012.



In 1964, the Wattiparinga Creek was covered as part of the South West Drainage Scheme. A bridge had been built over the creek in the 1850s to enable traffic on South Road to cross. In the 1960s, South Road was widened and the bridge was buried under the road.<sup>8</sup>

There are no recorded items of Aboriginal heritage remaining within the study area itself.<sup>9,10</sup> However, the enormous river red gums (*Karra* in Kurna language) that once lined the creek through the property probably had hollows that provided shelter for possums, birds and lizards, eggs and honey which were in turn a source of food for the Kurna people. Bark from the *Karra* would have been used to make shields and canoes, and the timber used for boomerangs and coolamons. Gum from the tree was used to heal burns and treat diarrhoea, and the leaves helped heal wounds. The Kurna people also ate the scale insects on the leaves as a source of sugar.

### Indigenous vegetation of the area

The original vegetation of the study area has long since been cleared, however David Ragless who grew up at Tonsley, recalled that it was mainly grey box with a grassy understory, and river red gums along the creek.<sup>11</sup> Examples of modified remnant vegetation exist outside the study area in Watiparinga Reserve. Near the origin of the Wattiparinga Creek, the vegetation would originally have been an open grassy woodland with *Eucalyptus microcarpa* (grey box or peppermint gum), *Eucalyptus leucoxylon* (South Australian blue gum) and *Allocasuarina verticillata* (drooping sheoak). The creek itself was lined with *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* (river red gums). The vegetation has been modified since settlement by woodcutting, removal of wattles for the tanning industry, grazing with sheep and cattle, clearing for orchards and vineyards and top dressing with superphosphate. The area today contains a restored *Eucalyptus microcarpa* woodland with a grassy understory. Over 170 indigenous plant species are present in the reserve, 50 of which are of State or regional significance. There have also been 57 indigenous bird species sighted and 7 of these are rated as uncommon, rare or vulnerable within the Mount Lofty Ranges. The vegetation found within the reserve is typical of much of the grassy woodlands of the plains and foothills of Adelaide.



Figure 3.3 Grassy woodland in Watiparinga Reserve. Source: [http://www.nationaltrustsa.org.au/natrust/uploads/images/watiparinga\\_calostemma\\_m%5B1%5D.jpg](http://www.nationaltrustsa.org.au/natrust/uploads/images/watiparinga_calostemma_m%5B1%5D.jpg)



Figure 3.4 David Ragless and his grandfather Christopher beside Wattiparinga Creek on Ballantrae property



Figure 3.5 Pool in Wattiparinga Creek behind sheds at Wattiparinga, around 1934.

8. Somerset, M. and Ragless, M. (2009). *St Marys Heritage Walk brochure*. p14.
9. Perry Langeberg (Senior Heritage Information Officer in the Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division) advised by letter to Dr Stephenson (File No. DPC12/0010) that the Central Archive, which includes the Register of Aboriginal Sites and Objects (the Register), administered by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet-Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division (DPC-AARD), has no entries for Aboriginal sites within the suburb of Clovelly Park. However the Register is not comprehensive and the site may nevertheless contain significant items. Land within 200 metres of a watercourse in particular, may contain Aboriginal sites and objects.
10. The Living Kurna Cultural Centre advised that any earthworks on the site more than 60 centimetres in depth should be monitored by a Kurna observer. Personal communication from Sascha, 15 June 2012.
11. Interview with David Ragless, 10 July 2012.

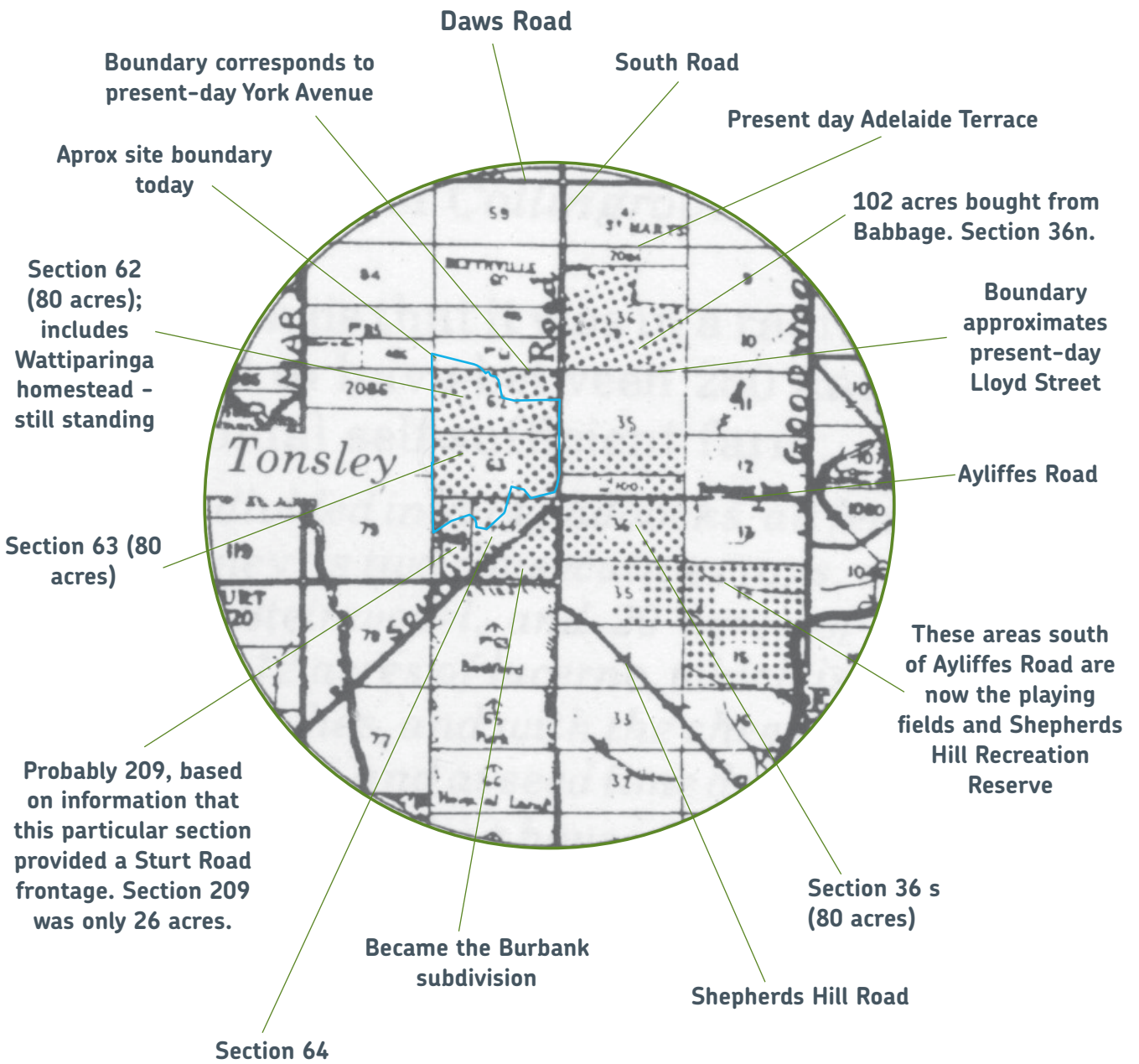


Figure 3.6 Tonsley Farm and surrounding district. Insert shows the section numbers.



## 3.2 The agricultural era (1839–1954)

The land now known as Tonsley was purchased by Henry Watts in 1839, and comprised Section 63 of 80 acres on South Road.<sup>12,13</sup> The property was Henry's country estate;<sup>14</sup> Henry and his wife Hannah lived in Adelaide where Henry was South Australia's second Postmaster General, having succeeded Mr Thomas Gilbert in 1838.<sup>15</sup>

In 1840, Henry Watts had a house built on his property which he named *Fiddown*. It was described as a modest 10-roomed stone and brick house.<sup>16</sup> He resigned from his position a year later, and was replaced by his brother, John. Henry then farmed his property for several years. In the early to mid 1850s Henry and Hannah Watts returned to England for a holiday. This marked the end of their association with the property.<sup>17</sup> On their return to South Australia in 1855, they moved to Macclesfield. Until 1869, the property was leased by a variety of gentlemen.<sup>18</sup>

### The start of the Ragless era

Mr Richard Ragless arrived in Adelaide on the ship *Eden* in 1838, aged 19. After a brief stay in Adelaide, he started a farm at Enfield with his father, John senior, and brother, John junior, where they trialed one of the first South Australian-manufactured strippers.<sup>19</sup> In 1860, Richard and his wife Eliza established the Willochra Inn (between Port Augusta and Blinman).

Richard Ragless took possession of the Henry Watts' property in 1868.<sup>20</sup> He also purchased the neighbouring Section 64 of 80 acres and Section 209 of 26 acres, giving him frontage onto both South and Sturt Roads.<sup>21</sup> Over the years, he purchased a number of neighbouring sections. He purchased Section 36n (102 acres) from the explorer and amateur scientist Mr Benjamin Herschel Babbage in 1876 (see overleaf).<sup>22</sup> In 1878 he purchased Section 62 (80 acres) from Mr Edwin Daw (after whom Daw Park is named). In 1889, he purchased a further 80 acres, Section 36st, from the Hill family. This section ran half-way up the Wattiparinga Creek gully, south of Ayliffes Road (on what is now the SA Women's Memorial Playing Field, and Shepherds Hill Recreation Park). The farm grew to almost 500 acres.<sup>23</sup> At its maximum, the property extended both sides of South Road, and south of Ayliffes Road (see figure 3.6).

12. *South Australian Homes and Gardens*, July 1953, pp32–33.
13. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p149.
14. *South Australian Homes and Gardens*, July 1953, pp32–33.
15. *The South Australian Advertiser*, Thursday 8 August 1861, page 2.
16. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p149.
17. *South Australian Homes and Gardens*, July 1953, pp32–33.
18. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p149.
19. *The Advertiser (Adelaide)*, Tuesday 23 April 1901, p3.
20. *The Advertiser (Adelaide)*, Tuesday 23 April 1901, p3.
21. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p149.
22. Symes, G. W., 'Babbage, Benjamin Herschel (1815–1878)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/babbage-benjamin-herschel-1550/text4195>, accessed 11 June 2012.
23. *The Advertiser (Adelaide)*, Friday 8 June 1945, p8.

*Benjamin Herschel Babbage was an engineer, explorer, surveyor and scientist.<sup>24</sup> His father, Charles, invented a calculating machine that anticipated the principles of modern computers.<sup>25</sup> Together Benjamin and his father worked on a prototype of a black-box data recorder.<sup>26</sup> Benjamin grew up in England where he met some of the country's finest minds: Charles Darwin, Charles Dickens, the Bronte family, engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel, railway founder George Stephenson, scientist Michael Faraday, and physicist and astronomer Sir John Frederick William Herschel.<sup>27</sup>*

*Benjamin emigrated to South Australia in 1851 after being appointed to make a geological and mineralogical survey of the colony. He settled in St Marys in 1853 with his wife and children. Babbage was subsequently appointed commissioner of gold licences 1852-3; government assayer from 1853; supervisor of the construction of the Adelaide to Port Adelaide railway line; the first chairman of the Mitcham Council; a member of the first Legislative Assembly; South Australia's representative to the Intercolonial Exhibition in Melbourne 1866; assistant to Charles Todd to plan and plot the course of the Overland Telegraph Line and supervise contractors 1870-2; and president of the Philosophical Society (now the Royal Society of South Australia). He contributed numerous scientific papers to the Society on diverse subjects: calculating machines, meteorology, oceanography, geophysics, agronomy, botany, photography, drainage, and methods of using concrete. Babbage also undertook two major expeditions of the Flinders Ranges and northern South Australia, producing meticulous surveys and beautiful sketches.*



Figure 3.7 The driveway into the Babbage property at St Marys, 1880, showing examples of remnant native vegetation. Photo courtesy of the State Library of South Australia, image B 23399.



Figure 3.8 Babbage's castle at St Marys, c1903. Photo courtesy of the State Library of South Australia, image B 7591.



Although Babbage sold part of his property to the Ragless family in 1876, he retained the adjacent land on which he had built his home. The first home burned down in 1875, after which he built a grand mansion known locally as 'the castle'. Babbage experimented with growing vines, olives, citrus orchards and roses on his property. Some of the new varieties of rose he cultivated are still in the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide. He had a large vineyard on his property, planted in 1853, and made his first wine in 1856. He kept a detailed diary of his wine growing activities and other activities until 10 days before his death. Like the Ragless family, Babbage was very involved in St Marys Anglican Church, and was buried there after his death in 1878.<sup>28,29</sup>

24. Symes, G. W., 'Babbage, Benjamin Herschel (1815–1878)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/babbage-benjamin-herschel-1550/text4195>, accessed 11 June 2012.
25. Babbage, Charles in A Dictionary of Computing. Ed John Daintith and Edmund Wright. Oxford University Press, 2008. Oxford Reference Online. Oxford University Press. <http://0-www.oxfordreference.com.www.catalog.slsa.sa.gov.au/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t11.e6302>, accessed 25 June 2012.
26. Hankel, V. (2007) Benjamin Herschel Babbage in *Finding Burke and Wills*. pp xx-xxix.
27. David Knight 'Herschel, John' *The Oxford Companion to British History*. Ed John Cannon. Oxford University Press, 2009. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. <http://0-www.oxfordreference.com.www.catalog.slsa.sa.gov.au/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t110.e2107>, accessed 25 June 2012.
28. Hankel, V. (2007) Benjamin Herschel Babbage in *Finding Burke and Wills*. pp xx-xxix.
29. Somerset, M and Ragless, M (2009). *St Marys Heritage Walk brochure*, pp4–6.



Figure 3.9 Vineyards on Babbage's property, with the castle in the background, c1900. Photo courtesy of the State Library of South Australia, image B 25211.



Figure 3.10 Benjamin Herschel Babbage c1860. Photo courtesy of the State Library of South Australia, image B 22854



Figure 3.11 Almond trees on the Ragless property. Source: David Ragless collection



Richard re-named his property *Tonsley*, after *Tonsley Hall* in England which he had greatly admired.<sup>30</sup> The name *Tonsley* has therefore been associated with the property for 143 years. The nine members of the Ragless family lived in the 'comfortable and commodious' stone house that had been built by Henry Watt and later extended.<sup>31</sup>

### Tonsley farm

Tonsley was a model farm characterised by great diversity, entrepreneurship and practices that today are promoted as environmentally sustainable. Richard Ragless worked the property until his death in 1901.



In the 1870s, Richard realised there was a need for a chaff mill in the district, so he purchased machinery and built a two-story stone barn with a loft to store the chaff. It worked at full capacity for many years with the help of his four sons. From 1878 to 1901, Richard also had a chaff and grain store in Currie Street, Adelaide.<sup>32</sup> After the grain store was closed, chaff was sold from Tonsley, and sometimes sent by train from the Adelaide Railway Station.<sup>33</sup> (The Tonsley railway line was not built until 1965-6).<sup>34</sup>

In 1888 he was growing wheat, oats and lucerne, using crop rotation. He kept 200 merino sheep, three Essex pigs, three cows and fifteen horses. There was also a seven-acre orchard (containing apricot, plum, apple and orange trees) and twenty acres of vines in which table and wine grapes were grown and sold to nearby wineries. Richard and his wife also made their own wine, and served it to guests.<sup>35</sup>

There were also implement sheds and an 18-stall stable that were 'prettily situated at the end of an avenue of large gum trees'.

Much of the produce was processed on the property. There was an eight-foot square store-room with underground furnace for drying fruit, and a stone room for smoking bacon. The property also had a blacksmith's and carpenter's workshop and a dairy.<sup>36</sup>

In 1888 Richard Ragless won the Angas Prize from the Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Society for the best conducted farm of from 250 to 1000 acres. He was innovative in his practices, and introduced several new implements.<sup>37</sup> The farm had a steam engine to drive the chaffcutter, a saw and two bone mills. There was a mechanical mower imported from England, a tine drill and a Norwegian harrow.<sup>38,39</sup>



Figure 3.12 Mr Richard Ragless, c1885. Photo courtesy of the State Library of South Australia, image B 45115.

Figure 3.13 (Left) Cutting chaff for animal feed at Wattiparinga, from left: Gordon Ragless, his brother Kenneth, their father Charles and uncle Richard W. Ragless, first cousin of Charles. Bagshaw Chaffcutter and elevator 1904-5 Model K.G.A., No 956, Serial No 3325. Bought second-hand for 11 pounds or \$22 on 1 May, 1915, from Mr Hancock who lived where Flinders University is now. Cut at a capacity of 30 to 40 cwt. an hour. Driven off an Oil Engine made by Ruston, Proctor & Co., Engineers of Lincoln, England. Distributed in Australia by H.V. McKay. Bought brand new about 1915 although it was a model made about 1902/3. Photo courtesy of the State Library of South Australia, image B 28774.



Figure 3.14 Source: *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p180.

30. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p149.
31. *South Australian Homes and Gardens*, July 1953, pp32-33.
32. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p150.
33. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p167.
34. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tonsley\\_railway\\_line](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tonsley_railway_line). Accessed 14 June 2012.
35. *South Australian Homes and Gardens*, July 1953, pp32-33.
36. *The South Australian Advertiser*, Saturday 1 December 1888, p6.
37. *The Advertiser (Adelaide)*, Tuesday 23 April 1901, p3.
38. *The South Australian Advertiser*, Saturday 1 December 1888, p6.
40. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p156.

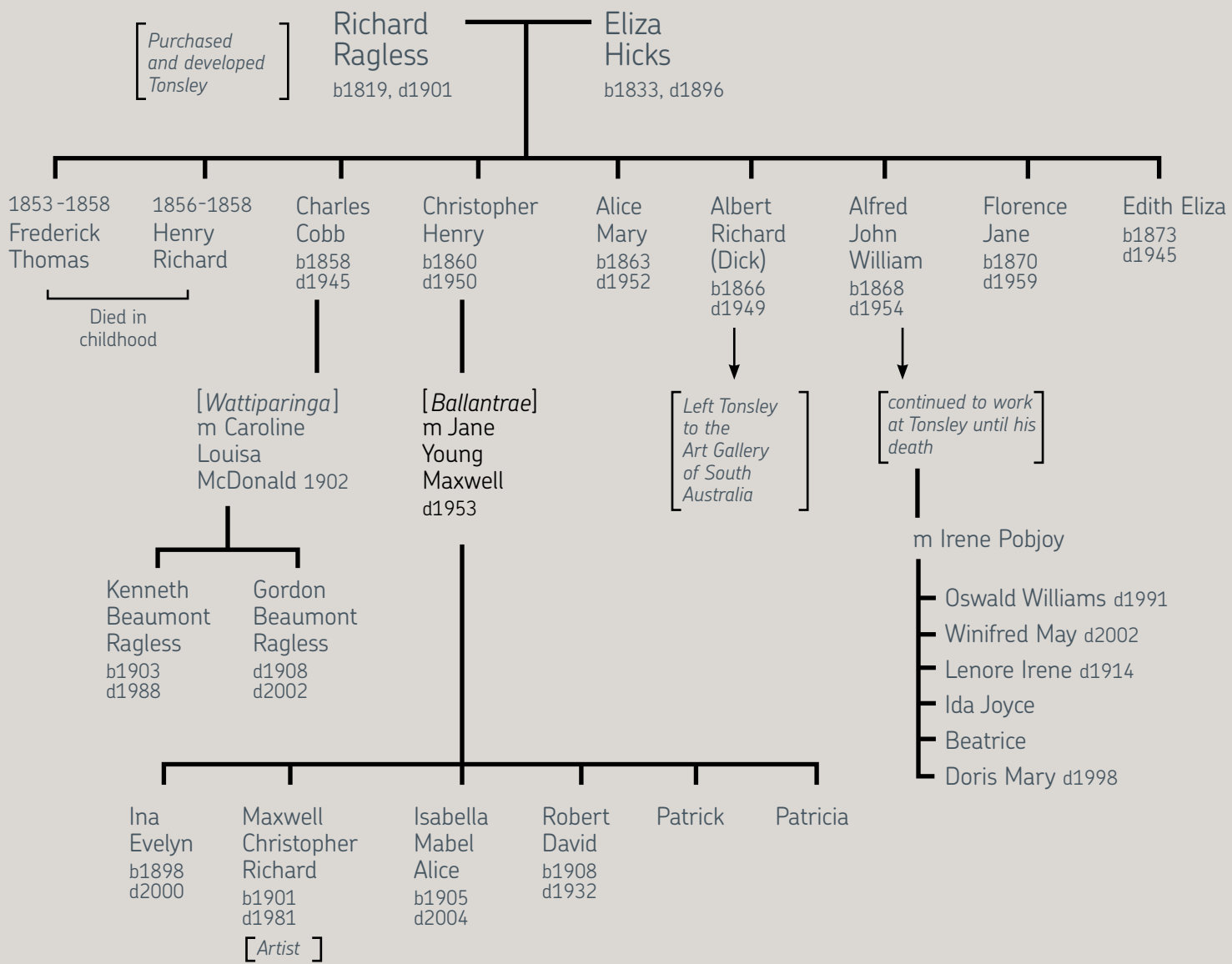


Figure 3.15 The Ragless Family Tree. Constructed from information in *Dust Storms in China Teacups*.



Richard undertook extensive tree planting. By 1888 he had planted 2 000 red gums, blue gums and sugar gums. Some trees appear to have been planted in belts along the fence line, where they were protected from stock by double fences of six wires. He also planted a double row of gums along South Road from St Marys Church in the north, to Sturt Road in the south in the 1880s, a distance of approximately 1.8 kilometres. Four gum trees on the corner of South Road and Walsh Avenue, by St Bernadette's School Oval, are the only trees that remain.<sup>40</sup>



Figure 3.16 Horse-drawn roller being used on a farm at St Mary's with Pasadena in background. Richard Albert (Dick) Ragless is sitting on the roller, c1904-7. Photo courtesy of the State Library of South Australia, image B 11941.

The property was used to host ploughing matches, as well as special picnics. In 1895, the journeyman bakers were granted a day's holiday and held their inaugural picnic at *Tonsley*.<sup>41</sup>

Mr Richard Ragless died at Tonsley in 1901.<sup>42</sup> The property was divided between his four surviving sons: Charles Cobb, Christopher Henry, Albert Richard (Dick) and Alfred John William Ragless.

## The second generation of the Ragless family

### *Charles Cobb Ragless and Wattiparinga*

The eldest surviving son, Charles Cobb Ragless, inherited sections of land north of the main home (Sections 36 and 62) which he called *Wattiparinga*. The property extended to the east of South Road and included what is now the suburb of St Marys; the family is commemorated in the name Ragless Street in St Marys.<sup>43</sup>

In 1902, Charles Ragless built a 'fashionable villa with return verandah' of bluestone from the Franklin's quarry at Darlington. The building cost £562.15.0, including the extras of a bath, marble mantelpieces, fireplace grates, stove, cast-iron work for the verandah, and a 1 000 gallon tank. The driveway to the house from South Road is now Selgar Avenue, and the house remains.<sup>44</sup>

When Charles took over his property, the Marion district was becoming well known for its market gardens, orchards, vineyards and almond groves, replacing the earlier cropping and grazing activities of his father's generation. (These activities were now being carried out on more remote properties). Charles grew a range of fruit and vegetables on his property, as well as crops. He grew almonds, oranges (Navel, Valencia, Poorman and Washington Navel varieties), peaches, grapes (including raisins), figs, passionfruit, lemons, rhubarb, potatoes and peas.<sup>45</sup>

41. Somerset, M and Ragless, M (2009). *St Marys Heritage Walk brochure*, p20.
42. *The Advertiser* (Adelaide), Thursday 7 Mar 1895, p6.
43. *The Advertiser* (Adelaide), Tuesday 23 April 1901, p3.
44. Somerset, M. and Ragless, M. (2009). *St Marys Heritage Walk brochure*. p20.
45. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p161.
46. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p157-163.





Charles was one of the largest almond growers in the state.<sup>46</sup> He grew several varieties (including Brown Brandis, IXL, Chellaston and White Brandis). He also developed his own almond hybrid – the Selgar – which was a cross between the White Brandis and Chellaston varieties. It was characterised by being a heavy bearer, holding on to the almonds tightly in spite of the strong gully winds in summer (which blew off much of the crop from other trees). The name Selgar was derived from Ragless, spelt backwards.<sup>47</sup>

Charles experimented with a machine to sieve the leaves and sticks away from the almonds, then husking, cracking and grading the almonds.<sup>48</sup> His son Kenneth perfected the machine in the late 1920s. It was initially powered by a kerosene engine driving a shaft and pulley and later, by electricity.<sup>49</sup>

Charles grew peas as a nitrogen-fixing crop for crop rotation. He developed a method for modifying an old stripper to produce a mechanical pea harvester. The blueprint for the idea was drawn up by his nephew, Max (later a famous artist), and manufactured by Dutch Brothers at Mount Barker. The harvester could process the peas as they were picked, rather than needing to be taken to a stationary threshing machine.<sup>50</sup>

Like his father, Charles was heavily involved in the Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Society.<sup>51</sup> He became a judge of agricultural produce and machinery between 1901 and 1913.<sup>52</sup> He was also involved in the Sturt Agricultural Show Society, and organised a ploughing match to be held at Tonsley.<sup>53</sup> In 1904, the South Australian Fruitgrowers and Market Gardeners' Association was formed, and in 1919, Charles helped to establish its Marion branch. In the 1940s, his younger son Gordon was the president. This association continued until as recently as 1970 when it was finally disbanded; by that time, post-war development had led to the creeks being converted into drains and houses covering much of the plains.<sup>54</sup>



Figure 3.17 The almond-cracking machine at Tonsley c1931. It working continually from 1925 to 1972. Photo courtesy of the State Library of South Australia, image B 33779.



Figure 3.18 Sorting almonds at Tonsley, c1932. Photo courtesy of the State Library of South Australia, image B 33777.



Figure 3.20 The almond and apricot-stone cracking shed at Wattiparinga, Tonsley, c1934. Photo courtesy of the State Library of South Australia, image B 33780.



Figure 3.19 Charles Cobb Ragless pumping water from Wattiparinga Creek to irrigate the vineyard on Tonsley (Section 63) in 1935. The pump was driven by a McCormack-Deering Tractor. Photo courtesy of the State Library of South Australia, image B 33775.



Figure 3.21 Charles Cobb Ragless ploughing a vineyard with a single farrow plough at Wattiparinga, Tonsley, c1932. Photo courtesy of the State Library of South Australia, image B 33782.

47. *The Advertiser (Adelaide)*, Friday 8 June 1945, p8.
48. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p157-163.
49. *The Advertiser (Adelaide)*, Friday 8 June 1945, p8.
50. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p162.
51. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p164.
52. *The Advertiser (Adelaide)*, Friday 8 June 1945, p8.
53. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p157.
54. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p157.
55. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p164.



Figure 3.22 Grape picking at *Wattiparinga*, Tonsley. c1920. Photo courtesy of the State Library of South Australia, image B 33771.

Charles and his wife had two sons, Gordon and Kenneth. They inherited *Wattiparinga* on their father's death in 1945 and subdivided it. *Wattiparinga* house is still owned by the Ragless family, the only one of the homes to remain so, although its extensive vineyards and orchards have been reduced to a small area (see figure 3.24 and 3.25).

### Christopher Ragless and *Ballantrae*

Christopher Henry Ragless was the second surviving son of Richard Ragless. He inherited Section 36th of 80 acres and Section 64 from his father's estate. He called his property *Ballantrae*. He and his wife built their bluestone villa from local materials on Section 36th. This Section later became part of Shepherds Hill Recreation Reserve. Section 64 was intersected by South Road. Just before the Great Depression, Christopher decided to subdivide the eastern part of this Section, bounded by South Road, Shepherds Hill Road and Sturt Road into 165 allotments. This subdivision was known as Burbank.<sup>55</sup> Sales were very slow; it took a decade to sell half of the blocks. Mr William Watson, an estate agent, bought the remaining blocks in 1937.

Christopher attempted to grow fruit and almonds, but was thwarted by the possums and birds. On the flatter land west of South Road, he grew crops and had a vineyard. Christopher was a foundation member of the Fruitgrowers and Market Gardeners' Association, and became its president in 1924.

Following the family tradition of innovation, Christopher and his son, Max, purchased a Cletrac Tractor in 1922 – thought to be one of the first caterpillar tractors used south of Adelaide.<sup>56</sup>

Christopher decided in the late 1920s to establish a Southdown sheep stud. These sheep were noted for their disease resistance, early maturity and hardiness. Christopher bred the sheep for export, and successfully entered his sheep in the Royal Adelaide Show. Unfortunately, as suburbia gradually encroached on his property, unrestrained dogs killed many sheep and wounded others.

Christopher lived on *Ballantrae* until he died in 1950; his wife died 3 years later. The government bought 78 acres of their property for present-day Shepherds Hill Recreation Reserve and the SA Women's Memorial Playing Field. The Ragless home was demolished in 1967 and was replaced by a block of 80 cream brick flats.<sup>57</sup>

Christopher's son, Max, built his home *Abercrombie* on part of the property immediately south of the *Tonsley* homestead. Max and his family remained on the property until 1958 when the land was compulsorily acquired for widening South Road. Monroe now occupies the site of *Ballantrae*.<sup>58</sup>

### Dick Ragless and Tonsley

Albert Richard (Dick) Ragless, the third surviving son of Richard Ragless, inherited the 'homestead block', *Tonsley*. He was unmarried and lived there for the rest of his life with his unmarried sisters Alice, Florence and Jean. Electricity was never connected to the house, nor was there a telephone. David Ragless recalled his great uncle and aunts as 'formidable people because they were very stiff and very upright...children were to be seen and not heard.'<sup>59</sup>

*Tonsley* house was surrounded by a large garden with picket fence, and shaded by Moreton Bay fig trees. The sisters grew many flowers in the garden beds and pots: blue daisies, yellow violas, scented verbena, stocks, geraniums, red tulips and dahlias.<sup>60</sup> In the 1930s, the garden was redeveloped in an Italianate style.<sup>61</sup>

In 1929, the four siblings decided to go on an overseas trip. They funded the travel by selling 106 acres of the *Tonsley* property (part of Sections 2100 and 35th). The estate agent, Mr William Watson, subdivided the area into South Road Estate, comprising the southern part of present-day St Marys. A small area through which *Wattiparinga* Creek ran was set aside as Ragless Reserve.



Figure 3.23 Southdown sheep at *Ballantrae*. Source: *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p174

56. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p172-173.

57. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p173.

58. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p175.

59. Interview with David Ragless, 10 July 2012.

60. Interview with David Ragless 10 July 2012.

61. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p177.

62. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p182.





Figure 3.24 Red rectangle shows all that remains of the Ragless family property that once covered almost 500 acres. Refer to original map (Figure 3.5 on page 12). The house is *Wattiparinga*, built in 1902 by Charles Cobb Ragless. Photo courtesy of NearMap.



Figure 3.25 Red rectangle shows close up of all that remains of the Ragless family property. Photo courtesy of NearMap.





Approx site boundary today →

South Road →

Driveway to Wattiparinga (future Selgar Avenue) ↓

Wattiparinga Creek ↗

Tonsley homestead and outbuildings ↗

Entry ↑

Ayliffes Road ↓

South Road ↓

Ballantrae

Shepherd's Hill Road →

Sturt Road ↓





Figure 3.26 There is evidence of the early agricultural machinery and some of the original, heritage-listed vines on the remaining Ragless property in Selgar Avenue, Clovelly Park. Photo Quentin Gore, 2012.



Figure 3.27 The original olive hedge remains around *Wattiparinga* home built in 1902 in Selgar Avenue. Photo Quentin Gore, 2012. Inset: *Wattiparinga* homestead. Photo: Tim Standing, 2012.

Figure 3.28 (Left ) Aerial view of Tonsley and district in 1949. Source: DMITRE/MMAL



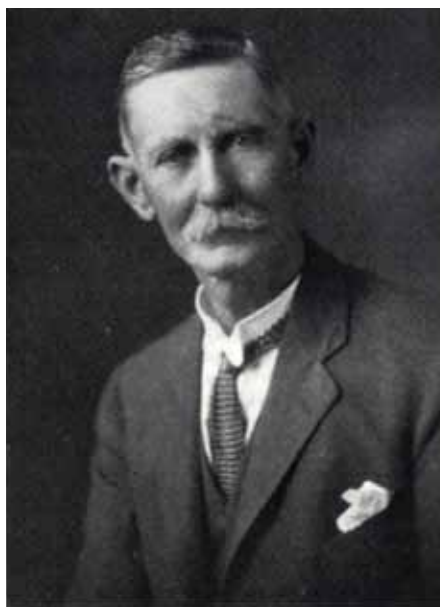


Figure 3.29 Dick Ragless. Source: Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p180.

Because of the Great Depression and then World War Two, most of the housing blocks were not built on until the 1950s.<sup>62</sup> In 1956, many of the allotments were bought by the South Australian Housing Trust. The timber-framed houses, clad with asbestos, became occupied by workers at the new Chrysler factory that came to occupy the original homestead block of *Tonsley*.

In the twentieth century, wheat and pea-growing gradually became less profitable, and Dick concentrated more on vines and almond trees, although peas and crops were still grown.<sup>63,64</sup> Until the mid-1920s, 50-100 sheep were kept at *Tonsley*; however he gradually changed to agisting horses and cattle, since they were less susceptible to attack by dogs. In 1939, the *Tonsley* home was still being described as standing among vineyards and almond orchards.<sup>65</sup> The siblings continued to work the property over the years, picking almonds, olives, oranges and grapes, pruning the vines, drying fruit such as apricots, digging potatoes, cutting chaff, stooking hay and ploughing and hoeing.

Aerial photos show just how extensive market gardening and vineyards were in the district (see figure 3.28). Even as late as 1949, the area was almost exclusively farms, market gardens and vineyards, with no urban development.

Dick died in 1946, and bequeathed the *Tonsley* property, valued at 10,000 pounds to the 'National Art Gallery' (of South Australia).<sup>66</sup> At the time, it was the fourth largest bequest they had ever received. The bequest must have allowed for the transfer of property to take place only after Dick's siblings had died, since his sisters Alice and Florence continued to live at the property until 1952 when they moved to a private hospital, and Dick's younger brother Alfred walked daily from Edwardstown to work on the property until his death in 1954. That year, the Art Gallery of South Australia sold the property to the Housing Trust of South Australia which gave an assurance that every effort would be made to preserve the existing trees and to preserve the name *Tonsley*.<sup>67</sup> By 1955, the property had been sold to Chrysler, apparently at the behest of the Playford State Government.<sup>68</sup> The Ragless family had owned this part of the property for 86 years.

At the time the property changed hands, *Tonsley* was still in a rural setting. *'There weren't many houses, and there were lots of open fields with field crops in them and there were lots of vineyards, there were lots of almond orchards. The roadways were much less developed than they are now. The South Road was only a two-lane highway; it had lots of trees and bush along the side of it. The creek that runs through the little Ragless Reserve up here on South Road was very much a creek: it meandered, it wound around; there were lots of trees; it was a rather wild place.'*<sup>69</sup>

63. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p179.

64. Ragless, M. (1988) *Dust Storms in China Teacups*. p181.

65. *The Advertiser (Adelaide)*, Friday 6 Nov 1953; p22.

66. *The Advertiser (Adelaide)*, Friday 8 September 1939, p30.

67. *The Advertiser (Adelaide)*, Wednesday 14 January, 1953, p4.

68. Art Gallery of South Australia, minutes of the Board, 1954.

69. Interview with Sir Thomas Playford (February, 1972). Interviewed by Mel Pratt. ORAL TRC 121/29. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.oh-vn765314>.

70. Interview with David Ragless, 10 July 2012.



Figure 3.30 Large Moreton Bay fig tree outside Wattiparinga in Selgar Avenue. The shed on the left was the garage. Photo Quentin Gore, 2012.



### 3.3 Chrysler (1955-1980)

#### Early Chrysler history in South Australia

The history of Chrysler in South Australia predates its operations at Tonsley.

T.J. Richards and Sons Ltd was a pioneer South Australian car manufacturer. The family business had started in the 1880s as a carriage-maker at Unley,<sup>70</sup> but by the 1920s it had plants at Keswick, Mile End and Finsbury. In 1928 the company started producing Chrysler cars using imported chassis. In 1941 they were renamed Richards Industries, and contributed to the war effort by making aircraft components.<sup>71</sup>

The eighteen Australian distributors of Chrysler Corporation (US) cars decided to form a company in 1935. This company was the Chrysler, Dodge, DeSoto Distributors (Australia) Pty Ltd, and it bought out Richards Industries in 1947. Four years later, the US-based Chrysler Corporation bought a controlling interest in Chrysler, Dodge, DeSoto Distributors (Australia) Pty Ltd and renamed the company Chrysler Australia Limited (CAL). This marked the beginning of a major expansion program for Chrysler in South Australia. At this time, CAL had a tooling and stamping factory at Keswick (now Le Cornu's Furniture), assembly facilities at Mile End and an aircraft production factory at Finsbury, all inherited ultimately from Richards Industries.

#### Establishing car manufacturing at Tonsley

After the World War Two, Thomas Playford's State Government was encouraging the development of industry. Thomas (later Sir Thomas) Playford recalled selling Tonsley to Chrysler in 1955.<sup>72</sup> Unfortunately, Dick Ragless' requests in his will that the property remain in the hands of the Art Gallery for at least 50 years and that no trees be pulled down, were not fulfilled. The name *Tonsley* has however been retained, as he requested.

Chrysler purchased 73 hectares (180 acres) of land at Tonsley, representing approximately 40% of the *Tonsley* property at its most extensive. Chrysler's aim was to combine all its operation on this site.<sup>73</sup>

Chrysler commenced at the site in 1956, with a motor parts and accessories division (MOPAR) and the construction of an engine plant in 1957.<sup>74</sup>

71. Rich, D.C. (2001) T.J. Richards and Sons Ltd, In *The Wakefield Companion to South Australian History*, pp459-460.
72. Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. (2009) *Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia*, p18.
73. Interview with Sir Thomas Playford (February, 1972). Interviewed by Mel Pratt. ORAL TRC 121/29. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.oh-vn765314>.
74. Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. (2009) *Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia*, p23.
75. Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. (2009) *Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia*, p23.

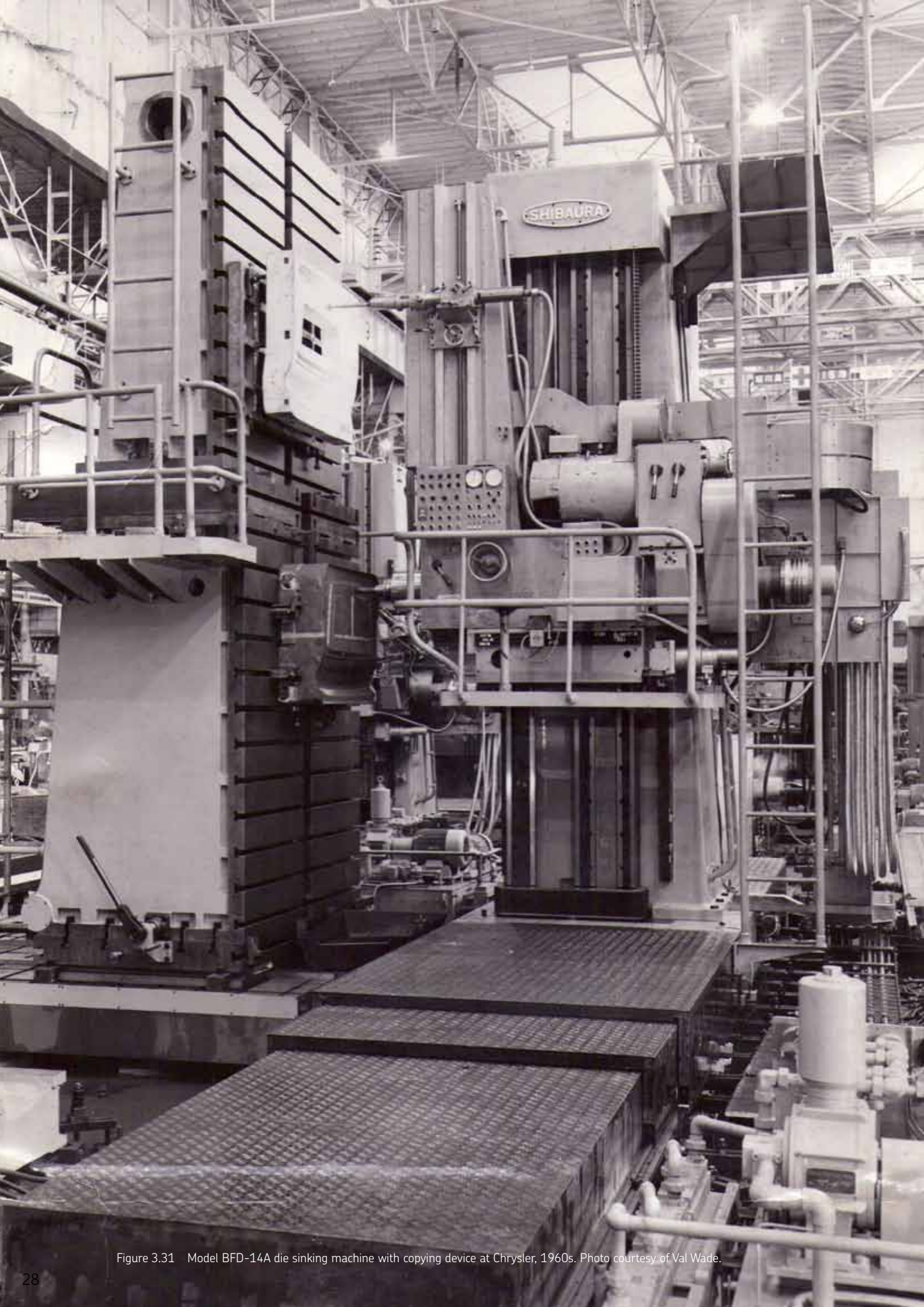


Figure 3.31 Model BFD-14A die sinking machine with copying device at Chrysler, 1960s. Photo courtesy of Val Wade.



When CAL started operations in South Australia, local content in the cars was negligible. By 1962, local content had increased to around 95%.<sup>75</sup>

From 1962, Valiant, Simca, Royal and Dodge bodies were assembled and painted at Mile End then placed sideways on a truck and taken to Tonsley where they were mechanically dressed and interiors installed. Sales of the Valiant were very successful and the company could not keep up with the supply using the inefficient system of two sites for manufacture.<sup>76</sup>

To streamline company operations, the Chief Executive Officer of CAL, David Brown, negotiated funding of \$36 000 from the head office of the US Chrysler Corporation to build a new assembly plant and CAL head office at Tonsley. Construction of the assembly plant began in April 1963 and in 1964 the first Valiant was completed at the new plant. The new plant was officially opened by Prime Minister Robert Menzies in October 1964. Two years later, a new engine foundry was opened at Lonsdale.<sup>77</sup>



Figure 3.35 The main assembly plant at Chrysler in April 1964. Source: DMITRE/MMAL.

Tonsley was the largest assembly plant in Australia operating under one roof. Sheet steel entered at one end of the factory, and the completed vehicle was driven out the other end.<sup>78</sup> Vehicles manufactured at Tonsley during the Chrysler era included:<sup>79</sup>

- Valiant (1962-1982)
- Galant (1972-1977)
- Sigma (1977-1987)

Each of these cars was manufactured with a range of options such as manual or automatic transmission, sedan versus station wagon, and luxury features (e.g. leather trim). In addition to cars, CAL produced trucks such as the Dodge.<sup>80</sup>

By 1969, CAL was the second largest exporter of cars in Australia, behind Holden.<sup>81</sup>

In 1970, Chrysler developed a new engine – the Hemi-6 (see figure 4.2 on page 40) – that was used in the Valiant, and was unique to Australia. It had 20% greater fuel economy, and was the most powerful six-cylinder engine produced in Australia, performing more like an eight-cylinder engine.<sup>82</sup>



Figure 3.32 Entrance to Chrysler's new Tonsley site in 1956. Source: DMITRE/MMAL



Figure 3.33 The new spare plants plant at Tonsley, 1957. Source: National Archives of Australia image number A1200, L23392



Figure 3.34 Unloading motor bodies at Tonsley in 1960. Source: National Archives of Australia image number A1200, L37057.

76. Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. (2009) *Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia*, p24.
77. Notes in Chrysler Car Club history, Archive D8282/4, State Library of South Australia.
78. Notes in Chrysler Car Club history, Archive D8282/4, State Library of South Australia.
79. Welcome to Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd: Tonsley Assembly and Stamping Plant.
80. Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. (2009) *Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia*.
81. Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. (2009) *Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia*. p21.
82. Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. (2009) *Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia*. p24.
83. *Valiant hemi-6 commercial featuring Sterling Moss* (1970) Chrysler Australia Limited.



Figure 3.36 Magazine advertisement for Chrysler Valiant VC, 1966. Image source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/aussiefordadverts/5337709599/in/set-72157625303328157/>

In 1971 Chrysler's parent company purchased a 15% share of the Mitsubishi Motors Corporation. This marked the beginning of a close working relationship between the companies, and some cars produced at Tonsley (such as the Galant and Sigma) were based on Japanese Mitsubishi-designed models. Some of these models continued to be manufactured when Mitsubishi took over the company completely in 1980. Chrysler's relationship with Mitsubishi was beneficial to the company, with the Chrysler Valiant Charger winning the Wheels magazine Car of the Year award in 1971. The Valiant Charger was a short-wheelbase, two-door hardtop version of the standard Valiant. The Valiant VE had also won the Wheels Car of the Year award in 1968.



Figure 3.37 Image source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/aussiefordadverts/5225582774/>

The mid-sized Sigma car, designed by Mitsubishi but manufactured at Tonsley from 1977, was very successful as consumers shifted to smaller cars during the oil crisis. The car had a four-cylinder Astron engine that was more economical than its predecessors. It was the largest selling four-cylinder car in its first year on the market.<sup>83</sup>

In 1979, CAL employed 7,500 people, probably the maximum. This number was soon to decrease.

### Fluctuations in company fortunes

Manufacturing industries are highly susceptible to changes in government policies, the relative values of local and overseas currencies, the fortunes of parent companies and in the case of car manufacturers, the price of fuel and changes in fashion. Chrysler's fortunes rose and fell over the years as a result of these factors.

### Government policy

The rise of Chrysler paralleled the growth of industrialisation in South Australia from post-World War Two to the 1960s, coinciding with Sir Thomas Playford's premiership. The number of manufacturing jobs increased for a further decade in South Australia until the mid-1970s, when major restructuring and job losses took place.<sup>84</sup>

84. Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. (2009) *Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia*, p25.

85. Rich, D.C. (2001) Industrialisation, In *The Wakefield Companion to South Australian History*. pp275-287.



After the World War Two, manufacturing industries were protected by tariffs on imported goods, and many materials were in short supply as a result of the war. The effective tariff on motor vehicles and parts was 50% in 1968-1969.<sup>85</sup> Liberalisation of trade in Australia started with a 25% tariff cut in July 1973. This opened up the local manufacturers to increasing competition from imported goods. Japanese imports rose from 7% of total sales in 1972 to 33% in the second half of 1974. Even when subject to a 45% tariff, Japanese imports remained very competitive.<sup>86</sup> The success of Japanese imports came at the expense of local manufacturers such as Chrysler.

### **Fuel prices**

In the 1970s, fuel prices rose and consumers changed their buying habits. The Tonsley plant started manufacturing the mid-sized Sigma car, which proved very successful. Sales of the larger Valiant however, declined.<sup>87</sup>

### **Parent company fortunes and changes in car models**

During the 1970s Chrysler's parent company, Chrysler Corporation (US) was particularly hard hit by the fuel crisis. In dealing with its problems in the US, the company lacked funds to invest in new models in Australia. Consequently, CAL had difficulty competing with the newer vehicles from Holden and Ford.<sup>88</sup>

The Valiant was becoming seen as out-dated.

### **Company acquisition**

In 1979, Mitsubishi Motors Corporation of Japan purchased a one-third share of Chrysler Australia Limited for \$27 million. The following year it purchased the remaining shares, and on 1 October 1980, it changed the company's name from Chrysler Australia Limited to Mitsubishi Motors Australia Limited.<sup>89</sup> Chrysler had been forced to sell the Australian subsidiary to avoid bankruptcy.

## **3.4 Mitsubishi (1980-2008)**

The first Mitsubishi-badged vehicles were produced at Tonsley in 1980, although Chrysler-badged vehicles continued to be produced until August 1981.<sup>90</sup> Vehicles manufactured there during the Mitsubishi era included:

- Sigma (1977-1987)
- Colt (1982-1989)
- Magna/Verada (1985-2005)
- 380 (2005-2008)

### **A change in culture**

When Mitsubishi took over the company, there were many changes in its operations. Operations Director, Graham Spurling, recalled that *"In addition to having a leaner workforce, Mitsubishi Motors spelled out that it was essential that the remaining workers totally embrace the Japanese company's philosophy, management processes and manufacturing techniques."*<sup>91</sup>

The workforce was cut back to 3,800 people.

Like other car manufacturing plants in Australia at the time, the Tonsley site had operated on American manufacturing philosophies. The Japanese philosophy was very different, and incorporated ideas that were unknown in Australia at the time: continuous improvement, Quality Circles, and Just-in-Time.<sup>92</sup> The Japanese were also more safety-conscious; safety had not been such a big issue in Chrysler days. With changing worker attitudes, major injuries such as crushed hands and broken limbs had become a thing of the past. The company had two health centres at Tonsley, with a full-time doctor, four full-time nurses, a physiotherapist, and an optician who visited regularly.<sup>93</sup>

86. Emmery, M. (1999) *Australian Manufacturing: A Brief History of Industry Policy and Trade Liberalisation*. Australian Parliamentary Library Research Paper 7.
87. Industry Assistance and Restructuring. 1976 Cabinet records – selected documents.
88. Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. (2009) *Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia*, p24.
89. Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. (2009) *Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia*, p24.
90. Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. (2009) *Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia*, p25.
91. Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. (2009) *Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia*, p25.
92. Quoted in Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. (2009) *Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia*, p30.
93. Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. (2009) *Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia*, p30.
94. Interview with Peter Besanko (2008) OH 853/9.

It seems to have been commonly believed that the Chrysler management was “very draconian”, and “fights were not uncommon”;<sup>94</sup> whereas Chrysler had a confrontational attitude to dealing with unions, Mitsubishi was more conciliatory.<sup>95</sup> Many workers who started at Chrysler thought that Mitsubishi was a better place to work, and that they were looked after better.<sup>96</sup> “Chrysler was totalitarian rule...The Americans are different than the Japanese, more autocratic.”<sup>97</sup>

In the Chrysler days workers did just the one job, whereas at Mitsubishi they became multi-skilled and there was greater variety. There was job rotation each day, and even each session.<sup>98</sup> For example the people in Cut and Sew ended up doing the sewing for a complete car, rather than just one part.<sup>99</sup> Bob Steven felt that some of the older workers did not like this new management style, whereas the younger workers liked the opportunity to move around to different jobs.<sup>100</sup>



Figure 3.38 Production of the 100,000th Sigma in June 1980. In 1988, Sigma was by far the biggest selling four-cylinder vehicle in Australia and ranked third only behind the Holden Commodore and Ford Falcon. Source: DMITRE/MMAL

### Mitsubishi vehicles and manufacturing facilities

In addition to cars, Mitsubishi produced trucks. In the 1980s, Mitsubishi assembled the 90 O-Bahn buses from component parts shipped from Daimler-Benz.<sup>101</sup>

In the early 1980s, the Japanese proposed introducing a new front-wheel drive model to be manufactured at Tonsley. The engineers at MMAL proposed a number of changes to the original Japanese model, including making it wider so that three adults could sit comfortably in the back seat.<sup>102</sup> Mitsubishi Chief Engineer Mike Stacy recalled:

*“The biggest problem was to convince them that we should widen the car to take three Australians in comfort across the rear seat. To provide adequate leg room. To have an adequate trunk size and a mechanical specification that suited our roads.”<sup>103</sup>*

Graham Spurling, the Managing Director of Mitsubishi at the time, had to convince his bosses in Japan that the plan should be pursued. Despite initial opposition and feelings that “Australia was being very arrogant, very Chrysler, very American, and that they should tow the party line”, the decision-makers in Japan ultimately approved the new model.<sup>104</sup> The new model was the Magna sedan.

In 1985 the first Magna TM sedan was produced and won the Wheels Car of the Year Award that year. In 1996 the updated Magna/Verada TE/KE won the Wheels Car of the Year Award, and in 1999 the NRMA/RACV Best Car Award for the Family

95. Interview with Peter Besanko (2008) OH 853/9.

96. Interview with Ray and Ron Jaekel (2008) OH 853/10.

97. Personal communication from Robert Case, 13 June 2012.

98. Peter Angrave, quoted in *Wheels*, 1 May 2008, pp76-84.

99. Interview with Ray and Ron Jaekel (2008) OH 853/10.

100. Interview with Sally Forrestal (2008) OH 853/1

101. Personal communication from Bob Stevens, 8 June 2012

102. *Three Diamonds* (1983) Volume 2, No 3, p1.

103. Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. (2009) *Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia*, pp32-33; 90-92.

104. Quoted in *Rising Sun Over Kingswood Country* (1997). Time Frame episode 13. Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

105. Quoted in *Rising Sun Over Kingswood Country* (1997). Time Frame episode 13. Australian Broadcasting Corporation.



Car category. The car was upgraded over the years to provide more power, better economy and improved safety. In 2002, Magna was manufactured as an all-wheel drive car, the first Australian-built all wheel drive family sedan.

Mitsubishi Australia's most successful year ever was 1997, with 41,000 sales of locally made models.

Over the years, Mitsubishi greatly upgraded facilities at Tonsley. Computer-aided design and manufacturing (CAD/CAM) technology was introduced in 1989 to the tool shop. In 1992, a further \$2.2 million was invested to increase high speed machining capacity, increasing the productivity and quality of tool manufacture. A headlight aim facility and a roller test facility to simulate road conditions were added to quality control in 1995. Thirty-eight robots were installed in the body weld shop.<sup>105</sup> In the Cut and Sew section, 60 computerised sewing machines were introduced at a cost of \$8 000 each.<sup>106</sup> Everything was originally done manually in the Paint Shop, but robotic spraying was introduced.<sup>107</sup>

In 2000 the company underwent major restructuring due to a declining domestic market and stagnating exports. Many people took voluntary separation packages, but there were no forced redundancies. The uncertainty for workers at this time caused considerable angst, particularly because there had been no indication as to whether a new model car would be produced.<sup>108</sup> However, many workers revelled in the extra responsibility that was given to them.<sup>109</sup> At this time many tasks were outsourced, such as Cut and Sew, and the trim panel.<sup>110</sup> The people who had worked in Cut and Sew had the option of shifting to a new area of production, or taking a package. Some moved to the Paint Shop or the Trim Line. Despite concerns from the men that the women from Cut and Sew would not adapt, the transition went smoothly.<sup>111</sup>

In 2002, MMAL spent more than \$600 million upgrading the factory in preparation for manufacturing the new 380 car which would replace the Magna. New presses were installed that produced a single main panel for each side of the car.<sup>112</sup> Executives at the parent Mitsubishi Motors Corporation approved the plan for Australia to go ahead with 380 in right-hand drive, and, from 2007, in right- and left-hand-drive versions of the long-wheelbase 380 model for export. However this decision was later reversed, and no long-wheelbase or left-hand drive cars were produced.

The new 380 car was launched in 2005. It was voted NRMA's most secure car, and awarded Australia's Best Cars: Best Large Car 2005. Nevertheless, sales of the car were far below expectation, and manufacturing could not be sustained.<sup>113</sup>

### Company achievements

Despite the demise of manufacturing in Australia, Mitsubishi recorded many achievements. It introduced the first 4-wheel drive sedan, was the first to put four airbags in standard family sedans, produced the first locally made V6 engine,<sup>114</sup> and was amongst the first to introduce robotic assembly.<sup>115</sup>



Figure 3.39 Assembling the chassis unit for the O-Bahn buses in the truck division at Mitsubishi Motors, 1983. Source: *Three Diamonds*, 1983, volume 2, number 3.

106. Notes in Chrysler Car Club history, Archive D8282/4, State Library of South Australia.
107. Interview with Sally Forrester (2008) OH 853/1.
108. Interview with Ray and Ron Jaekel (2008) OH 853/10.
109. Interview with Peter McWhirr (2008) OH 853/8.
110. Interview with James Sklifoff (2008) OH 853/6.
111. Interview with Ray and Ron Jaekel (2008) OH 853/10.
112. Interview with Sally Forrester (2008) OH 853/1.
113. Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. (2009) *Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia*, p99.
114. Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. (2009) *Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia*, p44.
115. Mitsubishi advertisement: <http://www.rtbnet.net/play.php?id=sP0jic05tRg>.
116. Personal communication from Vera Lukic, 27 June 2012.



 **Valiants**  
1962 - 1982



**Colt**  
1982 - 1989



**Sigma**  
1977 - 1987



**Magna**



Figure 3.40 Extract from presentation folder of Mitsubishi Adelaide Operations Tonsley 2000. Source: Rob Dale



## Education and training

Both Chrysler and Mitsubishi provided their workers with many opportunities for furthering their education and training. These opportunities were highly valued by the staff.

Both companies provided apprenticeship schemes although these gradually declined.<sup>116</sup> Peter Salerno started his five-year apprenticeship in 1968 as a fitter and turner and toolmaker. He described it as a fantastic time. His brother also did an apprenticeship at Chrysler, starting a year earlier. At the time there were several hundred apprentices in a range of fields: electricians, carpenters, mechanics, fitters and turners and toolmakers. Peter's apprenticeship involved spending a year in the training centre, then undertaking three month stints in different shops in the factory for three to four years. Peter was one of six apprentices chosen to go to Lonsdale to set up the new production line there.<sup>117</sup>

Mitsubishi was very serious about training. Ron Jaekel for example did a great deal of training after hours, all supported and funded by the company, including a university diploma course.<sup>118</sup> Peter McWhirr undertook the Vehicle Industry Certificate when he started at Mitsubishi in 1988<sup>119</sup> whilst Vera Lukic studied engineering.<sup>120</sup> There was a great deal of in-house training, and the opportunity for online courses and courses outside the company. The workers realised that participating in training was essential to progressing in the company.<sup>121,122</sup>

## Multicultural workforce

In both Chrysler and Mitsubishi days, the workforce was highly multicultural. Roy Jaekel remembered that company management used to meet immigrant boats at Port Adelaide to recruit workers.<sup>123</sup>

At its peak, workers in the Body Shop came from 52 different countries.<sup>124</sup> Sally Forrestal remembers there were eleven different nationalities in the Cut and Sew section.<sup>125</sup> In the Press Shop, the night shift was referred to as the 'Polish Shift' because of all the Polish workers, and the day shift was the 'Wog Shift' because of all the Italians.<sup>126</sup> Nevertheless, workers used only English to speak to each other,<sup>127</sup> and people respected the differences, with very few issues.<sup>128</sup>

The company assisted its multicultural workforce by providing English programs for migrants, and employed interpreters when needed. Important notices were written in several languages. Many of the supervisors had been promoted from the floor and were migrants themselves; their language skills helped to build positive relations.<sup>129</sup>

## Women in the workforce

When Roy Jaekel started working for Chrysler in 1954 at Mile End, there were no women at all on the production line. The first women joined the Cut and Sew section, and later, production.<sup>130</sup> In the mid-1970s, Chrysler introduced equal pay for women. This meant an increase in salary from \$45 to \$108 per week.<sup>131</sup>

By the 1980s, many women worked at Mitsubishi, but they were still more likely to be found in some parts of the company than others. Few women worked in the Press Shop,<sup>132,133</sup> whereas Cut and Sew had predominantly female workers<sup>134</sup> and the Paint Shop had roughly 50% female staff.<sup>135</sup>

Vera Lukic was proud to be the first female engineer at Mitsubishi when she started in 1989. She believes that Mitsubishi was well ahead of its time in providing a family friendly workplace. As a single mother, she didn't expect to be able to have a full-time job. However Mitsubishi allowed her to start work thirty minutes later than everyone else so she could drop her child at childcare.<sup>136</sup>

117. Interview with Ray and Ron Jaekel (2008) OH 853/10.
118. Personal communication from Peter Salerno, 1 June 2012.
119. Interview with Ray and Ron Jaekel (2008) OH 853/10.
120. Interview with Peter McWhirr (2008) OH 853/8.
121. Personal communication from Vera Lukic, 1 June 2012.
122. Interview with Ray and Ron Jaekel (2008) OH 853/10.
123. Personal communication from Vera Lukic, 1 June 2012.
124. Interview with Ray and Ron Jaekel (2008) OH 853/10.
125. Interview with Nick Marciano (2008) OH 853/7.
126. Interview with Sally Forrestal (2008) OH 853/1.
127. Interview with Andrew Coad (2008) OH 853/3.
128. Interview with Yi Zheng (2008) OH 853/4.
129. Interview with Nick Marciano (2008) OH 853/7.
130. Interview with Nick Marciano (2008) OH 853/7.
131. Interview with Ray and Ron Jaekel (2008) OH 853/10.
132. Interview with Sally Forrestal (2008) OH 853/1.
133. Interview with Andrew Coad (2008) OH 853/3.
134. Interview with James Sklifoff (2008) OH 853/6.
135. Interview with Sally Forrestal (2008) OH 853/1.
136. Interview with Carol Rollins (2008) OH 853/2.
137. Personal communication from Vera Lukic, 1 June 2012.



# THREE DIAMONDS

FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF MITSUBISHI MOTORS AUSTRALIA LTD.

JULY, 1984 Vol. 2, No. 11

Registered by Australia Post - Publication No. 307532

## Your Mitsubishi Quality holiday '84 Program choice



A holiday for two at Fiji, Singapore, Hong Kong, New Zealand or Bali, being '84 Quality Challenge.

The 'Challenge' program has been launched to not only maintain Mitsubishi quality, but importantly to improve MMAL's standard of excellence.

The Assembly Plant is divided into six groups: Body, Paint, Metal, Trim, Line, Chassis Line, Final Line including Cut and Sew.

Friday's following achievement of the target. During the competition, members of winning groups must be present at the draw.

### New Chairman visits MMAL

Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd.'s new Chairman, Mr. Yoshio Morita, last week visited our Company for discussions with senior management and inspection of our manufacturing operations.

Mr. Morita was accompanied by MMAL's new Deputy Chairman, Mr. Kenji Iwabuchi and also Messrs N. Tanaka, H. Hori and A. Takahara.

Take your choice for the holiday of a lifetime.

### Apprentice wins craftsman award

MMAL apprentices are continually in the news receiving recognition for their skills and hard work.

At the end of third year studies, the recipient being decided by the trade school.

Of the award, a board member said it was the good that he saw in every-day work.

By twice with a steel carrier loaded to overflowing with pattern and moulds he had made in pursuit of his hobby activities.

Mr. Steve Mann of Mann and Co. said it was particularly pleasing that work standards are increasing.

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Mr. Steve Mann of Mann and Co., Mr. Kenji Iwabuchi, Deputy Chairman, and Mr. Yoshio Morita, Chairman.



# THREE DIAMONDS

## 1995 TOKYO MOTOR SHOW

### 'Building Automobiles that Move People'

Mitsubishi Motors Corporation displayed a total of 38 vehicles at the 31st Tokyo Motor Show held October 28 to November 8. The company had 23 vehicles in the Passenger Car and RV Pavilion (including 14 show models), and 15 vehicles in the Commercial Vehicle and RV Pavilion (including 11 show models).

The only full-line automobile manufacturer in Japan, producing all kinds of vehicles from mini-size cars to large-size trucks and buses, the exhibits demonstrated Mitsubishi's aggressive and progressive approach to vehicle development.



HSR-V (show model)



G413 (show model)

#### MAIN EXHIBITS

HSR-V (Harmonic Science Research Car) is a further evolution of the HSR-IV advanced concept car shown at the previous Tokyo Motor Show. Reducing performance and establishing new levels of car-higher performance and confidence is the basic principle of the HSR-V.

A new-lock wedge shape emphasizing appearance of power and confidence, allows the driver to switch instantly from coupé to an open target top. A high function cockpit with information displays presents the driver with real time data of current vehicle performance.

HSR-V features a number of revolutionary technologies introduced in the HSR series which realise significant improvements in aerodynamic performance including greater airflow around the body, more high-speed stability and less drag at higher speeds.



### FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Producing any magazine or newsletter involves many hours of research, writing, sourcing photography and assembling the finished product.

The Editor has a responsibility to deliver to the audience the publication stories which the readers will find useful and interesting.

Reader feedback is a constant measure of performance and customer received on the last issue of Three Diamonds were very encouraging.

Meanwhile best wishes for Christmas and the New Year and we will be back in February to report on 1996.

#### MAUS (Mini Active Urban Sandal)

MAUS (Mini Active Urban Sandal) is really for urban commuters and represents a further evolution of the MUM 500 mini car shown at the last Tokyo Motor Show. MAUS is small but with improved economy and can be converted to an electric vehicle.



MAUS (show model)

Figure 3.41 Three Diamonds newspapers were produced in-house for Mitsubishi employees. They were important in informing employees about company activities as well as social and sporting events.



## Fluctuations in Mitsubishi's fortunes

Car manufacturing in Australia was restructured in the 1980s and 1990s as a result of Senator John Button's Motor Industry Development Plan. The aim of the Plan was to make the Australian car industry more competitive without tariff protection, partly by rationalising the number of car manufacturers and models; introducing an import/export facilitation scheme and restructuring import duties. Other major changes to government policy over the next five years included floating the exchange rate and deregulating the banking sector.<sup>137,138</sup>

The Colt ceased production in 1990 as a direct result of the Button plan, in which car models were rationalised.

In the 2000s, Governments tried to prop up the ailing car manufacturing industry. In 2002, the Federal Government announced that it would provide \$35 million to Mitsubishi in 2004-2005 on condition that it set up a research and development facility, and employ an additional 900 people.<sup>139</sup>

### Fuel prices

In the 2000s, fuel prices rose and consumers changed their buying habits.

The Tonsley factory produced the Magna and 380 – both in the large car market.

The 380 for example had a V6 engine with 3.8 litre capacity. This car has been described as 'the right car at the wrong time'.<sup>140</sup>

### Changes in parent company fortunes and company ownership

Mitsubishi Motors Australia Limited was owned by Mitsubishi Motors Corporation (MMC) and Mitsubishi Group of Companies. In 2001, DaimlerChrysler bought a controlling 37 percent share of Mitsubishi Motors Corporation. DaimlerChrysler had itself only been formed in 1998 from a merger of Daimler Benz and Chrysler Corporation. That merger proved unsuccessful, with the company incurring billion-dollar losses. It sold its shares in MMC in 2005, having failed to assist the company deal with enormous debts.

The financial difficulties of the parent companies had a major impact on MMAL. In 2004, the parent company announced a 'global revitalisation plan for future growth'.<sup>141</sup> In effect, this meant that MMAL closed its engine plant at Lonsdale and reduced its workforce at Tonsley. Over 1 000 employees left MMAL at that time. Plans to manufacture a long-wheelbase version of the 380 at Tonsley, and to export the car to the US and the Middle East, were shelved by the US and Japanese divisions of the company.<sup>142</sup> Tonsley was left producing a single model for the domestic market, a highly vulnerable position.

The Commonwealth and South Australian Governments launched an investment fund to stimulate local investment and jobs creation in the area.<sup>143</sup>

### The end of the line

After many years of financial difficulty, MMAL finally ceased manufacturing cars in Australia in March 2008. Nine-hundred and thirty workers lost their jobs.

Many of the workers felt that the company had treated them well, and that the severance packages were the best possible.<sup>144</sup>

138. Emmerly, M. (1999) *Australian Manufacturing: A Brief History of Industry Policy and Trade Liberalisation*. Australian Parliamentary Library Research Paper 7.
139. Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. (2009) *Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia*, p33.
140. Federal Government Props up Mitsubishi. <http://australianpolitics.com/news/2002/04/02-04-26a.shtml>.
141. Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. (2009) *Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia*, pp99-100.
142. Mitsubishi Motors Australia website: <http://www.mitsubishi-motors.com.au/about-mitsubishi/company/profile/our-history/timeline>
143. Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. (2009) *Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia*, pp43, 100.
144. Tonsley website: [http://tonsleypark.southaustralia.biz/interactive\\_timeline/](http://tonsleypark.southaustralia.biz/interactive_timeline/)
145. Interview with Andrew Coad (2008) OH 853/3.

## The Mitsubishi family

Many of the employees at Mitsubishi felt that the factory was like a family. They were very sad when it broke up.<sup>145</sup> Many made close friends with fellow workers,<sup>146</sup> met their spouses at the company, or had several family members working there.<sup>147,148</sup>

The company generally had good relations with the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union (AMWU). The company always sought to ensure that employees were never without pay, and maintained wages even in hard times.<sup>149</sup>

In spite of the sense of family, workers tended to identify with their work units and to continue to socialise within work units, even at company-wide events. For example at dinners, workers would sit at tables according to their unit, or would socialise within their work units at company picnics.<sup>150</sup>

There had been many different social and sporting clubs at the factory, and numerous informal activities that enhanced the sense of community.<sup>151</sup> These are described in section 4.1 (Theme 7).

Staff members were able to buy new cars and ex-lease cars at a discount.<sup>152</sup>

## Enduring memories

*"[Mitsubishi] was very important to the State, and a very important part of our family life in every way."*<sup>153</sup>

*"We had a lot of fun, but we got the job done"*<sup>154</sup>

*"We were like a huge family"*<sup>155</sup>

*"The company got the best out of people"*<sup>156</sup>

*"Being part of the Mitsubishi family helped me achieve everything I have."*<sup>157</sup>

## 3.5 The new development

The new development at Tonsley aims to create a vibrant and integrated mixed-use employment precinct.<sup>158</sup> It will combine social and economic opportunities with education, renewable energy and high quality community facilities; the site will become a hub for innovative companies working in environmental industries, sustainable technologies and high value manufacturing. The Sustainable Industries Education Centre (SIEC) at Tonsley will become a training hub for building and construction, bringing together all the trades associated with these industries on a single site.<sup>159</sup>

The new development will recognise and respect cultural and heritage attributes when planning and delivering places for people.<sup>160</sup>

The five proposals for the Tonsley Redevelopment that most excited respondents at Community Open Days were:

1. The open spaces and cycling and walking trails
2. Re-use of the former assembly plant
3. Educational opportunities from a new TAFE college (SIEC)
4. Employment opportunities resulting from the diversity of uses proposed for the site
5. Improved public transport and additional parking<sup>161</sup>

The new development provides an opportunity to respect the cultural and industrial heritage of the site, and to use this in creating the Tonsley brand. The proposed new uses are an excellent fit with the historical themes that best characterise the history of Tonsley. These themes are described in the Section 4.

146. See for example interviews in OH 853 at the State Library of SA; Voices of Tonsley videos; Making Cars at Tonsley videos

147. Interview with Andrew Coad (2008) OH 853/3.

148. Personal communication from Penny Bryant, 8 June 2012.

149. Interview with James Sklifoff (2008) OH 853/6.

150. Interview with James Sklifoff (2008) OH 853/6.

151. Interview with James Sklifoff (2008) OH 853/6.

152. Interview with Andrew Coad (2008) OH 853/3.

153. Interview with Ray and Ron Jaekel (2008) OH 853/10.

154. Penny Bryant, interview Friday 8 June 2012.

155. Ray Jaekel quote, in Interview with Ray and Ron Jaekel (2008) OH 853/10.

156. Personal communication from Shane, 16 June 2012.

157. Personal communication from Shane, 16 June 2012.

158. Personal communication from Vera Lukic, 27 June 2012.

159. *Tonsley Master Plan*. 2012. Woods Bagot. p23.

160. Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology website. <http://www.dfeest.sa.gov.au/sustainable-industries-education-centre/about-the-centre>.

161. *Tonsley Master Plan*. 2012. Woods Bagot. p62.

162. Tonsley Redevelopment Community Feedback Summary (Kath Moore and Associates, 2011)



# 4. Cultural Heritage Values

## 4.1 Intangible Heritage Values: Historical Themes

Tonsley's rich heritage can be told in eight historical themes. Each theme is described in this section, with some illustrative examples from interviews, newspapers, archives and other records. Section 5 describes ways in which these themes could be interpreted in the Tonsley development.

### **Theme 1: The Tonsley site represents the early settlement history of the Marion and Mitcham districts with mixed farming, market gardening and vineyards.**

The neighbouring council areas of Marion and Mitcham were characterised by extensive farms, market gardens and vineyards until the mid-twentieth century. *Tonsley* farm, operating on the site until 1954, exemplifies this history. Specific examples of this include:

- The early history of the Ragless farm was predominantly crops, with smaller areas devoted to orchards. Animals were also kept: sheep, cattle, horses, poultry and pigs.
- By the turn of the twentieth century, the land use shifted more towards market gardening and vineyards. The Ragless family grew a large variety of fruit, and developed their own variety of almond. They continued to produce some crops however, such as peas.
- The Ragless family were not just primary producers. They also produced wine from their grapes, dried their own fruit, and ran a chaff mill and a chaff and grain store in Adelaide.
- *'We had almonds, but vines were the major crop. We had a few olive trees, but mainly just for household use. And it ran around the cycle of harvest, pruning, topping, weeding and back to harvest again.'* [interview with David Ragless, 10 July 2012]
- *'There was a lot of open country, of course, in those days. Much of it was grazed and cropped alternatively. In my day, there were very few cereal crops grown; they were mostly field peas or garden peas were grown, ... if they were field peas they were machine-harvested or garden peas hand-harvested, and some of my earliest money came from hand-picking garden peas.'* [interview with David Ragless, 10 July 2012]
- *'[Grapes] were all harvested by hand, into kerosene buckets, and then tipped into either kerosene cases, but usually tipped straight into a steel-lined tray on the back of the truck...Dad usually took grapes to McLaren Vale or to Morphett Vale in the trusty Chev one-ton truck, which I know he often put more than two tons on, and he said if it was more than two tons he had trouble up Tapleys Hill steering it, because the wheels would come off the ground at the front.'* [interview with David Ragless, 10 July 2012]
- *'There was still plenty of grapevines [when I first started at Tonsley in the 1960s] – grapevines and almond trees – we would go out to the southern end of the plant and we used to get grapes when they were available or we'd pick the almonds, and the same at the northern end of the plant.'* [interview with Brian Windle, 9 July 2012]

The planned development can sustain and interpret this theme through the implementation of community gardens and urban orchards.



Figure 4.1 Almond blossom at *Wattiparinga* in 1952. The trees are White Brandis almonds planted in 1932.



Figure 4.2 The Hemi-6 engine, made from 1970 by Chrysler Australia at its engine foundry in Lonsdale. The photo shows the prototype, donated by Mitsubishi Australia and on display at the National Motor Museum, Birdwood, South Australia. Source: Wikimedia Commons [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a9/Chrysler\\_hemi\\_245.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a9/Chrysler_hemi_245.jpg)

## Theme 2: Tonsley is home to innovation and entrepreneurship

Since the nineteenth century, the people of Tonsley have been entrepreneurial and innovative in their practices. This is exemplified by the following:

- The Ragless family developed new implements to assist with their farm and market garden. These include an almond harvester and pea harvester. They were also amongst the first to use tractors and seed drilling. Their entrepreneurial spirit is shown by the chaff mill they established to supply the local and Victorian market with chaff – the fuel of its day. The Raglesses also developed their own variety of almond that withstood the strong hot winds in summer without dropping the nuts.
  - *‘Ken Ragless...designed and built his own machine which cracked the almonds, because prior to that they were all done by hand. I remember my grandfather sitting around in the winter months in his shed, hand-cracking almonds. But Ken used to do it both for the family and as a contract job for other people.’* [interview with David Ragless, 10 July 2012]
- Chrysler Australia Limited was innovative particularly in the development of the new Hemi-6 engine that was more fuel efficient. Their entrepreneurship is demonstrated by using Stirling Moss to promote the new engine.
- Mitsubishi Motors was innovative in its use of new technology, in particular the installation of robots and other automation. The company was also highly innovative in its work practices such as Quality Circles and continuous improvement. It was ahead of its time in providing a family-friendly work environment.

*In the Chrysler days, there was ‘the old gate line system of building a car, where gates went along a line and would manufacture the body shell of the car. This was done away with and a new...shuttle system was probably put in around about 1980s... So instead of the operator moving we brought the car to the operator and the operator finished the process. This was called a “straight line flow” system, and it was totally put in the body shop where the rear floor, front ends and body sides were all in a straight line process that fed into what we called the “main shuttle”, and hence the car was built in that process.’* [interview with Rob Dale, 9 July 2012]

*‘We had a new e-coat process put in the paint shop and manual spraying was done away with, with new belt systems put in...So there was a great lot of technology brought into the place and new systems and philosophies which were brought into the company.’* [interview with Rob Dale, 9 July 2012]

*A couple of years after introducing the shuttle system ‘we started developing the robot production processes with the first couple of robots went into the body shop, into the rear floor line...We would give names to these robots, and I can recall the two first robots on that rear floor line. There used to be one of the leading hands whose name was Albert, and he was a rather rotund man... So we named the robot “Fat Albert”. And then the other side of that robot we named after his wife, called Maria. So we had Fat Albert and Maria.’* [interview with Rob Dale, 9 July 2012]

*‘Then [Mitsubishi] came with the introduction of robots – and they didn’t come in and put robots in to displace people; they put the robots in in jobs that weren’t very popular, particularly in dirty jobs, hard jobs, difficult-to-get jobs, and especially with some of the big weld guns which weighed a few hundred pound – and this is on suspension – they would put a robot in to do the work of that operator.’* [interview with Brian Windle, 9 July 2012]

- The planned future uses of this site – sustainable light industry, innovative education, innovative urban planning – link seamlessly to this theme.



### **Theme 3: Sustainability has been important in Tonsley's history**

Sustainable practises have been important, particularly in the early history of Tonsley. The new development continues this theme.

- This land is home to the Kaurna people. They used the resources sustainably to provide for their needs.
- The Ragless family used a number of farming practises that are recognised today as being sustainable. For example they:
  - practised crop rotation, leaving fields fallow for a season,
  - planted shelter belts around paddocks,
  - planted peas for their nitrogen-fixing properties,
  - recycled old chaff as compost to enrich the soil,
  - recycled bonemeal to fertilise soil,
  - processed products on site (e.g. drying fruit, making wine, processing chaff) thereby reducing transport costs,
  - planted a diversity of crops rather than a monoculture: figs, apricots, peaches, plums, apples, oranges, loquats, lemons, passionfruit, vines, almonds, peas, rhubarb, potatoes, barley, wheat, oats and lucerne.
- Chrysler and Mitsubishi operated in an era in which sustainability was not a prominent concern. Nevertheless, the company did recycle scrap metal generated in the production line, and recycled paper.
- The Master Plan for the site's future places sustainability at the forefront again. Examples of this include:
  - the Sustainable Industries Education Centre
  - sustainable light industries on site
  - design features including transport options, cycling and walking paths, renewable energy use, water sensitive urban design
  - the revegetation project and retention of significant trees
  - restoring the creek to its natural state

### **Theme 4: Tonsley is a site for education, training, research and further learning.**

In each phase of its history, education has played a critical role. This will be continued in the new development.

- Tonsley and its surrounds were Law Country for the Kaurna people, where young adults were educated and initiated.
- The Ragless family operated as a family business over several generations. The children of each generation acquired hands-on skills from their parents, siblings and other relatives, as well as a more formal education at nearby schools.
- Chrysler and Mitsubishi both ran large, comprehensive apprenticeship schemes that were highly valued. Many apprentices rose to senior management positions within the companies.

*'It was a great learning institution. Chrysler apprentices were regarded as some of the best apprentices in Australia, along with General Motors Holden. We had the best training schools and development plans in the whole of Australia.'* [interview with Rob Dale, 9 July 2012]

Chrysler and Mitsubishi also provided opportunities for their employees to upgrade their skills and knowledge throughout their working lives by attending courses onsite and offsite. The companies provided an important skills base for South Australia as a whole.

*'I think they were quite forward-thinking. I really commend the managers of the day, because if, as an apprentice, you wanted to go on and do some extra studies they would either pay for the course for you – but what they did do, they actually gave you time off.'* [interview with Peter Salerno, 10 July 2012]

*'A lot of people had the opportunity to do training, whether it be postgraduate studies, going to TAFE and doing industrial business certificates and so forth, if you showed a bit of nous...and you applied for education, further education, and were granted, well, it was one of those cases where you could go off and do the training.'* [interview with Rob Dale, 9 July 2012]

- In future, the site will again provide educational opportunities with the Sustainable Industries Education Centre and Flinders University on site. It will again provide a skills base for South Australia.

*'Mitsubishi was a place of learning and work... So from that point it's really good to have that continuation here.'* [interview with Vera Lukic, 10 July 2012]

### **Theme 5: Tonsley is one big family**

Over its history, Tonsley has engendered strong feelings in those associated with it – feelings that the people on site were all one big family.

- In its early history, the Tonsley property was worked by people who were literally family. The large Ragless family worked together successfully on the property over several generations.
- Chrysler and Mitsubishi had very large workforces – as many as 7 500 in the heyday of car manufacturing. Despite this large number, the workers felt strongly that they were one big family. They felt part of a common enterprise in which their own endeavours were valued, and their ideas respected.

*'Chrysler's was really a real family thing. You would very easily find that there'd be parents, children and their children, you know – grandparents – and then all the cousins would be here, all the brothers, all the sisters, and there'd be a whole family of people working here'* [interview with Peter Salerno]

*'The whole place operated together. It was teamwork within the plant. Later on, under Mitsubishi, we seemed to get a lot of bad press as far as "the plant's going to shut down" ...I think that made this whole place here more close-knit and wanting to work together, and everybody, no matter what area it was in, where there's something had occurred bad in another area or there was labour shortage or there need to be more help, everybody was prepared to bog in and help in the whole operation, because our main aim was teamwork and to develop a good product to keep us afloat.'* [interview with Rob Dale, 9 July 2012]

*'Everybody in that building, you just about knew everybody, either by sight or by name, and that – it brought about a closeness of people. It's very, very rare you ever saw arguments in that building. I was fortunate enough in my latter years there, when I was in materials management, to visit all the other car manufacturers and suppliers, and the other car manufacturers, they're bigger than Mitsubishi, but their buildings are all segregated so the people in one building, the body area, didn't get to know the people in the assembly area, whereas here it was fantastic. Everybody knew everyone.'* [interview with Brian Windle, 9 July 2012]



*'Many of us were here for 30-odd years, and so it was just about home.'*  
[interview with Brian Windle, 9 July 2012]

*'I had three sons...and they all did their apprenticeships in other companies, and all of them eventually ended up here in reasonable positions for what their trades were. They were leading hands.'* [interview with Brian Windle, 9 July 2012]

- A strong sense of community can be fostered on site as part of the new development with careful planning of shared community spaces, and integrating the cultural heritage into the site to create a sense of continuity with the past.

## **Theme 6: People of Tonsley have made a significant impact on international and local communities**

In both the agricultural and manufacturing eras, the people of Tonsley have made a significant impact internationally and locally. Examples include:

- The Ragless family were involved in a wide range of community groups and organisations. Some examples are:
  - helped to establish the Fruitgrowers and Market Gardeners' Association, then took positions as office bearers
  - foundation member of the Almond Cooperative Society
  - member of the Wine Grape Growers Council of SA
  - active members of the Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Society
  - active members of St Marys Church
  - served on the council of the SA Division of the Wireless Institute of Australia
  - helped to establish Blackwood Radio Club, and continued as active members
  - Gordon Ragless worked during the war at a security radio listening post at Somerton Park to maintain a 24-hour service monitoring Morse-code signals, and was the first to report the landing of the Japanese in New Guinea<sup>1</sup>  
*'Gordon was one of the early radio operators and he was very skilled in Morse Code, and he had a job as a volunteer during the War manning a listening post and picking up signals and writing down what they were. And I think his big moment of glory was that he picked up a miniature sub in Backstairs Passage reporting to the mother ship, and he was always very frustrated that he couldn't get the authorities to jump up and down more than they did.'* [interview with David Ragless, 10 July 2012]
  - major contribution to ornithology in Australia. Gordon Ragless was member, Vice President and President of the South Australian Ornithology Association; member, Vice President and President of the Adelaide Ornithologists Club; Branch Secretary of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union. He amassed an egg collection of 4000-5000 clutches which was donated to the Australian National Wildlife Collection in Canberra. The collection contained eggs from over 90% of Australia's breeding birds and from many migratory birds. This collection has been vital for scientific studies, including for example studies on the effect of DDT on eggshell thinning.<sup>2</sup>
  - contributed to local council as councillor and chairman
  - provided facilities for workers' picnics and army practice during World War Two
  - Benjamin Babbage, part of whose property the Ragless family bought, made a major contribution to engineering, exploration and many scientific fields (see Section 3.2)

1. Obituary: Gordon Beaumont Ragless (2002) South Australian Ornithologist, August, pp31-32.

2. Obituary: Gordon Beaumont Ragless (2002) South Australian Ornithologist, August, pp31-32.

- Mitsubishi and Chrysler had a significant impact through:
  - exporting cars
  - providing a manufacturing skills base in SA
  - training large numbers of apprentices in a range of trades
  - sponsoring events such as the Mitsubishi Morphettville Race Day, the Mitsubishi Motors World Masters Golf Championship and the Australian Olympians 2008-2012

At a community level the company contributed in many ways:

- the employees' canteen society donated excess funds to charities such as the Royal Flying Doctor Service; donated a Pajero to the Salvation Army and supported the daughter of an employee with a serious illness<sup>3,4</sup>
- it employed disabled people
- looked after families when one family member had an overseas work trip
- raised money for parents of a disabled child to purchase equipment and vehicle
- provided facilities e.g. canteen for local clubs and dance classes

*'We had a lot of the Down Syndrome and slightly disadvantaged people ... they'd come in and work over in Parts & Accessories – they'd be bagging up little parts and things in plastic bags and stuff like that.'* [interview with Meredith Bryant, 10 July 2012]



Figure 4.3 Meredith Bryant performing with SA Police Band at Tonsley.

- There is potential for the new development to continue to make a significant impact through:
  - innovative, sustainable urban planning and site design
  - companies in the development that are internationally competitive and innovative
  - educating South Australians in a range of trades
  - contributing to the local community through sponsorship, mentoring of local people and providing facilities for local community groups
  - residents and employees of the site becoming involved in local community and sporting groups

3. Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. (2009) Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia, p54.  
 4. Interview with Andrew Coad (2008) OH 853/3.



## Theme 7: Tonsley has provided extensive social, cultural and sporting opportunities

Chrysler and Mitsubishi staff had an extensive range of social, cultural and sporting opportunities provided. These were very popular, although not all employees participated, depending on family commitments and how far they lived from work.

- Chrysler and Mitsubishi had at least two social clubs whose names changed over the years. At various times they were called the Valiant Club, Sigma Club and Magna Club. There was also a Sports Social Club.<sup>5,6</sup>
- There were regular cabarets. Performers included: Normie Rowe, the Platters, Johnny O'Keefe, Norman Wisdon, a Tom Jones impersonator, the South Australian Police Band, and the Kensington and Norwood City Band.<sup>7,8,9</sup> Often a car was raffled at these events.<sup>10</sup>

*'They wanted to put me in the concert because I had been with State Opera in the chorus for many years and so they said, "Well, we'll put a mystery singer in on cabaret night," and that occasion they had a police band and the police band was brilliant, and so I jumped at the chance... But I did enjoy it because I had such a beautiful accompaniment from the police band.'* [interview with Meredith Bryant, 10 July 2012]

*'Some of the cabaret nights were really good here. I think you'd pay \$10 for two tickets... in those days, that I can recall, and it was all you could drink. It wasn't a bad night, you know. And I can remember such artists as Kamahl appearing here; Gordon Boyd...; Anne Wills and her sister, they were regular acts here in the cabaret nights. And they were really well-attended nights; in fact, associated with those nights also, the cabarets, they also had the car draws here, and the car draw was where you'd put a dollar away a week for 25 weeks or something like that and every six months they'd have a car draw, and either you won the car or you could [get] X amount of dollars in lieu of the car. And I can recall one year a lady winning two cars in consecutive years, so she was a very, very lucky lady, she was.'* [interview with Rob Dale, 9 July 2012]

*'We used to have huge functions. I remember in the canteen here one night it was so chock-a-bloc full we had people standing out here in the foyer, sort of thing, trying to get in to listen to the concert. And there was – at the time, like, Johnny O'Keefe was a really big artist here; there was a guy called St John; there was Robbie Burns, there was a whole lot of other – the pop stars, King of Pops, Queen of Pops; we had the police band; we had orchestras; we had jazz bands; we had double bands, like two bands on stage, like non-stop music all night.'* [interview with Peter Salerno, 10 July 2012]

*'I was a member of the social club and I used to love going to the cabarets. We had top-line people coming from interstate and they were well-known, and we had a band. We had some wonderful bands. And it was just great fun.'* [interview with Meredith Bryant, 10 July 2012]

- Other events included:
  - Wine tasting days held at Hardys Reynella Winery (and in later years, McLaren Vale). A band played, and there was a barbecue.
  - Crabbing at picnic sites
  - Quiz nights
  - Film nights at drive-in cinemas at Christie's Beach, O'Halloran Hill and Morphettsville
  - Film nights at Glenelg Cinema, in which chicken and champagne were consumed in the break between two films
  - Christmas party for children organised by the company and by the staff club.<sup>11</sup>
  - Picnics



Figure 4.4 An exhibition of Latin American Dancing at a Sigma Club cabaret evening in 1984. Source: *Three Diamonds* (1984), Volume 2, Number 11, Page 8.

5. Personal communication from Robert Case, 13 June 2012.

6. Personal communication from John Speer, 13 June 2012.

7. Personal communication from Robert Case, 13 June 2012.

8. Personal communication from Meredith Bryant, 8 June 2012.

9. *Three Diamonds* newspapers, 1983-1984.

10. Personal communication from John Speer, 13 June 2012.

- Other clubs at Chrysler and Mitsubishi included:
  - Bonsai club
  - Camera club
  - Fishing club
  - Theatre club
- Sports played at Chrysler and Mitsubishi included:
  - Air pistol shooting (in the cafeteria)<sup>12</sup>
  - Archery
  - Boxing
  - Cricket
  - Football
  - Golf
  - Lawn Bowls
  - Martial arts style aerobics
  - Remote control planes (also in the cafeteria)<sup>13</sup>
  - Tennis

*'The main club... at Tonsley here was a sports club... They had a theatre club also. That had theatre nights down at the Glenelg Theatre...and they'd have a chicken-and-champagne night where they'd put on a couple of movies and at interval time it would be chicken-and-champagne supper. The cafeteria here was the meeting spot for the pistol club. Even bowls, lawn bowls. Out the back of the plant there, there are tennis courts with tennis players and so forth... When I first started here, as an apprentice, I played in the apprentice football team and actually ended up in hospital with a dislocated shoulder. We would play the final line or the trim line and so forth. It was a great Sunday game, the football here. One of the clubs, that is actually still going, is the Mitsubishi Golf Club, and now it's about 58 years of age, the golf club...So there's been a huge amount of sporting and social aspects in the club.'* [interview with Rob Dale, 9 July 2012]

11. Interview with Andrew Coad (2008) OH 853/3.
12. Personal communication from Shane, 16 June 2012.
13. Personal communication from Shane, 16 June 2012.



Figure 4.5 Mitsubishi had its own bowling club.  
Source: *Three Diamonds* (1983),  
Volume 2, Number 3, Page 6.



The future development has the potential to continue this theme through the provision of sport and recreation facilities and community spaces where local residents and workers can establish their own clubs, or join those existing in the neighbouring region.

### Theme 8: Tonsley has a rich multicultural heritage

The workforce at Chrysler and Mitsubishi was remarkable for the number of different nationalities represented – at least 52. More impressive is the fact that these groups worked together harmoniously (see Section 3.4 for more details).

*'A lot of these people who came here, a lot of them wanted to learn, people who had newly come to Australia and got a job here...A lot of these people from overseas had the qualifications...but weren't recognised in Australia... They had some great ideas; they were here to learn and be creative; so it was a two-way street, if you like. We both learned off of them as they learned off of us. So it was good that way. ...they had a lot of ideas that we could utilise, because they'd come from industry within their own countries and this information was brought out here to Australia.'* [interview with Rob Dale, 9 July 2012]

## Sports Club Annual Picnic

**The Mitsubishi Sports Club organised everything including the weather to make for a day of fun and enjoyment for everybody at the Annual Picnic late last month.**

It was held on the MMAL oval and the summer temperature was a comfortable 35°C. If you

were lucky enough to find shade from the trees to enjoy your lunch things were just fine.

Games and stalls were arranged for the amusement of children of all ages! Soft drinks, ice creams and lollies were in plentiful supply. A variety of races for all agegroups had everybody trying hard for prizes – and the egg throwing contest was great fun.

Children had a ball and parents relaxed knowing

the kids were enjoying themselves and wouldn't be back every five minutes or so asking for another 50c or \$1 to spend.

The only complaint heard was from the children – that the day finished too early!

To everybody who as usual worked so hard to make the day a success – thank you for a fantastic family day.

**Sandra Pawling  
– Service Division**

Figure 4.6 Report on the Sports Club Annual Picnic for 1984. Source: *Three Diamonds* (1984), Volume 2, Number 7, Page 5.

## Diary dates

JUNE 30 — Staff Social Club — Mid Year Cabaret.  
 JUNE 30 — Lonsdale Social Club — Skating St. Vincent's Recreation Centre.  
 JULY 7 — Sigma Club Cabaret.  
 JULY 7 — Lonsdale Social Club Cabaret.  
 JULY 8 — Mitsubishi Boat Club — Fishing Competition.  
 JULY 11 — Camera Club. Slides and Prints.  
 JULY 21 — Lonsdale Social Club Swim Night — Reynella Swim Centre. 7-9 p.m.  
 JULY 28 — Sports Club 50/50 Cabaret.  
 JULY 29 — Sports Club Film Night — Glenelg. "Educating Rita", "The Toy."  
 JULY 29 — Wylie Social Club — Downtown Visit.  
 AUGUST 25 — Sports Club "The Tony Pantano Show."  
 NOVEMBER 11 — Lonsdale Social Club — Pokie Trip, Mildura.

Figure 4.7 Diary dates for Mitsubishi staff in the second half of 1984. Source: *Three Diamonds* (1984), Volume 2, Number 10, Page 8.

*'It was just unbelievable, the multicultural society we had within the plant that was all working together. So it was great, because being a manager of several departments within Mitsubishi I got quite a lot of different cakes and so forth that would be supplied to me during the period of working.'* [interview with Rob Dale, 9 July 2012]

*'Mitsubishi was like United Nations. We had people from all over the world and we all worked together and we respected each other's culture and we learned about each other's culture.'* [interview with Vera Lukic, 10 July 2012]

*'I remember being here at production line, and when they stopped and all these people would sit down and have lunch together, somehow they communicated, and yet none of them spoke English really well, but just a few words – they really got on really well and they're still best of friends.'* [interview with Peter Salerno, 10 July 2012]

*'I think I can honestly say there was just about every nationality on the planet in that factory when I left. It was great, because in my time I only think I experienced one piece of racial disharmony. Everybody got on well. There was, as I say, every nationality you could think of here, and it was – everybody was accepted. There was no ostracised group, and you never really saw one group, like the Vietnamese, all in one group together or the English in one group together; everybody mixed in together, particularly mealtime, because we were all up here in the canteen.'* [Interview with Brian Windle, 9 July 2012]

*'We had our own little United Nations here at Mitsubishi.'* [interview with Meredith Bryant, 10 July 2012]

The new development should encourage a range of nationalities, and has an opportunity to pay tribute to the multicultural workforce that existed previously, perhaps through public art and shared spaces for games such as bocce.

## 4.2 Tangible artefacts

This study has sought to document the nature and location of tangible artefacts of Tonsley's history. Whilst we have been unable to locate any examples of equipment remaining in private collections, there are examples of photographs, films and memorabilia in public and private collections as listed below.

### 4.2.1 Onsite

Other than the buildings and significant trees that have been designated for retention as per the Master Plan, there are no other artefacts on site. All plant was sold to China as scrap metal, and discussions with former employees have so far failed to bring any other large items to light.

### 4.2.2 Private collections

Former employees and their families were asked whether they had any items of memorabilia relating to Chrysler Australia or Mitsubishi Motors Australia.

The State Library has agreed to be the custodians of any archival material that former employees wish to donate. The items will be catalogued and preserved and will be readily available for future projects and researchers. A copy of the deed of gift form for the State Library of South Australia is appended (Appendix number 7.3).

- Donated to State Library by former MMAL workers as part of this project:
  - Three Diamonds newspapers
  - 25 Year club dinner menus and programs
  - Welcome to Mitsubishi Motors Australia brochure
- Owned by former employees:
  - MB: Tape recording of a SA Police Band concert at the MMAL canteen, at which the employee sang. Photos of the concert.
  - RD: 25 Year club dinner menus and programs
  - BW: 25 Year club dinner menus and programs; press clippings, employee newspaper, photographs, industrial engineering items
- Owned by the Ragless family
  - JR: family photos of *Tonsley*, *Wattiparinga* and surrounding district.
  - DR: family photos of *Tonsley*, *Abercrombie* and *Ballantrae*; artworks by Max Ragless



### 4.2.3 Other collections

We have searched other collections for possible items from Chrysler Australia or Mitsubishi Motors Australia. Items that have been located are:

#### ***Cars and car memorabilia***

**National Motor Museum, Birdwood** has a collection of each of the cars manufactured at Tonsley, as well as the Hemi-6 prototype engine. A complete list of the collection is included in the Reference Catalogue.

**Institution of Engineering and Technology** – list of objects of industrial and engineering history to be provided.

#### ***Historic photographs and ephemera of Tonsley are held in the following collections:***

##### **State Library of South Australia**

Images of the history of Chrysler in Australia (Archive number D8282).

Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd (ephemera collection), SA Organisations File Collection.

##### **National Archives of Australia**

Industry – Motor Vehicles collection of photographs.

Immigration – Migrants in employment – Automotive collection of photographs.

Motor Industry collection of photographs.

##### **National Library of Australia**

Wolfgang Sievers photographic archive.

##### **Australian Broadcasting Corporation archive**

Television footage including the opening of Chrysler, the new 380 car, the new Magna, and the closure of factory.

##### **Mitcham Heritage Research Centre**

Photographs of *Tonsley*.

### 4.2.4 Published photographs or videos

#### ***Photographs of the Ragless family property have been published in:***

*South Australian Homes and Gardens* Jul 1953, pp 32-33.

*Dust Storms to China Teacups: Ragless family heritage to Australia* (1988)

Margaret E Ragless. Investigator Press, Hawthorndene. Includes photographs from private family collections.

#### ***Photographs of Chrysler and Mitsubishi have been published in:***

*Three Diamonds Down Under: the history of Mitsubishi Motors in Australia.* (2009)

Crawford, J. and Kennedy, E. Marque Publishing Company, Wyoming NSW.

Most of the original photographs used in these publications are either in private collections or in unknown locations.

There are also several videos relating to Chrysler and Mitsubishi held either in the State Library of South Australia, or available on the internet. These are listed in the Section 7.





Photography by Rob Geh



Photography by Rob Geh



## 5. Communication strategies and recommendations

### 5.1 Overview

The research work has clearly uncovered a variety of rich and engaging stories and themes associated with the place we know as Tonsley. This section of the report outlines the strategies and opportunities to communicate these stories and themes to a broad range of people that have an association with this place in the past, present and the future.

Certainly the vast majority of people that we interviewed and spoke with had a very positive and genuine interest in the site history and the future vision for the place.

#### 5.1.1 Audience for Interpretive Strategies

- the Kaurna people, through the Living Kaurna Cultural Centre
- Site neighbours and the local community
- Former employees of CAL
- Current and former employees of MMAL
- DMITRE and URA stakeholders
- Local, State and Federal Government stakeholders
- The Development team including urban designers, landscape designers, architects, branding and community consultants
- Local, national and international prospective tenants and investors including Flinders University and TAFE.
- Prospective home owners and community
- The broader community and general public

#### 5.1.2 Benefits of Interpretation

Our team believes that there are many short and long term benefits to be gained from the integration of the site history and key themes into both the physical environment and public realm as well as marketing communication strategies and collateral. Some of the key opportunities and ideas are fleshed out in the following pages. Importantly some of these communication concepts can be implemented fairly quickly; others are much longer term concepts.

#### 5.1.3 Placemaking

One of the biggest challenges of any redevelopment project is to create a strong and relevant sense of place. Certainly in this case we believe that acknowledging and integrating the rich history of the site into the urban design and public realm will help build a stronger sense of place.

Even prospective tenants and householders who have had no association with Tonsley will gain some benefits from understanding the cultural history and perhaps feel a stronger connection with the place.



### 5.1.4 Continuation of themes

Many of the key themes arising from the research continue on and into the future vision for the place. Concepts such as the inclusion of an urban orchard and community garden in the planned public spaces link directly with the agricultural and mixed farming history of the site. Themes often overlap as this concept also links well with the sustainability and education themes which is touched on in the masterplan documents.

*'I think it's gone from one learning institution; now it's becoming another learning institution. And to see it develop and just for the Marion district I think it's another lifeline into the area. To see this plant just be dismantled and thrown away would have been just a whole waste of effort. So I think it's gone to its next phase in its life and it's a great phase for the younger people that are coming on to have this building still here, and hopefully they'll understand the heritage of it and a lot of people that have worked here – thousands of people have worked here over the years – it's not all lost because now it's in their hands, and hopefully they'll carry on and be well-educated for the next phase of Marion and South Australia.'* [interview with Rob Dale, 9 July 2012]

### 5.1.5 Retention of the name 'Tonsley'

We strongly recommend retaining the name *Tonsley* for the site as a whole, as used originally by the Ragless family. The family desired that the name be retained for the property. Furthermore, the name is so strongly associated with the heritage of the site, that to discard the name would be to discard the site's heritage.

## 5.2 Interpretive Opportunities for Tonsley

### 5.2.1 Interpretive Themes

Whilst the site's agricultural and horticultural heritage may appear to have little in common with its more recent industrial heritage as a site of car manufacture, our research revealed that there are many themes that encompass both phases of history, and which fit seamlessly with the proposed new development. This study recognises that cultural values are dynamic, and that the redevelopment of the site is an important chapter in the next phase of social and cultural development of Tonsley.

These interpretive themes together with the timeline can be referenced and weaved through many of the following communication concepts. They can also be used to inform the urban design, public art and identity design.

**Theme 1:** The Tonsley site represents the early settlement history of the Marion and Mitcham districts with mixed farming, market gardening and vineyards.

**Theme 2:** Tonsley is home to innovation and entrepreneurship.

**Theme 3:** Sustainability has been important in Tonsley's history.

**Theme 4:** Tonsley is a site for education, training, research and further learning.

**Theme 5:** Tonsley is one big family.

**Theme 6:** People of Tonsley have made a significant impact on the international and local communities.

**Theme 7:** Tonsley has provided extensive social, cultural and sporting opportunities.

**Theme 8:** Tonsley has a rich multicultural heritage.

### 5.2.2 'Tonsley history', publication and DVD

Included in the scope for this project was the filming of interviews and recording of oral histories with former employees of CAL and MMAL and relatives of the Ragless Family as well as preliminary design and scripting for the production of a 'Tonsley Cultural History' audio visual that could be distributed online via website, YouTube and social media sites.

A DVD version could also be distributed to other stakeholders, local residents, former employees, design consultants and developers. It could also be used incorporated into interpretive displays onsite at any future visitor information centre and potentially at the new TAFE and Flinders University facilities. The audio-visual production could also be used for offsite displays at the local library, shopping centres, DMITRE and URA offices.

### 5.2.3 Time-line of the site

One key communication tool that we suggest should be developed is a Tonsley Cultural History time-line. A timeline is a very quick and effective way to communicate the history in a snap shot and to put key events in context. It could be implemented in the short term as an upgrade to the existing interactive timeline on the current website.

Longer term it could also be incorporated into interpretive displays at the onsite visitor centre and into a portable exhibition for use at offsite locations. Combined with relevant physical objects and memorabilia such as the actual cars produced during the manufacturing era or an old almond cracking machine, it has great potential to be a very engaging exhibition. The National Motor Museum has as part of their collection many of the cars that were manufactured at Tonsley. It may be possible to negotiate a loan agreement to relocate and display the vehicles onsite as a part of any future visitor information centre.

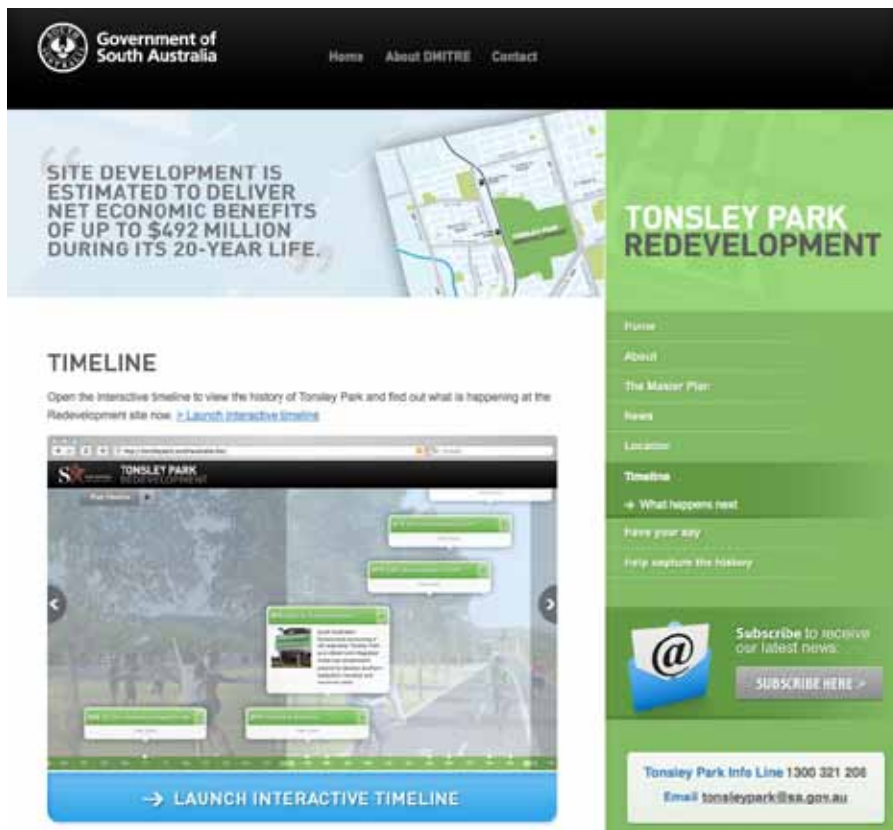
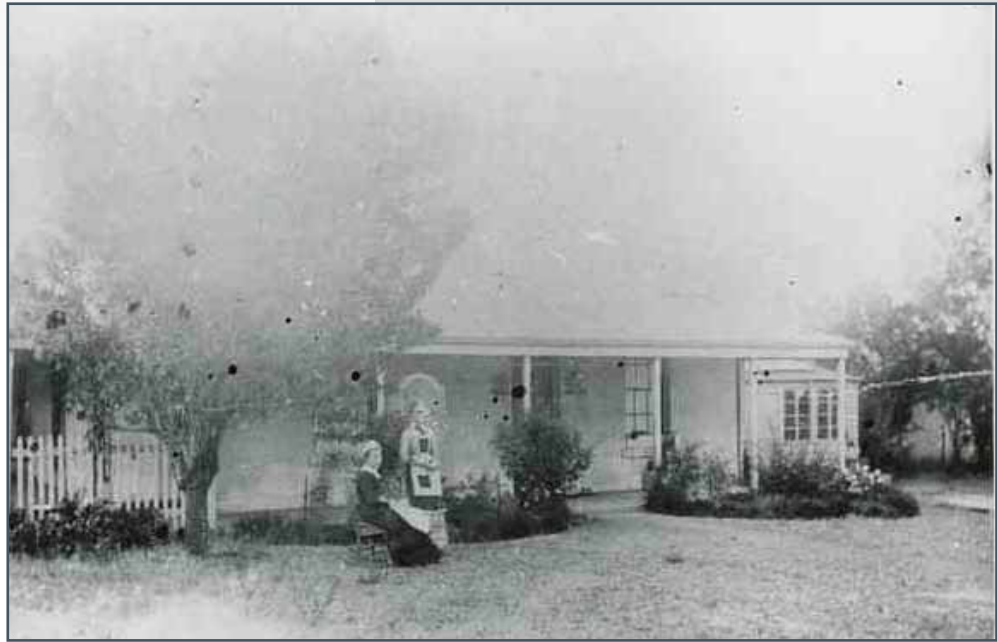
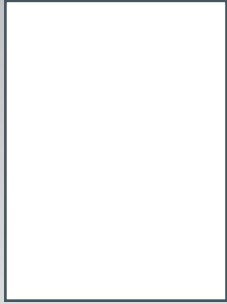
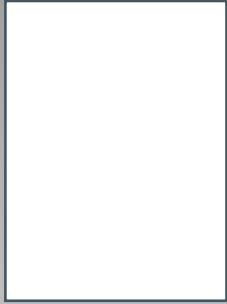


Figure 5.1 Existing interactive timeline from Tonsley website could be updated with the latest cultural history information.



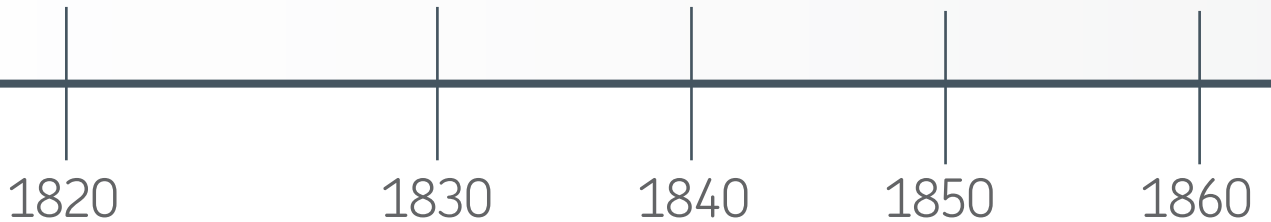
# INDIGENOUS HISTORY

## KAURNA PEOPLE



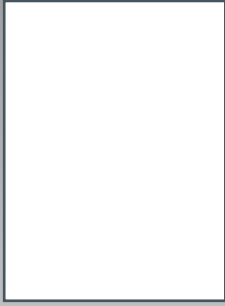
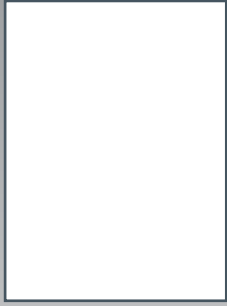
1836 —→ 1839 —→ 1855 —→ 1860

PROCLAMATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA    HENRY & HANNAH WATTS PURCHASE 80 ACRES    WATTS MOVE TO MACCLESFIELD    RICHARD WATTS PURCHASES PROPERTY





# AGRICULTURAL ERA



1868

RICHARD RAGLESS PURCHASES PROPERTY

1901

RICHARD RAGLESS DIES  
PROPERTY DIVIDED BETWEEN  
RICHARD'S FOUR SONS.

1870

1880

1890

1900

1910

1920



→ 1954 →  
LAST OF  
THE RAGLESS SONS  
DIES.

→ 1955 →  
CHRYSLER  
PURCHASES  
PROPERTY

→ 1980 →  
MITSUBISHI TAKE  
OWNERSHIP

1930

1940

1950

1960

1970

1980





1990

2000

2010

2020

2030

2040



# TONSLEY PARK

A rich cultural history



1968 V

*Harum out omnihitae. Et wert apicto di acerum con cupus, sum rat et ratemolum est as sundic tem coruntibus, quos consequas exces*

1839 Henry Watts purchase 80 acres  
1855 Henry and Hannah move to Macclesfield property leased

PERCIISMOL OVENDAM QUID QUATUS UNTTIBUS ET

1950s



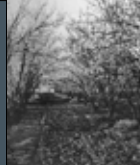


# TONSLEY PARK

A rich cultural history



Kaurna People  
WATTIPARINGA



1839 Henry Watts purchases 80 acres  
1855 Henry and Hannah move to Macclesfield property leased

1940s

Harum aut omnihitae. Et wert apicta di acorum con cuplus, sum rat et ratemolum est as sundic tem coruntibus, quos consequas exces



1800

1810

1820

1830

1840

1839 Henry Watts purchases 80 acres  
1855 Henry and Hannah move to Macclesfield property leased

PERCI SMOL  
OVENDAM  
QUID QUATUS  
UNTTIBUS ET

1950s







1960s



ONSLEY  
AMED  
TER  
ONSLEY  
ALL IN  
NGLAND

Multiple columns of small, illegible text, likely a list of names or a detailed historical account.



Multiple columns of small, illegible text.

*Harum aut omnihitae.  
Et wert apicto di acerum  
con cuplus, sum rat et  
ratemolum est os sundic  
tem coruntibus, quas  
consequas exces*

1950s -  
1970s

1980s -  
2000s

Multiple columns of small, illegible text.



ET ET OPTATUR? MA PEL MOST FUGITAE RESTRUM  
VERCH ILLAM FUGITEM UT LACERO DEBIS EATIUM  
QUAE AUT LAUT

## 5.2.4 Onsite visitor centre, interpretive displays and theatre

### *Tonsley Visitor Information Centre*

One key opportunity to communicate the cultural history is via an on-site information centre. This could include a two-staged strategy. Stage 1 would be to establish a temporary centre on-site utilising the existing canteen facility and entry road within the next 12 months, shielded from the rest of the development via hoardings.

This is a speculative concept only pending consultation with the masterplanning team and building program logistics.

As well as the cultural history displays this information centre would also communicate the future plans for the site and serve as a hub for visitors including the general public, investors and politicians.

In stage 2, the temporary visitor centre would move to a permanent visitor centre located adjacent to the planned town square, the active heart of the development that could include markets, cafés and food outlets.



Figure 5.2 The existing canteen could be fitted out in the shorter term as a temporary visitor information centre.



Figure 5.3 There is an opportunity to utilise the well established and well presented entry, infrastructure and promotional signage to draw visitors to the temporary information centre and activate the site.





Figure 5.4 The existing canteen area could be fitted out as a temporary visitor information centre and has the capacity to include vehicles on loan from the National Motor Museum.



- ← Existing main entry
- ← Existing billboard sign
- ← Existing carparking
- ← Existing canteen area as temporary visitor centre including cultural history displays
- ← Existing Mitsubishi office
- ← Former tennis courts and bowling green

Figure 5.5 Aerial photo courtesy of NearMap.





Figure 5.6 Portable display concept pending further development



Figure 5.7 Indicative interpretive signage concept

### 5.2.5 Portable travelling exhibition

Another effective communication tool that could be developed is a portable travelling exhibition. This could be designed and produced quite quickly and cost effectively as part of an early engagement strategy. It could be installed at local facilities such as the Marion Library, Marion and Pasadena shopping centres and Marion Council Chambers. It could also be displayed at the new onsite TAFE and Flinders University facilities in conjunction with any displays promoting the future vision for Tonsley. A portable exhibition could also travel to local schools and community organisations.

### 5.2.6 Onsite environmental graphics, imagery and signage

The massive superstructure from the former assembly plant has been retained as a key part and feature of the future development. It is in itself the single largest historical artifact on the site and provides a wonderful opportunity to link the history of the site to the future development through the integration of interpretive signage and historical imagery.

### 5.2.7 Self-guided walking tours and interpretive signage trail

Although there aren't many significant artifacts onsite other than the recycled building structures, and significant gum trees, there is still an interesting story to tell about the history and events that happened at various locations around the site. An interpretive trail is still feasible and relevant. It could be linked to the placement of environmental graphics, signage and the street and space names. The original home on Selgar Avenue, now a heritage listed property, and just a short walk from Tonsley, could be included in any history trail. Ragless Reserve just across South Road could also be incorporated, and lead to a walk through Shepherds Hill Recreation Reserve. This new trail could also be linked into any existing heritage trails in the area.

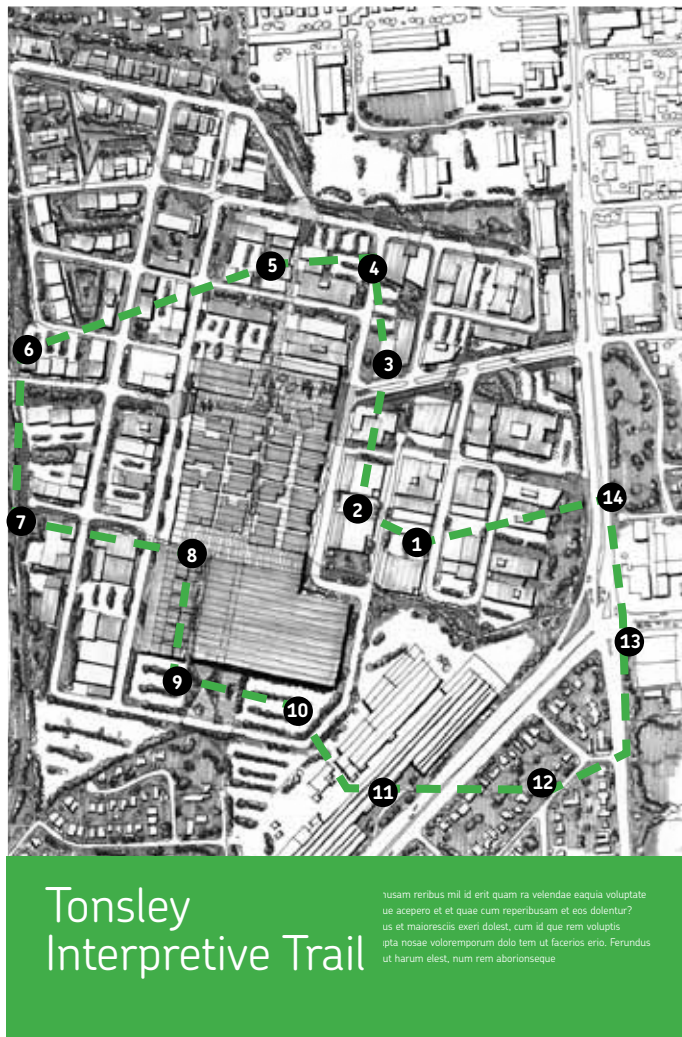
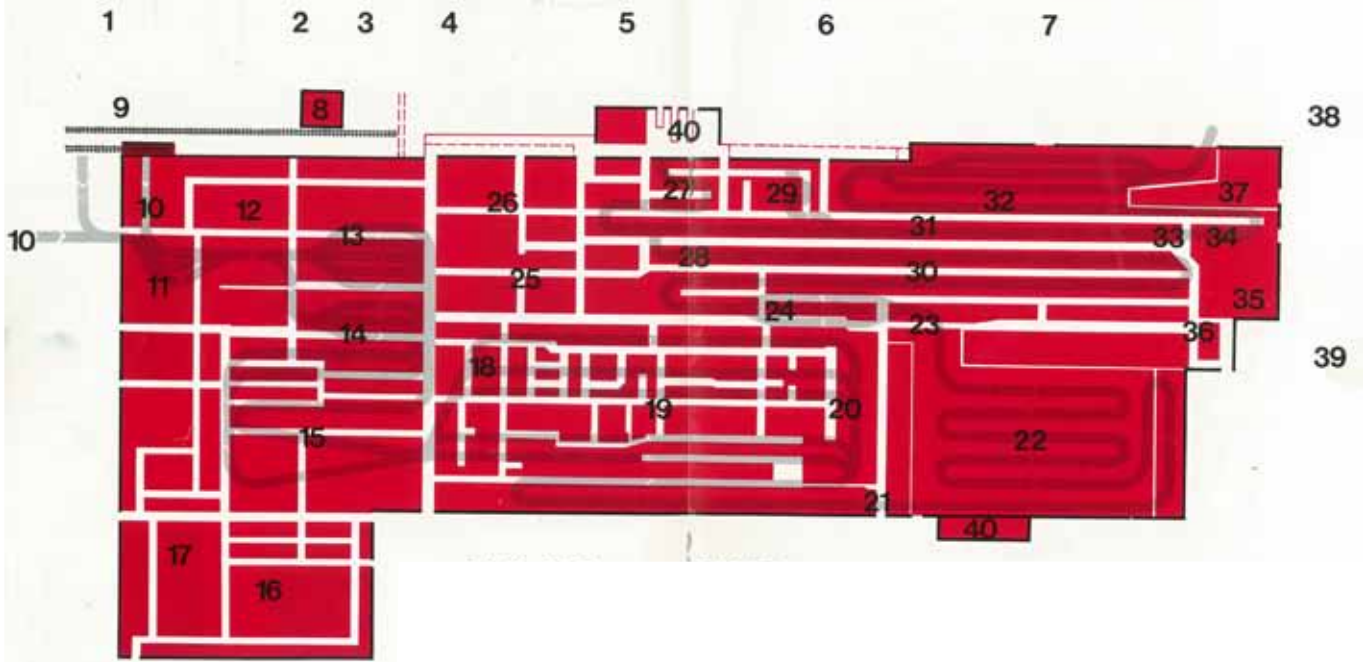


Figure 5.8 Indicative 'Tonsley Trail' map



## Assembly and Stamping Plant Tonsley Park



**TOTAL AREA**  
79.58 Hectares

**WORK AREAS:** 147,392<sup>M<sup>2</sup></sup>  
Stamping 6,125<sup>M<sup>2</sup></sup>  
Assembly Plant 105,434<sup>M<sup>2</sup></sup>  
Tool Room 24,528<sup>M<sup>2</sup></sup>

**LEGEND:**

- |                               |                                   |                         |                              |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Tool Manufacture           | 12. Die Maintenance               | 24. Underbody Spray     | 37. Squab & Cushion Assembly |
| 2. Pattern Shop               | 13. Heavy Press Shop              | 25. Maintenance         | 38. Vehicle Despatch         |
| 3. Apprentice Training Centre | 14. Light Press Shop              | 26. Panel Storage       | 39. Testing Facility         |
| 4. Cut and Sew                | 15. Hardware Assembly             | 27. Engine Dress Up     | 40. Receiving Stores         |
| 5. Plating Shop               | 16. Bulk P. & A. Storage          | 28. Trestles            |                              |
| 6. Boiler House               | 17. Unboxing                      | 29. Tyre Assembly       |                              |
| 7. Shipping                   | 18. Hemming Press                 | 30. Trim Line           |                              |
| 8. Baling House               | 19. Body Build                    | 31. Chassis Line        |                              |
| 9. Railway                    | 20. Gateline                      | 32. Final Line          |                              |
| 10. Bulk Steel Storage        | 21. Paint Shop Overhead Conveyor  | 33. Roller Test         |                              |
| 11. Blank Preparation         | 22. Paint Shop                    | 34. Water Test Booth    |                              |
|                               | 23. Overhead Vehicle Storage Area | 35. Mechanical          |                              |
|                               |                                   | 36. Quality Audit Booth |                              |

Figure 5.9 Tonsley Assembly and Stamping Plant layout



Figure 5.10 The urban orchard in Perth's Cultural Precinct.  
Courtesy of [www.perthculturalcentre.com.au/Gallery/Urban-Orchard](http://www.perthculturalcentre.com.au/Gallery/Urban-Orchard)



### 5.2.8 Website, smartphone app and social media strategy

In today's world, the use of online media is considered a fast and effective means of communicating with people. In fact it is rapidly becoming people's preferred means of communication. Upgrading the Tonsley website to include the cultural history information should be ranked as a high priority task. This same cultural history information could also be adapted to suit a smart phone and tablet app.

### 5.2.9 Naming of streets and public spaces, buildings and precincts

Another effective way to link the history of the site to the future development is to name the various spaces, streets and buildings with reference to the history i.e.:

Indigenous: plant species, bush food, waterway terms, Karna language

Car name theme: Sigma, Colt, Valiant, Verada, Galant, Magna, Charger

Significant people & family names: Ragless, Hicks, Watts, Babbage

Agricultural theme: Wattiparinga, Ballantrae, Fiddown, fruit and vegetables, almonds, Selgar, Brown Brandis, Chellaston, grape, apple, pear citrus varieties, Navel, Valencia, Washington Navel, sheep

Manufacturing plant locations: Boiler House, Pattern Shop, Bailing House, Heavy Press Shop, Chassis Line, Gateline, Engine Dressup

### 5.2.10 Urban orchard

One strong concept that could be developed as part of the urban design and public realm works is an urban orchard. This concept would reference and promote many of the key themes arising from the research particularly :

Theme 1: The Tonsley site represents the early settlement history of the Marion and Mitcham districts with mixed farming, market gardening and vineyards.

Theme 3: Sustainability has been important in Tonsley's history

Theme 4: Tonsley is a site for education, training, research and further learning

Theme 5: Tonsley is one big family

The various species of fruit and vegetables grown by the Ragless family could be established and interpretive signage could help explain the connection with the place and the history. Cuttings could be taken from the original vines still remaining on the Ragless property and propagated pending permission from the owners. Even some of the remnant farm machinery on the property could be restored and display in the community gardens again pending further investigation and negotiation with the current owners. Refer to section 3.2 The Agricultural Era .

The community garden concept was also mentioned in the masterplan documents but more with respect to the community and environmental initiatives which are equally valid. A good example of a working urban orchard project is the Perth Cultural Centre go to: [www.perthculturalcentre.com.au/Gallery/Urban-Orchard](http://www.perthculturalcentre.com.au/Gallery/Urban-Orchard).

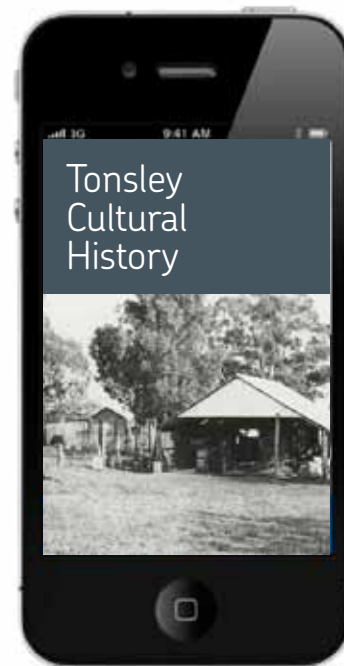




Figure 5.11 Courtesy of [www.brecknockconsulting.com.au](http://www.brecknockconsulting.com.au)  
Prospect Road Village Heart  
Client: City of Prospect  
Artist: Warren Langley



Figure 5.12 Courtesy of [www.brecknockconsulting.com.au](http://www.brecknockconsulting.com.au)  
Redcliffe Seaside Village Rejuvenation  
Client: Moreton Bay Regional Council  
Artists: Phil Price, Hew Chee Fong & L. M. Noonan, Russell Anderson, Bianca Beetson, Megan Cope and Brad Nunn

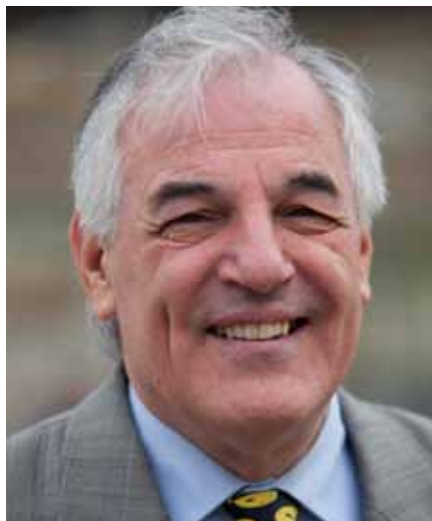


Figure 5.13 Just some of 'The faces of Tonsley'  
Interviewees: Brian Windle, David Ragless, Vera Lukic, Meredith Bryant, Peter Salerno, Rob Dale.

### **5.2.11 Public Art**

Public art is an important ingredient in any community development and is also a very effective way of communicating the cultural history of a site. This document and the recommended key interpretive themes within should form part of the briefing process for any future public art commissions and strategies. The Tonsley public art installations together with interpretive signage and significant places and artifacts, could form an engaging interpretive trail that really adds to the overall character and 'buzz' of the place.

### **5.2.12 The Faces of Tonsley (One big family)**

One of the key themes rising from this report is 'Tonsley is one big family'. A key concept that could be developed and threaded through future interpretive displays, marketing and communication collateral is 'The Faces of Tonsley'. Using photographs of real people who have had an association with the site together with their personal stories and testimonials is a simple but powerful way to communicate the cultural history. It can also expand into the future as the project develops and the new generation of students, tenants, businesses and residents tell their stories about the vision for the future.

### **5.2.13 Online reference catalogue**

Separate to this report we have prepared a Tonsley Reference Catalogue that contains a comprehensive list of reference material and other sources of information that could be used to communicate the Tonsley history. It also includes visual references to photography and any artifacts and memorabilia that we have identified so far.

### **5.2.14 The Tonsley collection (Maintained and accessed via the SLSA)**

In addition to the Tonsley Reference Catalogue we have set up an arrangement with the State Library of South Australia to catalogue and store all existing and future historical items of interest. We expect that more people will come forward with memorabilia in the future as the project progresses. People will be able to donate their memorabilia or have it photographed and catalogued via this well structured State Library process. Much, if not all the collection will be accessible online. Refer to appendix 7.3 for the Deed of Gift form.





Figure 5.14 Aerial view showing the tree-lined Warraparinga Creek running through the Tonsley property. Source: DMITRE/MMAL.



Figure 5.15 Aerial view taken in 2012 showing the creek at the north-west corner of the property. Source: NearMaps.

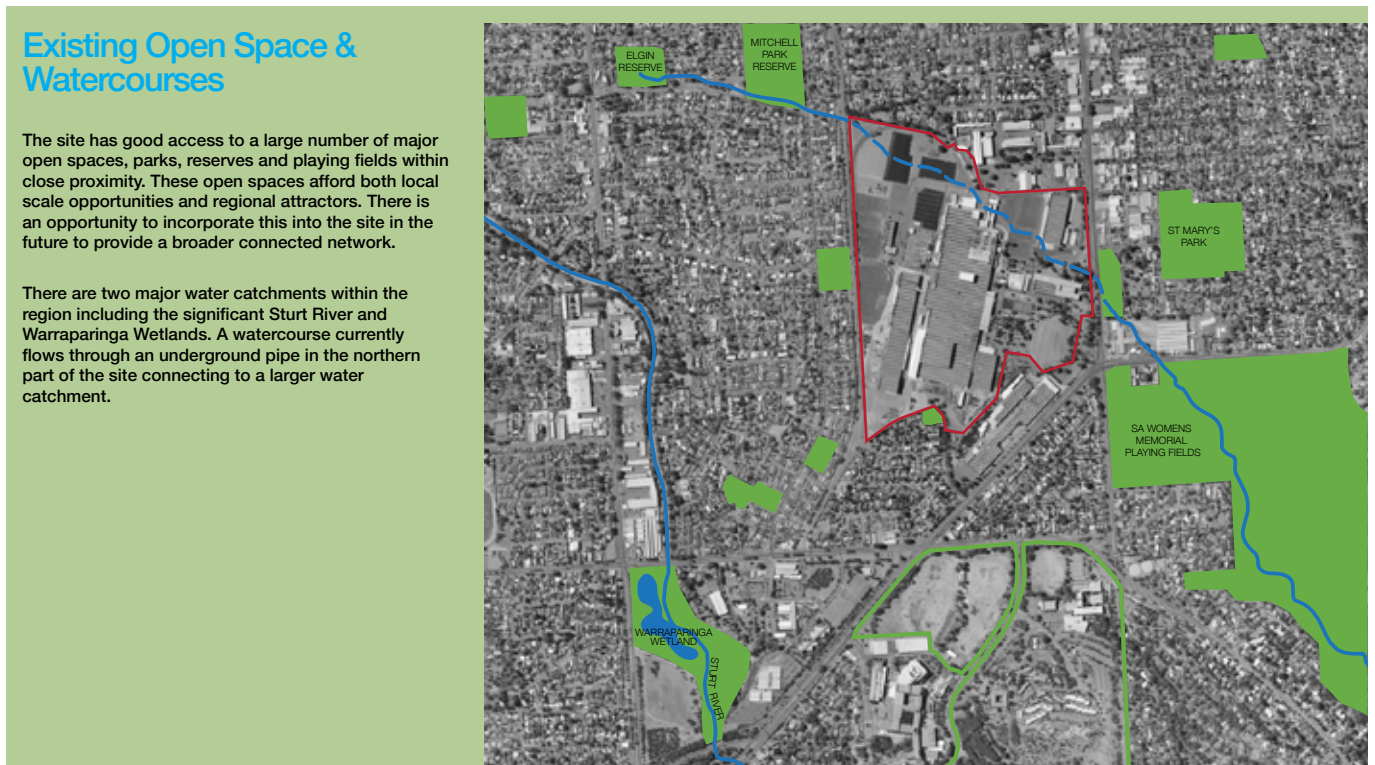


Figure 5.16 Section 03 Site Context, watercourses, from the Tonsley Masterplan documents.

### 5.2.15 Creek restoration, indigenous and natural history interpretation opportunity.

Refer to earlier section 3.1 Indigenous and natural history:

'The significance of Wattiparinga Creek' and

'Sturt River and the Kurna people'

*The Sturt River (Warri-Pari) provided a transport route for Aboriginal clans moving from the hills to the coast. Plants and animals near the river provided food sources; the Kurna took fish and yabbies from the river and hunted other animals such as ducks and other wild fowl, possums, kangaroos, wallabies and small marsupials. They used many plants for food, medicine and making tools, implements and weapons.*

*Aborigines were reported as living in the district on a reserve in what is now Mitchell Park when the Ragless family arrived in the district in 1869 .....*

Revegetation of Wattiparinga Creek would restore the native habitat, improve water quality, increase biodiversity and provide the community with an informative and pleasant leisure area. Interpretive signs could inform residents, workers and visitors about the indigenous history, vegetation, wildlife, and the value of the restoration.

The project would form a biolink with the upper reaches of Wattiparinga Creek (through Shepherds Hill Recreation Park and Wattiparinga Reserve), and reserves in Mitchell Park and Warriparinga, facilitating movement of flora and fauna.

This provides an opportunity to involve local residents, community groups and schools for example in the restoration works. It would also serve as an educational project on the environment and sustainability, in line with the key objectives of the project and supporting a key interpretive theme.



Figure 5.18 Early image of site vegetation  
Source: David Ragless Collection



Figure 5.17 Gordon Ragless was a keen ornithologist and collected between 4000 - 5000 sets of eggs covering approx. 90% of bird species that breed in Australia.  
Source: John Ragless Collection





Figure 5.19 Lawn bowls and tennis court facility Tonsley.  
Photo: Quentin Gore, 2012.

## Audience joins cabaret Mauri floorshow

Some five hundred people had a ball at the Staff Social Club's Cabaret.

Although a cold winters night, the mid year function warmed quickly. After arrival, patrons were confronted by Robbie Baxter and Jean Kelly who 'encouraged' them to buy a raffle ticket before sitting down to enjoy what must have been the best meal ever served by the Cafeteria.

Roast turkey, cranberry sauce, baked diced potatoes and vegetables made everybody well aware that the canteen can do far more than just routine mid-day meals. Many people enquired about the delicious cauliflower and the Cafeteria staff have released their 'trade secret' in 'Recipe of the Month' elsewhere in this edition of Three Diamonds. The first course was followed by a chocolate gelati confection with fresh cream. For anybody that managed to obtain two serves it was well worth it.

The 'Little Rubber Band' not to be confused with the 'Little River Band' kicked off smartly at 8.00 p.m. By no means a bad band they could have had more impact and punch. But never the less, they were quite 'danceable' and had lots of people on the floor.

Floorshow time brought something a little different from the usual singers and comedians. The 'Kapal' group made two presentations, the first of dancers from the Cook Islands. How they danced with handheld candles — without the flames going out — must be a Cook Island secret! Kapal's second presentation, Mauri dancers, provided more of a spectacle with fire sticks and the traditional Mauri Haka — a dance to ward off evil spirits.

Coaxed from the audience, cabaret patrons took to the floor to acquire Mauri entertainment skills. Leg shaking, arm waving and tongue poking, the men could well be the next floor show act — with about ten years practice!

And what the girls did with their twirling pom-poms — all went to prove that things are not as easy as they look!

For many Club Members who decided upon voluntary resignation or early retirement, the Cabaret was their last as MMAL employees. However, people retiring from the company may remain members of the Staff Social Club at the discretion of the Committee. So, retirees, if you're interested, why not drop a note to the Club Secretary.

*Floorshow time with audience participation — Mauri style.*

Figure 5.20 Mitsubishi staff performing traditional Mauri Haka at a social club cabaret night.  
Source: Three Diamonds newspaper July 1984. Courtesy of John Speer.



### 5.2.16 A community space for games

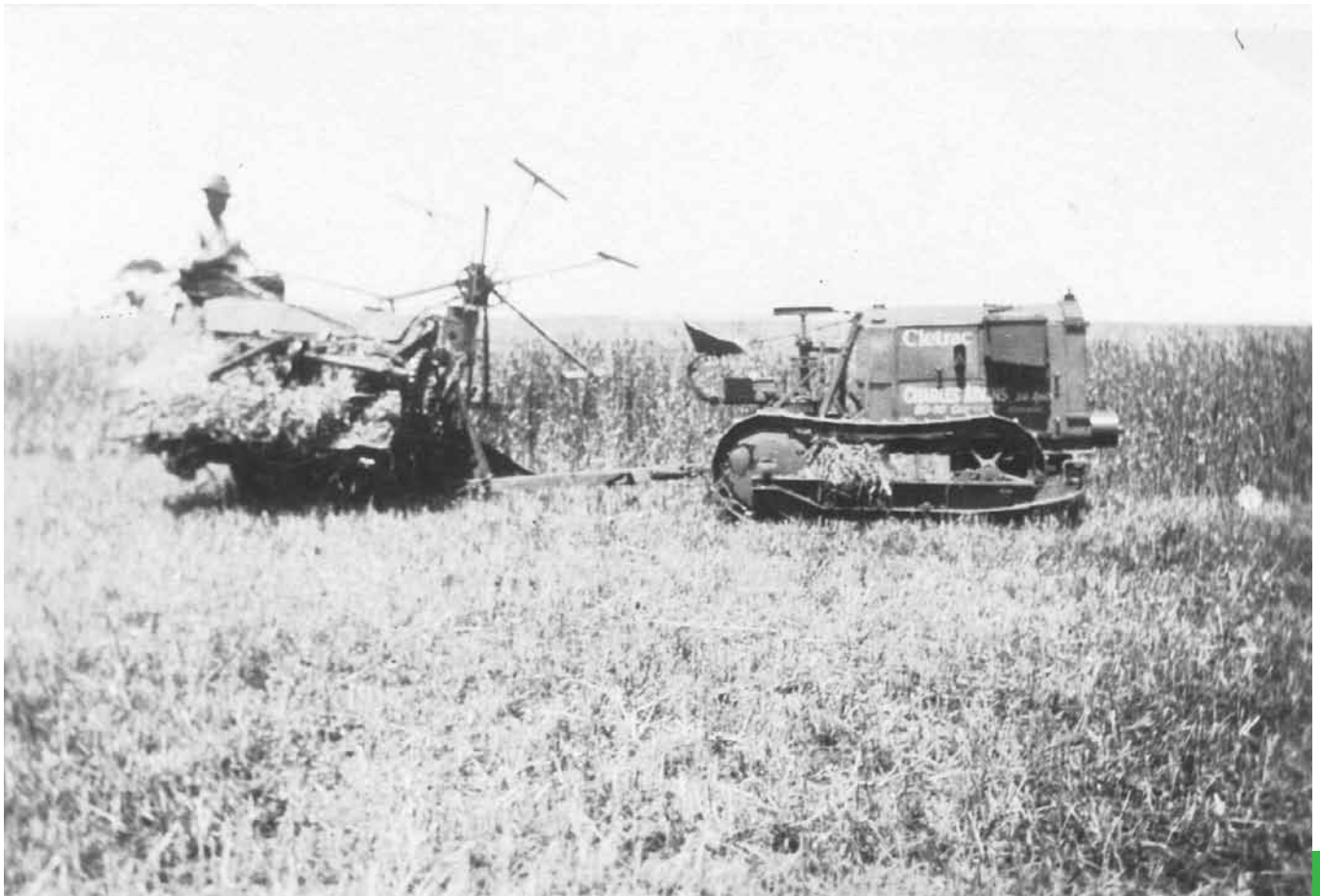
We recommend that at least one of the spaces in the new development provides the opportunity for residents, visitors and workers at Tonsley to participate in informal and spontaneous games, such as bocce (boules, petanque). This links with the key themes of Mitsubishi workers being one big family, and a highly multicultural workforce. Workers at the site used to come together for games during their lunch break, and shared lunches from their different cultures. This tradition could be continued, and is consistent with the need for social enrichment and place making, emphasized in the Master Plan.

### 5.2.17 Museum of technology

Tonsley has been the home of significant technological innovation, and items exist that could represent the different achievements in agricultural and manufacturing technology. Suitable items are currently in private collections (for example members of the Institution of Engineering and Technology and the Ragless family) and public institutions (such as the National Motor Museum). A small museum could be established on site to showcase some of these items.

Adelaide used to have a museum of technology at the former Institute of Mines and Technology (now the University of South Australia) however this closed. There was also a museum of agricultural and horticultural technology run by the Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Society. No such museum exists today. A museum of technology would be of benefit to students at the future Sustainable Industries Education Centre, and of interest to former workers, students in the region, visitors and current workers. It would be an educational resource for the region and for South Australia, and a fitting tribute to the important role Tonsley has played in South Australia's technological achievements.

Figure 5.21 Early farming at Tonsley.  
Source: David Ragless



# 7. Appendices

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### 7.1.1. Publications

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### 7.1.2 Primary sources

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#### **Archives at the National Archives of Australia**

*Industry Assistance and Restructuring*. 1976 Cabinet records – selected documents.  
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#### **Archives at the National Library of Australia, Canberra**

ORAL TRC 121/29. Interview with Sir Thomas Playford (February, 1972).  
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### **Archives at the State Library of South Australia**

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D8282/3-4: Chrysler Car Club history, newsletters, event press releases

Mitsubishi Motors Australia Limited: ephemera collection. Organisations File Collection

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### **Newspapers**

Adelaide Advertiser 1889-1954

Guardian Messenger 2008-2011

Register 1901-1929

South Australian Advertiser 1858-1889

South Australian Register 1839-1900

Three Diamonds 1983-1984 (newspaper for the employees of Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd)

### **7.1.3 Websites**

Australian Politics.com

Creative Spirits: Indigenous Australia Aboriginal Culture: <http://www.creativespirits.info/index.html>

Living Kurna Cultural Centre website: <http://www.marion.sa.gov.au/page.aspx?u=513>

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National Trust of South Australia: Watiparinga Reserve: [http://www.nationaltrustsa.org.au/index.php/places\\_to\\_visit/historic\\_buildings\\_museums\\_nature\\_reserves/adelaide\\_hills/watiparinga\\_reserve/](http://www.nationaltrustsa.org.au/index.php/places_to_visit/historic_buildings_museums_nature_reserves/adelaide_hills/watiparinga_reserve/)

### **7.1.4 Formal and informal interviews**

Meredith Bryant, former MMAL employee and had family members who worked there

Penny Bryant, several family members worked at Chrysler and Mitsubishi

Robert Case, apprentice at Chrysler, former Chrysler and MMAL employee

Rob Dale, former Chrysler and MMAL employee

Ron Graves, MMAL employee

Vera Lukic, former MMAL employee

David Ragless, grandson of Christopher Henry Ragless

John Ragless, grandson of Charles Cobb Ragless

Peter Salerno, apprentice at Chrysler

Ray Sara, Australian Manufacturing Workers Union

Sascha, Living Kurna Culture Centre

John Speer, former Chrysler and MMAL employee

Bob Steven, former MMAL employee

Michael Trott, Colliers International, site manager

Brian Windle, former Chrysler and MMAL employee

### 7.1.5 Consultation list

Name	Company/organisation/relationship	Comment
Allison Russell	History SA	
Betty Cobiac	Mitcham Heritage Research Centre	
Bob Steven	MMAL	
Brian Windle	CAL and MMAL	
David Ragless	Ragless family	
John Ragless	Ragless family	
John Speer	CAL and MMAL	
Ju Phan	Art Gallery of South Australia	
Julie Hogan	Mitcham Historical Society	
Lisa McIntosh	Electorate Officer, Office of Alan Sibbons MP	
Matt Lombard	National Motor Museum	
Meredith Bryant	MMAL	
Michael Trott	Colliers International/URA	Site manager
Penny Bryant		Family members at CAL and MMAL
Perry Langeberg	Senior Heritage Information Officer, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division	
Peter Salerno	CAL	
Ray Sara	Australian Manufacturing Workers Union	
Robert Dale	CAL and MMAL	
Robert Bogner	Institute of Engineering Technology	
Robert Case	CAL and MMAL	
Robert Case	former MMAL employee	
Robert Chadwick	MMAL employee	
Ron Graves	MMAL	
Sascha	Living Kaurna Culture Centre	
Shane	Former MMAL employee	
Tonia Eldridge	State Library of South Australia	
Tony Bryant	Mitsubishi Staff Golf Club; MMAL	
Vera Lukic	MMAL	
Veronica Kooyman	National Motor Museum	

**THIS is a DEED of GIFT** made on [ ]

**BETWEEN:**

**THE LIBRARIES BOARD OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA**, a body corporate pursuant to the Libraries Act, 1982 of North Terrace, Adelaide, 5000, South Australia ("**Board**")

**AND**

[..... ]

Please provide your full name

of

[..... ]

("Donor")

Please provide your full address

**BACKGROUND**

The Donor is the owner of the records described in Item 1 of the Schedule to this Deed ("**Records**") and wishes to make a gift of the Records to the Board.

**OPERATIVE PART**

**1. OWNERSHIP**

The Donor wishes to assign ownership of the Records to the Board. The assignment of ownership of the Records will occur when the Donor or the executor of the Donor’s estate delivers the Records into the Board’s control and possession. For the avoidance of doubt, assignment may occur after execution of this Deed by the parties.

Explanation

- Ownership here means enduring physical custody of the Records. The State Library will not accept donation of archival material without a legal agreement transferring permanent custody to the Libraries Board.
- Ownership of the Intellectual Property (Copyright) is dealt with under Section 3 (Copyright).



## 2. RESTRICTIONS ON USE

The Board agrees that in dealing with the Records it will comply with the terms and conditions of access, copying and publication specified in Items 3, 4, 5, and 6 of the Schedule.

### Explanation

#### Restrictions on use

- We prefer that there be no unnecessary restrictions on access to records. Some sensitive materials will require an embargo on access for a set period or access only with written permission from the Donor (or an appropriate representative of an Indigenous community). Restrictions to be specified in Schedule Item 3
- We prefer that there are no restrictions on copying for private research or study. Restrictions to be specified in Schedule Item 4.
- Publication rights are vested in the copyright holder. If the Donor is not the copyright holder, or the material is out of copyright, Schedule Item 6 should say 'Not applicable'. If the donor is the copyright holder and prefers not to assign copyright to the Board, Schedule Item 6 should say "No publication without permission from the copyright holder". The Board would prefer that the date (year) or time when copyright will transfer to the Board, is specified at Item 3.1.2.
- Donated photographic material will normally be digitised and published online (including via Picture Australia) unless the copyright owner specifies otherwise in Schedule Item 5.

### 3. COPYRIGHT

(See explanatory notes in box below)

- 3.1. Where the Donor owns copyright in all or any of the Records, the Donor:
- 3.1.1. \*assigns to the Board the copyright subsisting in the Records described in Item 2 of the Schedule; or
- 3.1.2. \*agrees that copyright subsisting in the Records described in Item 2 of the Schedule shall vest in the Board on \* .....  
 [*insert a date or year*]/ My death/Or the death of  
 .....[*insert name(s)*].  
 [*\* delete or cross out, whichever is inapplicable*]
- 3.2. If the copyright subsisting in the Records described in the Schedule is not assigned to the Board at the time the Donor assigns ownership of the Records to the Board, then the Donor grants to the Board a licence, free of charge, to deal with the Records as if it were the owner of the copyright subsisting in the Records subject always to clause 2, until such time as that copyright vests in the Board pursuant to clause 3.1.2.

#### Explanation

- Ownership of copyright (intellectual property rights) is separate from ownership of the physical item
- Copyright can be transferred to the Board through Clause 4 of this deed and Item 2 of the Schedule.
- Creators of copyright works have certain moral rights (including the right to be recognised as the creator) which persist after transfer of copyright.
- Complex groups of records may have multiple copyright owners.
- Copyright may persist in unpublished material in perpetuity and can be inherited.
- In some instances it may not be possible to determine who (if anyone) has copyright.

Donors are advised not to assign copyright to the Board unless they are certain that they have the right to do so. (If copyright is not to be assigned to the Board for any part of the Records, all of Section 4 should be crossed out, and nothing should be listed in Item 2 of the Schedule.)

#### 4. WARRANTIES

Either

- 4.1 \* The Donor warrants that they:
- 4.1.1 own the Records;
  - 4.1.2 own the copyright in the Records described in Item 2 of the Schedule;  
and
  - 4.1.3 are not restricted from making a gift of the Records to the Board.

And

- 4.2 The Donor hereby indemnifies the Board against any loss or liability that has been reasonably incurred by the Board as a result of a claim made or threatened against the Board that the use by the Board of the Records in accordance with this Deed infringes the intellectual property rights of a third party,

Or

- 4.3 \*The Executors of the Donor's estate warrant that, to the best of his/her knowledge and belief that:
- 4.3.1 the records were owned by the deceased;
  - 4.3.2 the Donor owned the copyright in the Records; and
  - 4.3.3 the Donor was not restricted in any way from making a bequest of the Records to the Board.

*[\* delete whichever is inapplicable]*

#### Explanation

- The Warranty Clause is a mandatory State Government requirement devised by the Crown Solicitor's Office. Clause 4.2 is intended to ensure that the Board can recoup any legal and other costs it incurs if an infringement of copyright is claimed.
- Donors are advised to consider carefully whether there is potential for a third party to claim copyright, and to discuss this with the Library before proceeding with the Gift.



**EXECUTED AS A DEED**

\*

**THE COMMON SEAL** of [ ] )

was hereunto affixed in the presence of: )

.....  
Director  
[Print Name: ]

.....  
Director/Secretary  
[Print Name: ]

*or*

\*

**SIGNED** by [ ] )

in the presence of: ) (Signature of Donor)

Your signature

.....  
Witness  
[Print Name: ]

Witness signature and name

*\*[Delete the inapplicable]*

**SIGNED** for and on behalf of **THE LIBRARIES** )

**BOARD OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA** by ) .....

[ ] being a person duly )

authorised in that regard in the presence of: )

.....  
Witness  
[Print Name:..... ]

**Explanation**  
If you are not donating on behalf of an organisation with a Common Seal please print your name in the brackets after "Signed By" and sign on line above "Signature of Donor". Your signature must be witnessed. It is not necessary to use a Justice of the Peace or lawyer as witness.

**SCHEDULE**

**Item 1**

**Records**

**Item 2**

**Records in which copyright is owned by the Donor** [see explanation on page 3]

**Item 3**

**Restrictions on Access** [see explanation on page 2]

None  Other  (specify)

**Item 4**

**Restrictions on Copying for Private Research or Study** [see explanation on page 2]

None  Other  (specify)

**Item 5**

**Restrictions on online publishing of digitised images by the State Library** [see explanation on page 2]

None  Other  (specify)

**Item 6**

**Restrictions on Publication** [see explanation on page 2]

None

No publication without written permission from the copyright holder

Other  (specify)



Government of South Australia  
Department for Manufacturing,  
Innovation, Trade, Resources and Energy



**PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW  
AND INFORMATION**

I \_\_\_\_\_, give my permission to the State Government **Department of Manufacturing, Innovation, Trade, Energy and Resources (DMITRE)**, to use this interview, or part of this interview, for research, publication (including electronic publication on the Internet), and/or broadcast/for use in exhibitions and other activities.

**I do/do not** give my permission to DMITRE to deposit this interview in the J.D. Somerville Oral History Collection in the State Library of South Australia, where this interview or copies of the interview may be used for research, publication and/or broadcast by other bona fide researchers.

**I do/do not** wish to be advised of any requests to publish or broadcast this interview during my lifetime. I understand that if I do want to be advised, this will involve DMITRE, the State Library of South Australia or authorized researchers contacting me to get my written permission to publish or broadcast this interview, or part of this interview.

**I do/do not** prefer to remain anonymous if the interview is used for publication or broadcast during my lifetime.

I understand that if, after a period of five or more years, I can not be contacted by the State Library of South Australia copyright for the recording passes to the State Library of South Australia.

Other restrictions:

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PTO





Date of recording: \_\_\_\_\_ Date donated: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief outline of content: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Donor's/copyright owner's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (H) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (B) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (M) \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax number \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cultural History Report

# Tonsley

