

Living in Prospect in the Playford Era

Pauline Payne

Everybody used to go up the road on Friday nights; it was a big to-do, an altogether different atmosphere ... you would meet up there and have a nice talk ... you used to know the people from the top of the street to the bottom ... everybody ... and as you went by they would pass the time of day ... Now you don't know half of them.

I've seen it really grow ... there were hardly any houses at the bottom of Alexandra Street at all ... only a few homes dotted here and there ... and the old shops that used to be on the corners ... Opposite us there used to be open spaces and the children used to play there ... I remember always children playing together in the street ... that's something they miss out on these days.¹

Lilian Raneberg's description of changes in the City of Prospect during the last 60 years would be echoed by many residents of other Adelaide suburbs. Prospect thus provides a sample of suburban life in the Playford era.²

In 1933, the year when Tom Playford was elected to parliament, the District Council of Prospect was elevated to municipality status and then to city status two years later. The physical environment of Prospect today, with a population of about 18,600 people living in approximately 8,000 dwellings, displays significant legacies of the decade preceding the depression.³ A substantial number of houses built in the 1920s have survived: bungalows and Tudor-style residences in tree-lined streets that date to the 'boom period' of Prospect's expansion between the world wars. However, there are also important legacies of the 1950s and the later Playford era.

The 1950s saw new developments in infrastructure, particularly in sports facilities, health services and community services, as Prospect's residents recovered from the dislocation of the Second World War. The population of Prospect reached its peak of about 23,600 people in 1950.⁴ In post-war Prospect, buses replaced trams, Hills hoists appeared in back yards, the FJ Holden became common in local streets, and European migrants brought new customs and language. The 'rabbios' and milkman's cart disappeared while supermarkets and used car yards replaced small shops along Main North Road.⁵ Traffic increased along the three main roads that run in a northerly and north-westerly direction from Adelaide (Main North Road, Prospect Road and Churchill Road) and the two major roads that run roughly east-west (Regency Road, formerly Irish Harp Road, and Fitzroy Terrace). However, for much of the Playford era the quiet back streets of Prospect were still places where children played with comparative safety.

The development of Prospect to the Second World War

During the 1840s European settlement in South Australia spread out from Adelaide. The road north became a major road providing access to farming land north of Adelaide, to the Barossa and further north to mining towns such as Kapunda and Burra. By 1872 Prospect was managed by its own District Council and in 1877 had a population of 900 people. The development of areas such

as Prospect, with their 'quarter acre' blocks, public transport facilities and easy access to the central business district, was part of the pattern whereby Australia became highly urbanised.⁶ While most of the building blocks were quarter acre, there were some larger properties, for example along Fitzroy Terrace, and some smaller blocks, as in the 'Little Adelaide' area in Highbury Street where the subdivision dated from the 1840s. By 1910 the population of the Prospect district was 6,800 and it grew rapidly to nearly 13,000 by 1921. In the boom years of building, at least 250 houses were added annually between 1922 and 1927, bringing the population to over 20,000 by 1932.⁷ These new houses were frequently built of stone or stone and brick in the fashionable bungalow style.⁸ Keith Martin recalled that he was earning £3 11 s a week as a butcher when he bought his house in California Street, Nailsworth for £750 with a £50 deposit at the time of his marriage in 1938.⁹ He and his wife were part of a 'young married' group that was to have a significant demographic influence on the population of the district for the rest of the Playford era.

Older residents can recall when Prospect became a municipality. Bounded by the Adelaide parklands in the south, the northern railway line to the west, Hampstead Road to the east and adjoining Enfield in the north, the district included the suburbs of Prospect, Sefton Park, Broadview, Nailsworth, Collinswood, Thorngate, Medindie Gardens, Fitzroy and, later, Ovingham. It was a quiet area with open paddocks where cows grazed; local lads took them to the dairy before and after school. New houses were soon made tidy with neat gravel paths fringed with roses and patches of Iceland poppies and violas. Children played tennis and football in the street. Prospect's terrain provided great opportunities for soapbox races down hilly streets using pieces of timber mounted on four wheels.¹⁰ On summer nights children played games like hopscotch and fox and hounds under the glimmer of street lights.¹¹ There was little mechanised traffic and the few vehicles were slow. It was a time when people had time to notice what was going on: lads getting into mischief or elderly people needing a hand.

Trams provided transport into 'town' along Prospect Road and Main North Road but many local residents worked in the district or its neighbouring suburbs, particularly at trades in the western suburbs. Many rode their bicycles, carrying an old-style kit bag between the handlebars or on the back. Prospect's initial industries included timber milling, chaff cutting and lime burning. While small workshops survived, factories did not develop and the suburb remained primarily residential. Many worked at the nearby South Australian Railways workshops at Islington: Alvan Aslat commented that in his childhood there was hardly a street in the area where there was not someone employed in the railways.¹² Hundreds were employed at the abattoirs at Gepps Cross. The working population tended to be employed in manual work or trades rather than the professions or managerial positions.¹³

The many local dairies provided work for milkmen in horse-drawn floats. Householders put out a 'billy' that the milkman filled from large metal containers. The milkman's horse, like the baker's horse, knew the route and could move on to the next house while the delivery was being made. Butchers called, cutting up meat for their customers who waited with meat dish in hand. Ice was delivered for ice-chests. Hawkers came to the door: the 'rabbios' with two rabbits for a shilling; the Syrian fishmonger; a man who sold bales of lucerne for backyard 'chooks'; the Sharpe Brothers cart with earthenware pots of horehound beer and ginger beer.

Then there was Mr Rawson from Gladstone Road with a variety of crockery, bedroom jugs, pots, buckets and tins on his horse-drawn cart, calling ‘Crock-er-y !’, and pedlars such as Chinese John with his boxes of haberdashery, towels and tea in containers suspended over his shoulders by a long pole.¹⁴ In the depression years unemployed men tried to earn a few shillings by selling small items from door to door: clothes pegs, clothes line props and buttons. Manure was sold both as a garden fertiliser and for burning in the copper on washdays or in the bath heater on Saturday nights. It was said to keep the mosquitoes away too.¹⁵

In the Great Depression, when South Australia’s unemployment was the highest in the commonwealth and up to half of those in employment worked part-time,¹⁶ an area such as Prospect with a significant number of blue collar workers was hard hit. The 1933 Census figures reflect this. There were 6,729 males over 15. While only 1,307 were listed as unemployed, income figures show that 2,270 earned less than £103 for the previous year and as many as 3,029, or nearly half the adult males, earned less than £3 a week or £155 per annum, at a time when the basic wage was £163 11s per annum.¹⁷ Backyard vegetables, fruit trees, almond trees and fowls helped many families to survive.¹⁸ For some, the generosity of neighbours provided a life-line. For example, a woman whose husband was still working gave some money every week to a neighbour whose husband was put off work at the Islington workshops.¹⁹ The Mayoress of Prospect, Mrs Annie Whittle, followed the lead provided in Thebarton and initiated a Prospect Women’s Service Association ‘to help the poor and needy in the district’. They had free rein of the Town Hall for their fund-raising functions and the women would visit residents in need, providing money orders for clothing or food. Many of these women were also active in local churches which were ‘the strength of the district’.²⁰

One resident, Theresa Farrelly, whose husband was out of work for seven years during the depression, recalled how they survived on the ration tickets collected from the Public Relief Department in Kintore Avenue in Adelaide. ‘Sixpenneth of stewing pieces’ from the butcher would provide several meals and the butcher would always give some fritz for the children.²¹ These were shops where the shopkeepers knew their customers and people stopped and chatted. Most households did not have refrigerators, and ice-chests kept perishable food fresh for only a limited time. People walked to their local shop, shopping ‘for a little often’, especially if their income was irregular. Goods such as sugar, flour and biscuits had to be weighed and wrapped at the grocer’s shop. Such regular contact meant that the person behind the counter was often the person with whom problems were discussed and local gossip exchanged.²²

At a time when higher education was generally the privilege of well-to-do young men, many young people capable of going into professional positions worked in local shops or in office jobs. A clever child who won a scholarship to a secondary school might well refuse the offer because of the expense that was involved for the family through books, uniforms and fees.²³

Despite difficult economic times in the 1930s, some small businesses flourished. Two success stories in Prospect were A.S. Horne Pty Ltd and R.M. Williams Pty Ltd. Alex Horne had started a business on Prospect Road in 1925 doing boot and shoe repairs, a business that developed into a factory manufacturing gloves, boots and waders,²⁴ while Reg Williams began making boots for stockmen in 1934,

gradually adding saddlery gear and clothing. British Tube Mills in Churchill Road, begun in 1939,²⁵ and the railways workshops, provided industrial employment on the periphery of the district.

At the end of the working week many Prospect residents could look forward to outings on Saturdays. For those fortunate enough to have a car, Day's Motor Supplies Social Club held outings, including an annual social picnic which attracted several hundred people.²⁶ Day's Motor Supplies had the first dealership for new and used cars along Main North Road. Many enjoyed 'the pictures' on Saturday nights at the Ozone theatre or dances and socials held in local halls. Hotels were not a venue for evening gatherings in an era of 6 o'clock closing. Apart from the Windmill Hotel on Main North Road, the hotels were on the edge of the district; for example, the Reepham on Irish Harp Road and the Hampstead on Main North East Road. In the 1930s the absence of hotels along Prospect Road could be contrasted with the great success of the churches. The Methodist Church was particularly strong in Prospect and adherence to Roman Catholicism weaker than the metropolitan average.²⁷ In 1935 the temperance groups in the district succeeded in their battle to prevent a liquor licence being granted along Prospect Road.²⁸

Prospect's churches played a vital role in local recreational life with their socials, tennis teams and other sporting clubs. Parishioners were involved in womens, mens and youth groups, Sunday schools and choirs. One of the most notable churches in the district was the Prospect North Methodist Church (now St John's Uniting Church). In its heyday in the interwar years it had up to 608 scholars enrolled in its Sunday school and 57 teachers, one of the largest in South Australia.²⁹ Its Sunday school anniversaries, held in the Ozone Theatre from 1932 to 1943, involved between 500 and 600 scholars and teachers, the girls wearing white dresses and the boys white shirts. The tradition of the anniversaries was for scholars and teachers to meet outside the Prospect Institute (Town Hall), march along Prospect Road and then be escorted by local police across the road to the theatre.³⁰ The Sunday school picnic was another important annual event. Some years a special train took the children and their parents from the Dudley Park station to the Belair National Park; in other years trams took the group to Hazelwood Park, Burnside.³¹

The Second World War

From the total population of slightly more than 20,000, at least 1,486 Prospect residents volunteered for active service in the Second World War.³² Most residents had a family member or close friend who was serving in the armed forces. Many others contributed to munitions work and other war-related activities such as the Land Army. Economic conditions during the war years were difficult and, in addition, there were daily reminders of the possibility of enemy attack. Throughout the metropolitan area, air raid shelters were built and street lighting kept to a minimum. Local residents working as ARP (Air Raid Precautions) Wardens checked that householders had fitted blinds to prevent light from being seen from the outside. People dug trenches in backyards and school grounds. There was an air raid siren at the Council Depot on Main North Road and air raid shelters on the vacant land on the corner of Prospect and Barker Roads.³³ Children helped to make camouflage nets at school through the Schools Patriotic Fund.³⁴ Spare-time activities supported the Red Cross or the war effort.³⁵ Many groups were

suspended, for example tennis and football clubs and Girl Guide companies.

The government rationed petrol and cigarettes. Clothing, tea and sugar were rationed from 1942, butter from 1943 and meat from January 1944. Householders had ration books with coupons for each adult and reduced amounts for children. People handed down clothes from child to child. Much ingenuity was used: skirts could be made from tablecloths, jewellery from bread and even knickers, albeit strange looking ones, from striped fabric intended for tea towels.³⁶ A wide-ranging list of goods, including cosmetics, Scotch whisky, rice and coloured pencils were not rationed but were in short supply. Rationing continued beyond the war; clothing and meat were rationed until 1948 and petrol, tea and butter until 1950.

Most of those who had friends and relatives serving in the armed forces or living in Great Britain wrote letters and sent parcels as part of the war effort. In addition, many people belonged to church or service groups that had programs for writing letters or knitting socks and other items for service people. An example is the Knitting Circle at the Prospect North Methodist Church, where a group of girls knitted, packed parcels and wrote fortnightly letters to 114 men and women from that church who had joined the forces. By 1946 they had sent 1,989 parcels and 5,100 letters.³⁷

Local resident Molly Casanova was a member of the Australian Broadcasting Commission's Radio 5CL Bluebird Club, founded in 1928 to help poor and needy families in the depression.³⁸ When the war came, Molly was already a member of the club's all girls mouth organ band. The group gave concerts at the Cheer-up Hut, Comfort Funds functions and dances for lonely servicemen who were on leave or awaiting transfers.³⁹

Civil Defence training through the Prospect ARP attracted up to 500 residents from the community. Red Cross activities expanded as did those of the St John's Ambulance Brigade.⁴⁰ Those with previous service experience were a great asset, as in the case of Sister L.M. Hurst, a veteran of the Australian Army Nursing Service in the First World War, who became Commandant of the Prospect Red Cross section in charge of first-aid posts.⁴¹ Red Cross members trained by Sisters Hurst and Jamieson served at Northfield Military Hospital and the Red Cross Convalescent Home at Henley Beach, and also participated in the ARP organisation.⁴²

Many women joined the workforce in the war years. Local residents working at Horne's factory helped produce yellow hide gloves for the American army.⁴³ Day's Motor Supplies established a small munitions factory in a shed on their premises with women as the main source of labour. Some women worked in munitions factories, others worked at the British Tube Mills factory where the workforce expanded to over 1,000 people producing gas storage cylinders, ammunition and aircraft parts.⁴⁴ Women employed at a new factory established at the railways workshops site to manufacture aircraft, earned good wages and overtime.⁴⁵

Prosperity and consolidation: 1945 to 1968

The post-war period

After the declaration of peace, some 600,000 Australian servicemen and women returned from war service. Many women left their wartime jobs and returned to domestic responsibilities. Commonwealth post-war migration programs

contributed to a population growth in the 20-40 year age group. The years after the war were relatively prosperous. A buoyant economy and an increasing population led to increased expenditure on housing, schools, health services and amenities such as clubrooms and sports facilities. Prospect shared in this growth.

The number of Australians marrying rose in this period and the age at which they married fell.⁴⁶ The Australia-wide trend for more marriages was followed by a baby boom. Even though Prospect was not a young area by metropolitan standards,⁴⁷ this overall trend was reflected in heavy bookings for Saturday weddings in Prospect's churches. Accommodation was in short supply. An acute shortage of building materials affected all sections of the community. Building permits were required as there was government control over building activities and the supply of building materials. Young single people, with few exceptions, lived with their parents. After marriage, young couples often lived with relatives, perhaps in a glassed-in sleepout, or used a caravan on their building block.⁴⁸ Some built a 'backender', building the bathroom, kitchen and laundry first and adding other parts of the house later when building materials were more readily available and savings had accumulated. Some belonged to a Home Builders' Association, a self-help group where practical skills were pooled. 'You had to know someone' to get hold of building materials, for example plumbers supplies or red clay bricks as opposed to grey cement bricks.⁴⁹

There were already 6,150 houses and shops in the district, leaving relatively few vacant blocks. In April 1946 Prospect Council reported that there were only 1,000 allotments of land available for building, and many had recently been purchased for house -building.⁵⁰ In a period of full employment and relative prosperity, some residents who worked towards the goal of building on these vacant allotments could have only dreamt of home ownership in the pre-war years. One of these was Miriam Goldsworthy. The economic hardship of the depression had limited both her education and job opportunities. It was an exciting occasion for her when the foundations for her new house were poured in 1957.⁵¹

Others establishing their homes were younger people who contributed to the post-war baby boom. Associated with this were demands for maternity beds and places in kindergartens and schools. In the 1950s Nailsworth Primary School catered for 1,500 children ranging from junior primary through to secondary, with classes of 50 or more students. The asphalted grounds were so crowded that running and throwing overarm were forbidden!⁵²

Private schools expanded their facilities to cope with demands for places. In 1952 the Dominican Fathers established Blackfriars Priory School for boys in Prospect Road.⁵³ In 1958 the Dominican Order opened a new building for the Rosary School so that 300 children could be accommodated, the original building dating back to the opening of the church school in 1908.⁵⁴ Demographic changes and economic prosperity affected both schools. The establishment of Catholic schools reflected increasing numbers of Catholics in the area, especially Italian migrants, as well as post-war prosperity. There was increased demand for secondary school tuition and a greater capacity for families to provide financial support for non-government schools. Similarly, with pre-school places much in demand in the decade from 1946, local parents worked actively to provide new kindergartens such as Prospect North and St Helen's.⁵⁵

Health and welfare services

Significant developments in Prospect's health and welfare services accompanied the development of educational facilities. Before the war there had been small private hospitals, catering particularly for maternity cases, such as Berklea Private Hospital on Prospect Road. There was also the Northern Hospital on Main North Road, run by the two Sisters O'Brien, Eileen and Hannah. In 1951 Dr Hewgill Hamilton, Medical Officer for Prospect Council, initiated moves to acquire the land and buildings for the Northern Community Hospital to bridge the gap between public and private hospitals and help relieve the overall shortage of hospital beds.

The board of management of the new hospital represented both Prospect and Walkerville Councils, local doctors, local industry and other elected local representatives. Funding for alterations and improvements came from state government subsidies, local government, local businesses, service groups such as Rotary and Prospect Women's Service Association, and private donations. State government subsidies of £2 for each £1 spent by the hospital on capital works helped not only Northern Community Hospital but other community hospitals in South Australia at Burnside, Ashford and Glenelg.⁵⁶ Local support for such hospital fund-raising was energetic. In Prospect there was a street procession in 1952 with floats and bands, queen competitions in 1952 and 1956, door-knock appeals, raffles, a square dance competition, bridge parties, trading tables and collections at Prospect Oval during the football season. There were personal touches in support of the hospital too, and auxiliary members helped arrange flowers in the wards.⁵⁷ Obstetric services were much in demand and in 1953 the hospital recorded 344 births.⁵⁸

The Northern Suburbs Ambulance Association, the Mothers' and Babies' Health Association (MBHA) and the Royal District and Bush Nursing Society provided other important community health services.⁵⁹ The District Nursing Society work was geared to those who could not pay the full cost of such a service. Effective fund-raising was vital and it was provided in a similar fashion to that used for the Community Hospital. There was also support from local government representatives, the Women's Service Association, the Country Women's Association (CWA), sporting bodies and service clubs such as Rotary and, later, Lions and Apex.⁶⁰

Similar support from the community helped develop the Prospect Branch of the School for Mothers (later the MBHA) after it was established in 1921.⁶¹ Local fund-raising of this kind not only allowed a service to develop but also provided activities that were important social occasions for local residents, especially for women in an era when most families did not have a car and most married women were not in the paid workforce.

The importance of the voluntary sector and the way that voluntary organisations co-operated with local government is seen in the development of the local ambulance service in 1946. The Northern Suburbs Ambulance Association was formed after the Prospect and Enfield Councils combined with nearby factories and district organisations such as the Red Cross for the joint purchase of an ambulance to be operated by both paid and volunteer staff. Initial fund-raising was aided by a carnival and house-to-house canvassing. Prospect Council provided the ambulance headquarters and both councils contributed to ongoing costs.⁶²

The Red Cross, an important service group in the community dating back to

1914, was especially active during the war. New service clubs began, including Rotary (1950), Apex (1955) and Lions (1963). These three groups supported new services for the aged, in particular the opening of a Prospect Senior Citizens Club building in 1965, a project which also attracted support from Prospect Women's Service Association, Prospect sub-branch of the Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia (the RSSILA became the Returned Services League, RSL, in 1965) and the Prospect Branch of the CWA. Rotary endowed a ward at the Northern Community Hospital in 1956 and sponsored a Meals on Wheels kitchen in 1958 in co-operation with both state and local government when the service, which was founded in South Australia in 1953, was established in Prospect.⁶³

Meals on Wheels provided a valuable adjunct to aged care services. Wallaroo Cottage Homes in Prospect Terrace, established in 1900,⁶⁴ catered for only a few residents. Neighbours and family members provided the backbone of care for the aged with church groups making a further contribution. Many elderly people had lived in the same house all their adult life so social contacts were maintained with friends and neighbours, another important factor in care of the aged. Meals on Wheels catered for 26 people initially. The majority of its volunteer helpers were young mothers.⁶⁵ The organisation was an important innovation because not only did it help to maintain the health and independence of elderly residents by providing them with a substantial midday meal, but the volunteers delivering the meals could also alert health and welfare services if the condition of a resident had deteriorated.

There was a close relationship between local government, local business and the service clubs. Names from the list of elected local government representatives and staff appear in service and sports and recreational bodies and on the committees for local schools, health and welfare services. This is exemplified in the careers of Mayors George Whittle and Charles Williamson and Town Clerk Bob Pash. Whittle, Prospect's first mayor in 1933, was a councillor or alderman for 43 years. An auctioneer in the business world, he was a keen debater and Repertory Theatre actor and was instrumental in the formation of the Prospect Band. He was also an elocutionist and an active member of the Red Cross, Boy Scouts and North Adelaide school and sporting bodies. Williamson, mayor from 1949 to 1952 and 1953 to 1954, in addition to terms as an alderman, had a long association with both the local Red Cross and sub-branch of the RSSILA, with strong participation in community affairs. Pash, first employed by the council in 1934, enlisted in 1940 and returned to council after the war, becoming town clerk in 1950. He was active in Rotary, a long-serving office bearer of the District Nursing Society, and held appointments in the professional sphere.⁶⁶

Prospect's mayors came from varied backgrounds, with the professions, local business and industry strongly represented.⁶⁷ The council was not involved with human services such as libraries, aged care and community arts programs, since state and federal funds for such services were limited. It concentrated on basic services such as the paving of roads and the provision of drainage, which was especially important since Churchill Road was prone to flooding.⁶⁸

There were no women on the council in the Playford era.⁶⁹ The mayoresses, wives or close relatives of the mayors, became involved with organisations such as

Red Cross, the District Nursing Society, Prospect Women's Service Association, the Institute Library, sports clubs, kindergartens and schools as well as committees to raise funds for particular projects. In July 1954 Mayoress Ruby Litchfield chaired the meeting at which a number of Prospect residents who had previously lived in the country established the Prospect branch of the CWA.⁷⁰ The CWA formed a choir, a drama group and a hospital committee to visit the elderly, taking flowers and small gifts. As another community service, the CWA participated in the naturalisation ceremonies at the Prospect Town Hall, making posies to give women at the ceremony and helping with entertainment at supper-time.⁷¹ Local churches supported health and welfare services; for example, church groups provided volunteers for Meals on Wheels and organised sewing and mending working bees.⁷² The contribution of thousands of hours of work by such volunteers was remarkable and underscores the strength of the local community in developing new services in education, recreation, health and welfare during the Playford era when the government was overly parsimonious at times.

Although community groups co-operated and membership of community groups overlapped, divisions between groups existed. Roman Catholic families, a group with only 10.55 per cent of the population in the 1947 Census and 13.5 per cent by 1954, were generally concerned that their children should attend their own schools and marry within their own faith. For most of the Playford era Catholic parishioners were discouraged from attending Protestant wedding services. Lodge membership reinforced these Catholic-Protestant divisions. Divisions between rich and poor occurred as in other suburbs, as did disputes between neighbours. However, while many kept to their own small group, the accounts of older residents describe a stable and cohesive community where people usually did know their neighbours. People might expect to 'keep to themselves' and maintain their privacy but, for many, small gestures such as offers of fruit and vegetables or lending a hand in time of need were an important part of neighbourliness.

Weekends and leisure time in post-war Prospect

Times may have been less prosperous than now, but 'the community made up its own activities and it didn't cost a lot'.⁷³ Families visited other families; churches provided a focus in sport and social life; fund-raising events, generally in support of local causes and sporting groups, played a significant role in outings and conversations. On summer nights families gathered on the front lawn with neighbouring children congregating at one house or another. There were Saturday matinees at the Ozone Theatre for the younger ones, and many adults had regular bookings for Saturday nights. Sunday outings involving all the family were popular. However, organised sport was not played on Sundays and churches were often reluctant to make the keys to their tennis courts available on this day, even for a casual game.⁷⁴

On most Saturdays sport at Prospect Oval was the centre of attraction for large crowds and residents could be sure of meeting people they knew. Cricket and Australian Rules football were the big draw-cards but the oval site had gradually been developed with a grandstand incorporating the RSSILA clubrooms, tennis courts, a croquet club and a bowling club. Bob Pash and three of his brothers were typical of many sportsmen, playing cricket in summer and football in

winter for the local clubs. In 1939 one brother, Jeff, won the Magarey Medal for the best and fairest player in the South Australian Football League competition other North Adelaide players to win medals in the period were Harold Hawke (1937), Ron Phillips (1948 and 1949), Ian McKay (1950) and Barrie Barbary (1960).⁷⁵ In the 1952 Grand Final North Adelaide defeated Norwood by a record 18 goals – a photograph of McKay's 'Mark of the Year' became a collector's item. Local hero, Ken Farmer, set several records in kicking 1,500 goals in club and interstate games from 1929 to 1941.⁷⁶ The strong support for the Prospect Cricket Club was rewarded with the team winning the South Australian Cricket Association premierships of 1960-61, 1962-63 and 1963-64.⁷⁷ Reminders of wartime experiences are found in three structures linking the RSSILA and the oval: a memorial arch to First World War members opened in 1936; a memorial arch to the fallen of the Second World War unveiled by Mayor Williamson in 1952; and the RSSILA's Hall of Memory clubrooms which Premier Playford opened in November 1959. The clubrooms, built by voluntary labour supplemented by contract work, were financed by a long period of fund-raising.⁷⁸

Bowling and croquet lawns, local football and tennis clubs, basketball and tennis courts, with special emphasis on junior sports, were provided at Broadview Oval in the north-east of the council area. Blair Athol Tennis Club and Prospect Gardens Women's Bowling Club provided residents with other choices.⁷⁹ In addition church groups had courts for tennis and basketball (later called netball), facilities which were much used in the 1950s and 1960s when in any one season teams from one church alone might involve 60 to 70 people.⁸⁰ Formal dances were popular in the 1950s. Local residents might go to Adelaide to the Palais Royal on North Terrace for a Saturday night dance. Many of the church and voluntary groups sponsored dances and more formal balls. Other events were organised by individuals to celebrate such occasions as 21st birthdays and debutante, or 'coming out', dances. Dress was formal at the popular debutante balls: girls wore long white dresses with long white gloves, and their partners dressed in dinner suits. 'Socials', square dances and talent quests were simple forms of entertainment that allowed for a mixture of age groups. Annual picnics or outings, often on a holiday weekend, were held by many groups. Young people might make up a group to go to the beach on their bicycles. Trips to the beach with the family were made on the Glenelg tram or the Semaphore train, but increasingly residents had their own cars for these expeditions.

Saturday night entertaining at home gave the hostess an opportunity to use the hand embroidered supper cloths she had prepared for her glory box. A supper that included sandwiches, sausage rolls, lamingtons and cream cakes was less expensive than a formal dinner party. Such occasions could involve younger members of the family, with entertainment appropriate to the mixed age group: card games, board games and singsongs. Meanwhile, other cooking traditions were developing in Prospect that owed little to *Miss Futter's Australian Home Cookery* or the *Green and Gold Cookery Book*: pasta, baklava, goulash, stollen, were being served by some of the migrant families from Europe who had come to live in Prospect.⁸¹

For quieter recreational pursuits, residents supported the local Institute Library that had been established in 1905.⁸² The library survived with the financial support of subscribers and some help from the council, struggling through the difficult years of the 1930s.⁸³ Keen young readers could catch the tram to visit the Children's

Library in the old Police Barracks in Adelaide.

Musical groups waxed and waned in the Playford years. Prospect's Band, established in 1935 with the encouragement of Mayor Whittle, never recovered from the impact of the Second World War when 27 of the 40 band members enlisted in the services. The band was wound up in 1955. A number of men who had served together in the local ARP formed the Prospect Male Voice Choir in 1945, and this lasted until 1952.⁸⁴ By contrast the new CWA choir flourished in the mid 1950s, as did the many church choirs.

Prospect's lifestyle from the 1950s

The 1950s and early 1960s brought changes to the culture and material conditions of the pre-war years and foreshadowed the greater changes of the 1970s. Telephones and refrigerators were installed in houses along with breakfast bars and vinyl chairs; by the early 1960s residents were installing television sets. Some older houses were 'modernised' to fit in with new architectural fashions, and new dwellings were built of cream brick.

Shopping patterns changed as refrigerators became more common and car ownership increased. New supermarkets affected the patronage of long established shops along Main North and Prospect roads: grocers such as the old CPS (Central Provision Stores), Beilby's or Town and Country, and drapery shops.⁸⁵ The popularity of television led to the closing of the Ozone Theatre and its conversion to a supermarket. Continental delicatessens made their appearance and provided new products.⁸⁶ Car sales yards replaced a number of houses and small shops along Main North Road. Other businesses adapted to new conditions. W. Smith's store on the corner of Bosanquet Street and Prospect Road, which had provided saddlery for horse-drawn vehicles, became a successful hardware and crockery store.⁸⁷ The Greek-born parents of Bill Zaharis worked in factories until they could afford to buy a property for a fruit and vegetable shop on Prospect Road, one of several shops with Greek or Italian owners.⁸⁸

Despite these changes, the existing network of contacts persisted: Lions and Rotary clubs evolved, sports clubs and lodges flourished. By the early 1960s, the Northern Community Hospital, the MBHA centres and new kindergartens were well established. With the open paddocks gone and only a few vacant allotments available, the council concentrated on developing parks and reserves.⁸⁹

In 1934, the year after Tom Playford was elected to parliament, the Blair Athol School opened to cope with the increasing number of children in the northern part of Prospect. Symbolically in 1968, the year Playford finished his parliamentary career, the Prospect Senior Citizens Centre opened, followed two years later by the Nailsworth Senior Citizens Centre. Playford and Prospect were beginning to age. Those who had built new bungalows in the late 1920s were now in their 60s and 70s. Many of the younger people who had played in tennis and basketball clubs in the 1950s had married and moved away from the district. The population of the area was now in decline, with fewer people per household and more elderly people than in 1933. An influx of young professional couples to the district was to ensure further demographic changes and new demands for community services. However, the infrastructure was in place, its development reflecting changes that had occurred throughout the inner metropolitan area: streets had been paved, health and educational services had improved and there were better sporting facilities. There

were changes to daily life that arose from transport developments: buses had replaced trams and there were more cars on the roads. New shopping patterns had emerged with the advent of the supermarket and the decline of the corner store. Television had led to new recreation patterns and migrants had introduced different customs and languages.

Despite the impact of the many changes, people still mowed their lawns on the weekend, gathered at Prospect Oval on Saturdays, pruned their roses after the start of winter and chatted over fences about their children, families, sport and life in general as they watered their gardens. Prospect was a quiet district and suburban life went on quietly.

¹ Lilian Raneberg in *Recollections of Prospect 1982*, Corporation of the City of Prospect, Prospect, 1982, p.19

² This chapter is based on material published in *Treasure*, the Prospect Gallery, 1993, with additional information and assistance provided by colleagues and present and former residents of Prospect.

³ Australian Bureau of Census and Statistics, Community Profile, based on the 1991 census, catalogue no. 2722.4.

⁴ Max Lamshed, *Prospect 1872-1972: portrait of a city*, Corporation of the City of Prospect, Prospect, 1972, p.48

⁵ Older residents describe the call of the rabbio as 'rabb-io' with the emphasis on the first syllable, not 'rabbit-o' as was common in Sydney.

⁶ One-third of Australia's population lived in the six capital cities by 1901 and nearly two-thirds by 1961. See J. W. McCarty, 'Australia's capital cities in the nineteenth century', in *Australia's Capital Cities: historical essays*, eds J.W. McCarty and C.B. Schedvin, Sydney University Press, Sydney, 1978, p.6. In South Australia this process has been one of suburbanisation and metropolisation since few towns of any size developed outside Adelaide and its environs. See Sandra Holton, 'Twentieth century South Australia: from a patrician to a plebeian view', *The Flinders History of South Australia: social history*, ed. Eric Richards, Wakefield, Adelaide, 1986, p.559

⁷ Lamshed, pp.42.3.

⁸ Richard Apperly, Robert Irving and Peter Reynolds, *Identifying Australian Architecture: styles and terms from 1788 to the present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989, pp. 206-9.

⁹ *Prospect Review* March 1968. Martin was a former Prospect alderman. The interest was about 11 s a month.

¹⁰ The first soap-box derby in the British Empire is reported to have been on Irish Harp (now Regency) Road in 1938 with Radio 5DN in attendance. David Towler, *The First Sixty Years 1924-1984 5DN 972*, 5DN Macquarie, North Adelaide, 1984, p.23

¹¹ Interview with Vera Baghurst June 1993. All interviews conducted by the author.

¹² *Recollections of Prospect 1982*, p.21. Born in 1915, Alvan Aslat was one of the third generation of his family to live in Beatrice Street.

¹³ Although the 1933 census figures do not provide a breakdown enabling appropriate analysis, this view is based on anecdotal evidence. The 1933 figures reveals that 5 per cent of male breadwinners worked in public administration and the professions, and 17.5 per cent in commerce and finance, whereas 28 per cent worked in the 'industrial' category, including manufacturing, building, roads, railways and earthworks.

¹⁴ See *Recollections of Prospect* for information from Alvan Aslat, Laurie Sharpe and Aileen Underwood, pp.6,18, 24.

¹⁵ Len Wilson in *Recollections of Prospect*, p.62

¹⁶ See Glen Withers, Anthony M. Endres and T.M. Perry, 'Labour', in *Australians: historical statistics*, ed. Wray Vamplew, Fairfax, Syme & Weldon, Sydney, 1988, p.152; Jim Moss, *Sound of Trumpets: history of the labour movement in South Australia*, Wakefield, Adelaide, 1985, p.308; Ray Broomhill, *Unemployed Workers: a social history of the Great Depression in Adelaide*, University of Queensland press, Brisbane, 1979, pp.2, 15-16

¹⁷ The figure of 3,029 is given in the 1933 census and includes men over 65, employers and 110 who did not state income.

¹⁸ Cliff Burnard in *Recollections of Prospect*, p.77.

¹⁹ From a former Prospect resident now a member of the Kensington and Burnside Historical Society.

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- ²⁰ Interview with Bob Pash in *Prospect Review* October 1989.
- ²¹ Theresa Farrelly in *Recollections of Prospect*, p.34.
- ²² Ita Allen and Miriam Goldsworthy in *Recollections of Prospect*, pp.11, 65.
- ²³ Interview with Vera Baghurst June 1993.
- ²⁴ Anne Suter in *Prospect Review* December 1994.
- ²⁵ Lamshed, p.108.
- ²⁶ *Treasure* features a group photograph of the 1928 picnic, pp.48-9.
- ²⁷ According to the 1947 census, in comparison with 20 other metropolitan municipalities Prospect ranked third with regard to the percentage of Methodists in the population and 18th in percentage of Roman Catholics. Analysis provided by Dr Jenny Tilby Stock. There is still no hotel along Prospect Road.
- ²⁸ Anita Woods, *The Prospect North Story: a history of St John's Uniting Church, Prospect*, St John's Uniting Church, Prospect North, 1988, p.76.
- ²⁹ Its main rivals in size were Mile End and Unley. It was overtaken by the Holder Memorial at Mile End in 1935. The student roll was approximately 600 from 1935 to 1939. Woods, p.45.
- ³⁰ Ron Bridgeman and Ern King in *Recollections of Prospect*, p.84. The Rechabite Hall was used from 1944 to 1966. Woods, pp.49-50.
- ³¹ Woods, p.51.
- ³² This figure is from the temporary roll of honour established by the City of Prospect and recorded in the *City of Prospect News* 1.4.1946. In war-time 396,661 Australians served overseas and nearly 1,000,000 were in uniform. See Michael McKernan, 'War', in *Australians: historical statistics*, p.411.
- ³³ Miriam Goldsworthy in *Treasure*, p.8.
- ³⁴ Albert and Beryl Lokan in *Recollections of Prospect*, pp.39, 80.
- ³⁵ *Prospect Review* March 1968. For example, the Prospect Croquet Club helped with stalls for the Comforts Fund, Christmas hampers, purchase of War Savings Certificates, support for Red Cross and knitting of socks. See 'Prospect Croquet Club 1926-1986', brochure.
- ³⁶ Information from Jean Schomburgk July 1994 and Kath Millowick February 1995.
- ³⁷ The group was formed in May 1940 and continued until March 1946. Working bees were held fortnightly at the home of Mr and Mrs Arthur Shillum. Of the 114 who had been on active service, six became prisoners of war. Twelve of the 114 died as a result of war service. Miriam Goldsworthy in *Treasure*, p.8; Woods, pp.65-6.
- ³⁸ About 8,000 listeners were members of the club. Members knitted baby garments and items such as bed jackets and rugs for elderly people.
- ³⁹ Molly Casanova in *Treasure*, p.36; *Standard Messenger* 13.1.1993.
- ⁴⁰ Lamshed, p.87.
- ⁴¹ Lamshed, pp.69-70.
- ⁴² Lamshed, p.87.
- ⁴³ *Treasure*, p.30.
- ⁴⁴ Lamshed, p.108.
- ⁴⁵ Information from Kath Millowick February 1995..
- ⁴⁶ The percentage of Australian women aged between 20 and 24 who were married was 48 in 1947 and 60 in 1961. A.W. Martin, 'The people', in *Australians from 1939*, eds. Ann Curthoys, A.W. Martin and Tim Rowse, Fairfax, Syme & Weldon, Sydney, 1988, p.69.
- ⁴⁷ In the 1947 census Prospect was ranked 10th out of 21 municipalities for the percentage of the population over 65 years and 16th out of 21 for the percentage of the population under 21. Figures provided by Dr Jenny Tilby Stock.
- ⁴⁸ Information from Irene and Max Smith 29.12.1994. The Smiths lived with Max's father for two years and then in a caravan. Having no children meant that they did not have priority for getting a building permit. See also Apperly, Irving and Reynolds, p.211.
- ⁴⁹ Information from Kath Millowick February 1995.
- ⁵⁰ *City of Prospect News* 1.4.1946.
- ⁵¹ Miriam Goldsworthy and her parents were able to move into their new home in May 1958. *Treasure*, p.8. Saving for the house was helped by the fact that Miriam had negotiated for her wage to be paid at male rates when the female rates of pay were normally much lower than those for males.
- ⁵² *The Prospector* June/July 1981.
- ⁵³ The school was established after 'Comonella' (originally called 'St Catharine's') was acquired from the Lewis family. Blackfriars opened in February 1953 with 45 students. *Prospect Review*, Autumn 1987 and March 1993.

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- ⁵⁴ Information from Jenny Flood 19.5.1995.
- ⁵⁵ Interview with Irene and Max Smith 29.12.1994.
- ⁵⁶ The Burnside War Memorial Hospital was established in 1949, the Le Fevre and Port Adelaide Community Hospital in September 1950, followed by the Glenelg Community Hospital and the Ashford Community Hospital in November 1950. Information from Dr Ian Forbes.
- ⁵⁷ A.K. Johninke (comp.), *Northern Community Hospital Inc.: highlights of development 1951-86*, Northern Community Hospital, Prospect, 1986, pp. 1 -23, 39. Further information from the hospital's Chief Executive Officer, Mr A. Wilson, 28.12.1994.
- ⁵⁸ Johninke, appendix E.
- ⁵⁹ Lamshed, pp-88-9; interview with Bob Pash. The Prospect Branch of the District Trained Nurses Society, formed in 1912, evolved into the local Royal District Nursing Society.
- ⁶⁰ *City of Prospect News* 1.4.1946; Robert Pash in *Prospect Review* October 1989.
- ⁶¹ Lamshed, p.90. Prospect had one of the earliest MBHA centres in Adelaide. It began in premises lent by the District Council with the Council providing leadership in the organisation: the Mayor was president and the Town Clerk was vice-president. A second centre was opened at the Church of Christ in 1925. By 1935 the annual attendances had reached 10,000. Centres were established at the Prospect Town Hall, Nailsworth and in the Highbury ward by 1940 and an auxiliary at Broadview by 1941.
- ⁶² Lamshed, p.91.
- ⁶³ *Prospect Review* December 1993.
- ⁶⁴ The Wallaroo Cottage Homes were established as a result of private philanthropy, being the gift of Mr J. M. Richman.
- ⁶⁵ *Prospect Review* June 1988.
- ⁶⁶ *Prospect Review* December 1989.
- ⁶⁷ Serving for the usual term of two years, they included an accountant, a solicitor, a newspaper editor, an engineer with British Tube Mills, a city tailor, local businessmen and a railways officer.
- ⁶⁸ *Prospect Review* July 1993.
- ⁶⁹ It was not until 1977 that three women stood for election. In June 1977 Angela Lewis, later to become Angela Bannon, was elected to Council. Jennifer Strickland, who contested the election, was later to become Prospect's first woman Mayor in May 1985. *Prospect Review* July 1993.
- ⁷⁰ A number of older residents commented that country folk liked Prospect's open paddocks and its proximity to the northern country areas.
- ⁷¹ Lamshed, p.89.
- ⁷² Interviews with Una Clarke 29.12.1994 and Neville Smith 2.1.1995.
- ⁷³ Interview with Neville Smith.
- ⁷⁴ Interview with Neville Smith.
- ⁷⁵ John Wood, *The Centenary History of the North Adelaide Football Club Inc.*, North Adelaide Football Club Inc., North Adelaide, 1993, p.112.
- ⁷⁶ Wood, pp. 116-7; *Treasure*, pp.38-9.
- ⁷⁷ Lamshed, p.81. The team also won the premierships of 1968-69, 1969-70 and 1970-71.
- ⁷⁸ Lamshed, p.75; Katie Hicks in *Treasure*, p.31.
- ⁷⁹ The Blair Athol Tennis Club was established in 1928. The Prospect Gardens Women's Bowling Club was established in 1949 using part of the Prospect Gardens Reserve, land that had been used for air-raid shelters during the Second World War. *In the Club: an exhibition of Prospect sporting club memorabilia*, pp.5, 9.
- ⁸⁰ Examples are the Baptist Church tennis teams and the Prospect North Methodist Church basketball (netball) teams. Several church sports teams had disbanded by the mid-1970s; the Prospect North football teams in the 1960s, table tennis teams by 1971 and some netball teams in 1975. Information from Neville Smith and Woods, pp.90-1.
- ⁸¹ Figures from the 1954 census reveal that about 200 people in Prospect had been born in Germany and Austria, 75 in the Netherlands, 43 in Czechoslovakia, 74 in Hungary, 62 in Greece, 179 in Italy, 37 in Malta and 182 in Poland.
- ⁸² There were 80 subscribers by 1906.
- ⁸³ The library provided a service until 1988. *Prospect Review* October 1988.
- ⁸⁴ Lamshed, p.60.
- ⁸⁵ Ita Allen in *Recollections of Prospect*, p.66.

⁸⁶ Nick DiMaria and his wife, who in 1995 still had a delicatessen at 192 Prospect Road, opened their shop in 1962 as the second continental delicatessen on Prospect Road.

⁸⁷ *Treasure*, p.42. Smith's daughter carried on serving behind the counter until her retirement in 1993 when she was in her 80s.

⁸⁸ Bill's parents had come to Australia and married in 1958. Their move to Prospect after they had survived difficult early years in this country was typical of several successful Greek migrants. *Treasure*, p.54.

⁸⁹ This intention had been outlined at the cessation of the Second World War, see *City of Prospect News* 1.4.1946.