

**LIFE AND TIMES AT THE  
BELAIR HOTEL**

**Janet Callen**

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*Cover photo - main: Belair Hotel, Belair Road crossing, 1910. (Courtesy Mitcham Heritage Research Centre)*

*Cover photo - insert, Belair Hotel, (Janet Callen)*

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## FROM BLACKWOOD INN TO BELAIR HOTEL

In the 1850s horse drawn travellers, exhausted after the steep and dusty climb from Mitcham to Sleeps Hill, would lounge about and refresh themselves at the Travellers Rest, run by Gottfried Kolle (1856-1862). Gradually they were joined by sawyers and wood cutters who, with loaded carts, were travelling down from the Tiers to Adelaide.

The hand-hewn track up from Mitcham crossed a ford in Muggs Hill Road and wound its way steeply along the ridge to the west of the current Old Belair Rd. The track, regularly gouged into by iron tyres, was stony and dusty in summer, and slippery and muddy in winter. It was known as ‘The Government Cut’. At the bottom of the Cut was the Blythwood Inn (1851-1879), situated to the west of the Mitcham Cemetery (1851-1879).



**The Blythwood Inn** (*Courtesy Mitcham Heritage Research Centre*)



### Old Belair Rd 1910

*(Photo. C. Petts, courtesy Mitcham Heritage Research Centre)*

The nearby Government Farm supported the horses of public servants and those of the Police Escorts bringing gold back from the Victorian gold diggings and on the slopes overlooking Government Farm settlers were establishing fruit orchards and vineyards. Gustav Ludewigs was busy planning a small township on his holding at the top of Sleeps Hill, naming it Belair.<sup>1</sup>

By 1860 a new Mitcham Hill Road was being surveyed leading up from Mitcham to join the road to Clarendon. When this road was completed Robert Burfield seized the opportunity to establish a small shanty with a tap room, stables and blacksmith's forge on the corner of his property, Blackwood Vale Farm. This small ale house, akin to many which existed at the time - a cottage with a tap room where liquor was served - was situated on the site of the current Belair Hotel. The licence remained in Burfield's hands for most of the time between April 1869 and September 1877.





**The Old  
Blackwood  
Inn,**  
**photo 1933**  
*(Courtesy  
State Library  
of South  
Australia,  
B8795)*

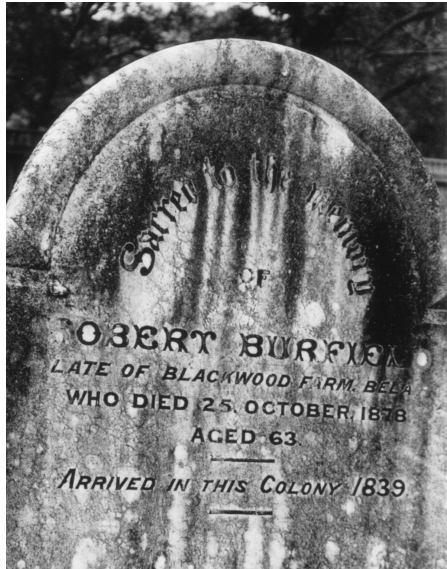
Burfield was an influential figure in the district, with land holdings extending over much of present day Glenalta. He was elected onto the Mitcham Council in 1861, and was on the committee involved with the establishment of St John's Church of England in Coromandel Valley. By 1877 he was on the new fourteen member management committee of the Inebriates Retreat at Belair. It was at this time that he transferred the licence of the Blackwood Inn to Henry Cliff.

Burfield's accidental death in October 1878 was widely reported by the press. It happened when he was carting water for his extensive garden near Minnow Creek. At this time coronial inquests were conducted in hotels and so Burfield's body was taken to the nearby Blackwood Inn.

**Death of Mr Burfield of Belair** -An inquest was held by the City Coroner (Mr T. Ward J P) on Saturday October 26 at the Blackwood Inn Belair, on the body of Robert Burfield, an old settler in the neighbourhood, who was found dead under his cart in a creek the previous day. Mr Shepley was Foreman of the Jury. At the place where the accident occurred there was a wooden bridge over the creek with only space for one vehicle to pass, a post and rail fence being on each side. From the evidence it appeared that Mr Burfield on Friday afternoon left home at about a quarter to five o'clock with the object of getting a cask of water from the creek for household purposes. afterwards, Mrs Samson who lived near the creek, heard Mr Burfield calling to his horse to stop, and looking towards the bridge saw the horse and cart which he was driving fall over the side of the bridge. She ran to the spot and saw the deceased lying with his face in the water. The splash of the dray was

upon him and he lay in about two feet of water. The horse was freed, the cart removed, and the body was conveyed to the Blackwood Inn, where it was found that life was extinct... The jury returned a verdict that death was caused by accidental suffocation and from injuries received by the fall. Mr Burfield was a colonist of forty years' standing, and about sixty years old.

*The Adelaide Observer*  
Saturday, 2 November 1878



Grave of Robert Burfield, Coromandel Cemetery (Photo R. Sabine 2007)

Six years later the sale of Blackwood Farm, with blocks adjacent to the Belair Hotel, was announced by Townsend and Son of the South Australian Auction Mart.

Let us envisage a traveller of the era boarding the train to Belair, in response to this advertisement for the sale:

**The Blackwood Farm at Belair** -The whole of section 1063 and part of Section 874 Hundred of Adelaide, containing 100 acres or thereabouts, and bounded on the East West and South sides by three Government or District Roads, adjoining the Government Farm on the west and the properties of A.G. Downer Esquire and P.F. Laffer on other sides, and situated immediately to the rear of the Belair Hotel and in very close proximity in one part to the Blackwood Railway Station on the Adelaide to Nairne line.

This magnificent Estate is well known as the Blackwood Farm ... the soil is very productive ... good feed is cropping up all the year round. Well established and thriving Orange, Lemon, Peach, Cherry, Pear, Almond, Walnut, Cape Gooseberries, Strawberries figure in great abundance... A wide creek of permanent water runs through a portion of the estate over which rustic bridges are dotted here and there on the banks of which grow immense weeping willows. Some portions are heavily timbered with magnificent gum trees and ever-greens, the perpetual haunt of sweet singing birds of every feather...

*South Australian Register*, 7 October 1884

Our visitor alights at the new Blackwood railway station and proceeds cautiously towards the Belair Hotel. His way is lit briefly by the light from the panting engine before it pulls away into the gloom. As he approaches the hotel light from the obligatory gas lamp over the door twinkles weakly through the misty rain. Though it is October and supposedly Spring, water is dripping from the gum trees and the two-storeyed building of the hotel is shrouded in mist.

Once inside, the visitor finds the hotel much to his liking. The 1880s, following the Victorian goldrush, have been prosperous years for the colony. The railway from Adelaide to Nairne was opened in 1883 and with prospects of improved transport subdivision is proceeding and more people have moved into the district. In response to the increase in visitors the old Blackwood Inn has been upgraded and is now known as the Belair Hotel. It meets the requirements of the Licensing Bench, established in 1869 by the South Australian Government to control the liquor trade. Hotels now have to provide meals and accommodation in addition to liquor.

The law demanded that hotel structure, room size and ceiling height were regulated. By this time architectural plans had to be submitted for new buildings, and inns and shanties not obeying the new regulations did not have their licences renewed. The inns that were expanded now became known as hotels. H.C. Richardson, later one of the inaugural members of the South Australian Institute of Architects, in 1880 designed the two-storeyed main building with a balcony fenced with wrought iron and shaded with blinds, similar to many other hotels of the era. Wooden panelling and stained glass featured in the interior. There was an underground cellar.

In the bar, replacing the original tap room, with a bar counter rather than the tap from which liquor previously was served, our visitor learns of nearby stables and the Water Reserve across the road from the hotel.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of this is to accommodate horses and stock being driven through Blackwood while the passengers and drovers stay at the hotel. In line with public policy it is provided by the Council free of charge.



**Belair Hotel, 1899** (*Courtesy Belair Hotel*)



There is a photo on the wall of Mary Anne Hillier, nee Menpes, licensee of the hotel from 1880-81 and now running the Crown Inn at Reynella. Our visitor learns with wonder of the horrific voyage Mary Anne survived as an infant, coming to the colony aboard the *Moffatt* in 1839. Thirty of the passengers, including babies and children, were buried at sea. He is then shown into an upstairs bedroom, and we will leave him tumbling into bed, looking forward to viewing some of the property at Blackwood Vale Farm.

**Mary Ann Hillier, c 1850s**  
(*Courtesy J. McBride*)

## A PAST ERA AT THE BELAIR HOTEL

By 1887 the population of Belair and Blackwood combined was approximately 560 people, mostly gardeners and orchardists. The proposed subdivision of Government Farm was finally averted and Belair National Park was established in 1891.<sup>3</sup> Over the years visitors to the Park increased and the Belair was close enough to provide accommodation for holiday makers. Travellers, too, were using the new railway and improved roads and were looking for meals and accommodation. Stabling was available and for drovers there was the Water Reserve for stock. Though official closing time was 11pm, bona fide travellers, who had travelled more than seven miles in the day, could be served any time, and had to be extended hospitality.

For the first time in the 1880s licensees were allowed to have tap rooms 1000 yards from the nearest licensed premises at no extra fee. Thus, in 1887 Helene Marie Masson extended her business by successfully applying for permission to have a tap room 1,100 yards from the said house, and situate at Blackwood Railway Station, to be managed by the applicant.<sup>4</sup>

For some years the interior of the Belair Hotel, with its wooden panelling, velvet curtains and lead light windows, made a comfortable venue for local groups to gather. In 1906 the *Unley Citizen* reports:

On Saturday week last the St George's Football Club ... journeyed to Blackwood in drays where they met a team from Coromandel Valley ... After the match, at which Coromandel Valley was defeated, they drove to the Belair Hotel where a splendid dinner was in store for them much to the delight of all. After dinner a dance was held.

*Unley Citizen* 17 August 1906 p3

At the time cards and billiards were permitted in hotels, though these activities were frowned upon on Sundays. In 1885 publican Thomas Dunn had been granted the first billiard licence at the hotel and in 1907 Ethelwyn Wilson, Licensee of the Belair Hotel, applied again for a licence at a hearing entitled 'Publicans and Billiards.' The applications were made to the hearing 'Publicans and Billiards' of the Adelaide Licensing Bench, 'at the annual meeting, to be held at the Police Court Victoria Square, Adelaide, on Tuesday 12th March 1907 at 11 o'clock in the forenoon.' In 1911 Licensee Charlotte Toleman was included in

the list of successful applicants of the 'Publicans and Billiards, New Applicants for Old Houses.'<sup>5</sup>

Hotels were still required to receive corpses for inquests unless there was a police station within two miles. The nearest police station, opened at Overway Bridge (now Pinera) during the construction of the railway, had closed in 1885. However, by 1908 hotels could refuse a corpse if it was too decomposed or was deemed to have been suffering from a contagious disease.

Patronage at the Belair Hotel was curtailed by the growing Temperance Movement. The SA Government legislated in 1874 to set up refuges for alcoholics and three years later the Inebriates Retreat was set up at Belair on the site of the current St John's Grammar School. In 1892 the Retreat was transformed into a working rehabilitation farm, Hope Lodge. In Blackwood Hon. John Carr, responsible for some of the early subdivision of Blackwood, was concerned at the drunkenness associated with life on the railway camps. He worked to establish a Methodist Chapel in Young St providing an alternative style of socialising, and a Temperance Hotel was opened in 1879 on the site of the current Magnet Shopping Centre car park.



**Temperance Hotel, Blackwood**

*(Photo R. Sabine, courtesy Mitcham Heritage Research Centre)*



Band of Hope marches were a feature of Blackwood life during the 1890s and, on the death of Queen Victoria visitors would have seen the flag on the Temperance Hotel flying at half-mast. At this time Mr Vincent of the Blackwood Temperance Hotel was conducting and accompanying the Blackwood Temperance Choral Society. An application by Charles Reeves to open the 'Hills' View Hotel' near the Temperance Hotel came to nothing.

Due to the actions of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union in 1908 registration of bar maids became compulsory. This separated them from general servants in the hotel and conditions applied. Usually the only women working behind the bar were members of the publican's family.

It was not easy for publicans to obtain a licence from the Licensing Bench. As well as paying fees for the publican's licence, there was the malt liquor licence and the wine licence. The applicant had to be of good moral character and undertake not to serve adulterated or watered-down liquor, not to serve it out of hours, and gambling was forbidden. A clean house had to be provided. For a fee it was possible for a publican to obtain a permit to serve alcohol late for a special occasion, but the usual closing time until 1916 was 11pm. The drinking age in 1908 was raised from 15 to 18 and, because of the efforts of the Temperance Movement, it was raised in 1915 to 21 years.

### **INSPECTION AT THE BELAIR.**

Our next visitor to the Belair Hotel is Walter Millard, Hotel Inspector, responsible for the annual inspection of hotels. It is the early days of World War One. He alights from the train in the broad daylight and negotiating the track leading from Belair Road Crossing (now Glenalta Station) into the hotel yard he is struck by the dilapidated appearance of the building. A tumble-down white picket fence separates him from the muddy Main Road. Some sheets, formerly white but grimy with smoke from the nearby locomotives, are dangling from a sagging clothesline propped up by a forked stick near the side of the building. Several hens with scanty feathers scuttle out from under his feet. He knows that Clarence Penny, publican 1912-13, has recently lost his licence. It was he, Millard, who had instructed the Clerk of the Licensing

Bench to record:

Pursuant to section 79 of The Licensing Act 1908 I hereby give notice that on the 10th day of September, 1913, at the Police Court, Adelaide, the licence of Clarence M. Penny, of the Belair Hotel, Belair, was forfeited under section 70 of the said Act.

Wm. Hall, Junior Clerk,  
Adelaide Licensing Bench.

This was because Penny was ‘within a period of two years convicted two several times of offences for which his licence is liable to be forfeited.’ Nine miles from the nearest hotel, Penny may have been tempted to serve liquor out of hours or to serve ‘adulterated liquor.’<sup>6</sup>

The licensee during this visit in 1914 is Ellen Coonan. Ellen complains of how difficult it is to get staff to stay at this semi-rural hotel, half way between the straggling shops of Blackwood and the small township of Belair. The work load is forbidding. At this time the building is heated during the cold wet Belair winters by wood fires and the cooking done on a wood stove. At night the gas lamps require lighting. Water in the wash house or laundry is heated in a wood-fired copper and the washing stirred around with a copper stick, which resembling a broom stick. When the wash is finally hung out, passing steam trains puff out black smoke on sheets and towels drying on the line at the back of the building. A chip bath heater warms the water in the upstairs bath room. Getting hot water for cleaning all rooms including the drop toilets is almost impossible. Milk is provided by the house cow living in the adjacent paddock and milking is done twice a day. The poultry is kept in the hotel yard. Removal of manure from the stables and yard is a constant problem. Rubbish, too, has accumulated. There is as yet no rubbish collection in the district.

Ellen has eight sleeping rooms, four sitting rooms, and one bar room to maintain. Walter Millard noted that ‘the bedding was not at all satisfactory and the house generally not clean.’ Ellen was by now required to keep a register of lodgers, and this she had failed to do. Millard wrote that ‘this house is in only just fair repair, and roughly kept and very little patronised by lodgers.’ Ellen was ordered to get the stables cleaned and white washed with hot lime.<sup>7</sup>



The next report was no better. The Clerk of the Licensing Court recorded in 1916: 'This house is in generally poor repair and appears to be very carelessly kept.' By May 1917 the licence was lost:

The Licencing Court constituted for the licensing district of Adelaide, sitting at the Deputation Room, New Government Buildings, Flinders St, Adelaide, on the 15th day of May, at a special meeting called for the purpose of considering and determining information for forfeiture of licences, under the provisions of the Licensing Acts 1908 to 1916, made an order declaring the licence of Ellen Coonan, in respect of the Belair Hotel, situate at Blackwood, to be forfeited, on the grounds of her having been convicted 2 times within a period of 2 years of offences for which her licence was liable to be forfeited.

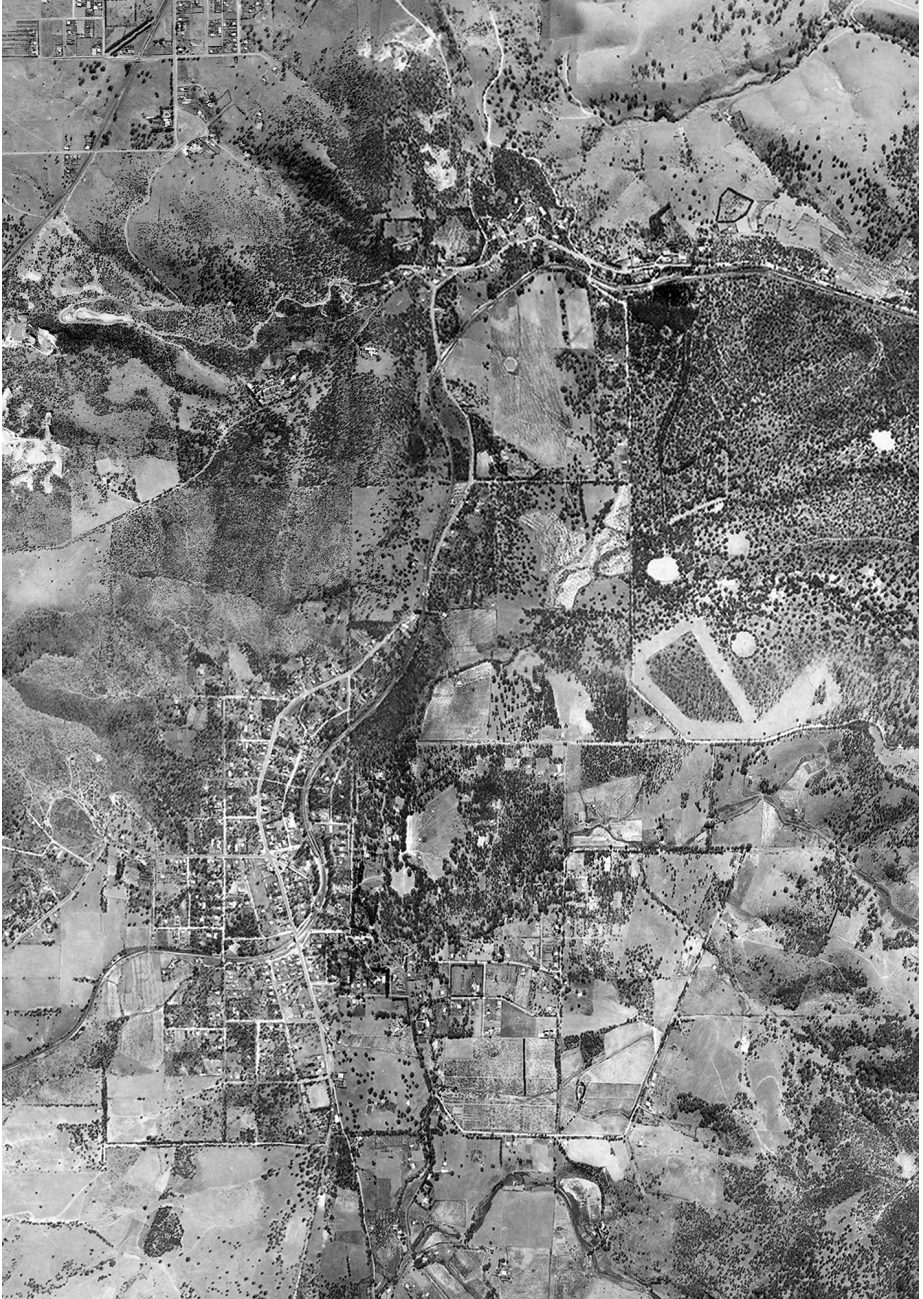
M. Mc Bean, Clerk of the Licensing Court.<sup>8</sup>

The licence was renewed in 1917 and granted to Ellen's son, Thadiaz Coonan.

Due to pressure from the Temperance Movement a state-wide referendum was held in SA on 27 March 1915, resulting in the 6pm closing of hotels. Though many hotel bars were remodelled at this time to cater for a sudden influx of drinkers between the hours of 5 and 6 pm, little changed at the Belair.<sup>9</sup>

## **THE HOTEL IN BLEAK TIMES**

By the 1920s the population of the Blackwood Belair district was still semi-rural, with dairy farms, grazing, gardens and orchards on the slopes between the hotel and the National Park. Cars were beginning to be seen on roads and some people travelled by train to work in the city. Shops were spreading along Coromandel Parade and Main Road at Blackwood. To accommodate the needs of the increasing number of children and young people in the district the Boys Club Hall was established in 1903 near the current Hewett Oval and catered for many social activities. For functions at Belair there was the Belair Parish Hall. The Belair Primary School opened in 1912 and the Blackwood School in Gladstone Rd opened in 1929. From 1919 electricity was available, and in 1914 the telephone exchange opened in the Blackwood Post Office. But the euphoria following the end of World War One was dampened by a flu epidemic which gripped the state causing many deaths and resulting in the closure of the borders into Victoria and New South Wales.



Blackwood and Belair District 1936 (*Courtesy Geoscience Australia*)

The situation of the Belair, at an inconvenient distance from both the settlement of Blackwood and from the little township of Belair, added to the difficulties publicans experienced. Licensees came and went in quick succession. Robert Kesteven had taken over from Thadiaz Cloonan and stayed little over six months. During the months that Robert Marshall and Ethel Noble held the licence things remained in 'only moderate repair' and the house 'was not very patronised by lodgers.'<sup>10</sup>

When Arthur Payne took over in May 1920 he was given three months to deal with the situation or the licence would again be lost. A detailed report was given by Walter Millard:

Paintwork and wall hangings throughout are in bad condition, the furniture very meagre and in bad repair. The supply of bed linen is limited and of very poor quality---'<sup>11</sup>

Millard instructed that all the rooms needed repapering or painting, and the many cracks needed attention. The furniture and wood work was to be painted, locks were to be put on the doors, and some furniture replaced. All rubbish outside was to be burnt. Arthur Payne attempted the repairs except for carpet laying and paper hanging himself, with limited success.

When Agnes O'Leary took over two years later the poultry needed confining, the closets were neglected and the partition between them needed repairing. The hall needed to be cleaned. In fact it was recommended that the dining room, parlour, and adjoining bedroom, that is the older single-storeyed part of the building, be demolished. This did not happen as the roof was still leaking one year later. Agnes did however manage to attract lodgers with these limited facilities, and she methodically recorded the numbers:

July	242
August	296
September	309
October	305
November	85
December	115
January	180
February	127
March	96 <sup>12</sup>

Electric light was installed in 1922, reducing the work load for domestic staff. Also being connected to the outside world by telephone reduced the isolation and attracted more custom. Yet the yard remained a problem with rubbish, wandering poultry and dirty stables. The drinking trough outside the front of the building needed a coat of tar. Finally, in 1923, Agnes was able to employ a yard man to care for the stables and the new four car motor garage.



**Drinking trough outside Belair Hotel** (*Photo Ian Mudie, The Chronicle 29 October 1936, courtesy Mitcham Heritage Research Centre*)

However much remained to be done. There was lumber to be removed from the bathroom and the ceiling needed kalsomining. The lower part of the kitchen walls and the woodwork needed paint. The newly developed floor covering, linoleum, was suggested for the stairs and was also popular for use on the top of bars as it provided a soft surface which was easily cleaned.

Walter Millard recommended complete renovation. The balcony was to have a new floor, the bar window new glass, wire screens were to be supplied to the kitchen, the closets were to receive new bigger pans and the urinal was to be scrubbed. The closet walls would be lime washed. Outside the ever growing manure pile was to be carted away, and a shed built for the poultry. The bedrooms would even get new mirrors. At this time there were seven bedrooms, including four with double beds, and one room with two singles.





**Belair Hotel 1936** (*Courtesy State Library of South Australia, B31810*)

By 1926 there was space for six cars and the newly renovated hotel was reported to now be in good condition. Between June and October 1926 there were 604 lodgers.

The Temperance Movement continued to be a strong force in the 1920s. A Methodist service with a combined congregation from the churches of Blackwood and Coromandel Valley was held, and the Reverend Norman Smith, who boarded at the Temperance Hotel, spoke on ‘The Burden and Curse of the Liquor Trade’. It was decided to revive the The Blackwood Band of Hope Society. This non-denominational organisation instructed youth in the value of sobriety, and the problems associated with swearing, smoking, and gambling. Monthly meetings were held in the Methodist Sunday School Hall.

## **DEPRESSION YEARS**

In 1930 the district surrounding the Belair Hotel remained more rural than suburban. Fruit from local apple and pear orchards which extended from Belair to Coromandel Valley was transported to market by rail and stored in the Cold Stores adjacent to the Blackwood Railway Station. Sheep were a common sight being ushered along the Main Road, though some stock came up by train to holding yards at the railway station.



**Sheep Main Rd Blackwood, 1929** (*Photo R. Sabine, courtesy Mitcham Heritage Research Centre*)

Householders had constant problems with straying stock. A ranger had recently been appointed by the Mitcham Council to round the animals up and impound them in pounds, one opposite the Belair Hotel and one in Blackwood. One Blackwood resident wrote:

To the Mitcham District Council

Dear Sir,

On more than one occasion I have phoned the ranger at Mitcham in regard to cattle straying on Carr St and Glen Rd. These stray cattle in the past have done much damage to my garden. I wish to thank the ranger for his promptness in coming to Blackwood within half an hour of call, as it happened on each occasion to be on a Saturday probably he came in his own time---

A letter from the Council to a rate payer, dated 7 April 1933 follows:

Dear Madam,

I beg to inform you that there are cattle in the Mitcham and the Blackwood pounds which we have reason to believe belong to you. Your failure to remove same from the pounds does not relieve you of liability in connection with the matter, and I am hereby directed to give you notice to remove the cattle within 12 hours from receipt of this letter.

Yours faithfully,  
District Clerk<sup>13</sup>

During the Depression unemployment and poverty was widespread. The railway line from Adelaide was duplicated in 1928, the work providing jobs for some. Cracking stones for roads was another initiative to provide work. The new Blackwood Police Station opened in 1933 and Mr Huxley, its first policeman, was kept busy handing out forms for rations and attending to requests for clothing. He recalled that forty workers queued up at his counter to fill one job on the railway line. Men appeared walking through the district with swags on their backs and took up residence in the arbors in the National Park. Shacks and tents appeared in Belair and Blackwood, to the concern of residents. Among the tent dwellers was one woman who camped on the site of the current Chinese Restaurant on Main Road for over a year.



**Blackwood Police Station** (Photo R.Sabine, courtesy Mitcham Heritage Research Centre)



**Holding cells behind the Blackwood Police Station** (Photo R. Sabine, courtesy Mitcham Heritage Centre)

James Bryan took over the hotel in 1932. He and his wife Alice moved to the peaceful rural setting at Belair after a busy life at the Railway Hotel in Murray Bridge. James' daughter, Lorna Mc Morran, recalls her father creating a beautiful

garden at the front of the hotel, with many red and orange cannas. They worked hard to improve the service and the meals. She remembers too the very fine antique furniture inside the hotel. James Thomas Bryan died 16 March 1942. His obituary reflects his busy life as an hotelier. It reads in part:

Mr Bryan entered the hotel business 34 years ago in 1908. His first licence was at the Crown Hotel, Kingston, and he subsequently held licences at the following hotels-Lake Hotel, Milang; Pier Hotel Milang; Railway Hotel Port Elliott; Charleston, Balhannah; Glynde; East End Market; Launceston, Belair, Murray Bridge; Star and Garter and Royal Oak Hotel Clarendon. The latter was his last licence which he surrendered on 4 April 1941.---Although in the trade 34 years he was proud of the fact that only one conviction had been recorded against him. His death removed from hotel life a well known and highly respected identity.

*(The Licensed Victuallers' Gazette, April 1942)*

Mr Claude Hunt was the next licensee at the Belair during the difficult times in the 1930s. It was run down and in the annual assessment of the four public houses in the District Council of Mitcham fell a long way behind the Torrens Arms, the Edinburgh Hotel, and the Avoca Hotel. The assessment included the 'Public house, Stabling, and all other Outbuildings'.<sup>14</sup>

By now the drinking trough, retarred in 1925, needed attention. Before the summer a new one was required.

Belair Hotel  
Blackwood  
14.8.33

To Mr N. Mellor (Surveyor)  
District Council of Mitcham

Dear Sir,

In reply to your letter of the 17 June re Drinking Trough I note you state the Engineering and Water Dept. say they cannot see their way clear to grant a free service of same. I am prepared to pay for the water provided the trough is installed. I am anxious to get same in before the summer as I am asked almost daily about it from horse owners. Trusting you will do your best to grant my request.

I am Yours Faithfully,  
Claude L. Hunt.



Though horses were still common, the increasing use of the motor car meant that by 1935 bona fide travellers had to have covered 50 miles before they could be served out of hours and provided with accommodation at the Belair Hotel.

In Blackwood cars were causing residents other concerns:

To the Mitcham District Council

Dear Sirs

I wish to draw your attention to the state of Glen Rd. It really is a danger as we have no path way other than the road and it is not safe to venture out at night without a lantern or light of some kind also could we not have a road light at the corner of Carr St and Glen Rd. I think it is a shocking state of affairs---

I am Yours Hoping for better roads--- <sup>15</sup>

At Belair the Progress Association had been lobbying for improvement and finally the Automobile Association provided white posts along the sides of the current Old Belair Rd to help on misty winter evenings, and some street lights were installed near the railway station.

## **WAR TIME AND THE BELAIR HOTEL**

By the late 1930s South Australia was pulling out of the Depression. Harry Rupert Symons took over the hotel licence for a long tenure of thirteen years. The money spent on improvements amounted to £60 on the bathroom, £200 on furnishing, and £80 on other general repairs. Running water to the bar, long requested, was finally laid on in 1940 and a fridge was installed in the kitchen and bar. With these improvements visitors were charged 10/- for a day's food and accommodation, and from 42/- to 50/- for weekly board. The balcony was repaired and a 6 ft by 9 ft concrete porch was added at the front door, keeping the dust from blowing into the hall.

Inside the hotel upstairs there were now six single bedrooms and two double ones. An extra one had been created downstairs. There was one sitting room, one dining room, one lounge and the bar was extended by doing away with a parlor. There were two indoor and one out door lavatories and a urinal, the

indoor lavatories being on septic tanks. Running water was at last available all over the building and a bath with a shower over it was supplied with hot water by an electric water heater replacing the chip bath heater. In the kitchen there was one wood stove and one electric stove and electric light had been put on throughout. The modern improvements helped with the work load, but during war time it was impossible to get staff, and there was never time for rest.

A complaint was filed that the hotel was unattended on a Sunday and from the Blackwood Police Station the following letter was sent to Superintendent Crafter in Adelaide:

Sir,

Re Belair Hotel

I have interviewed the Licensee of the Belair Hotel Mr Symons and he has informed me that the premises are not unattended at weekends, he admits that he goes out some Sundays but there is always some person on the premises and the only time the place is locked up is when the cow is being milked for half an hour and the others in the family are away. I visit the hotel very frequently on Sundays and I have always found some person on the premises. I believe the complaint is without foundation unless further information is supplied.

Respectfully returned to the Commissioner of Police.

Mr Landers was Senior Hotel Inspector during World War Two. He arrived by train in 1940 to find a depressed Symons and Mrs Symons with her arm in plaster. Symons explained to Mr Landers that he had been trying to get staff for many months, that his wife did all the domestic work and had finally broken her arm. He had had to refuse accommodation to persons he did not consider 'fit and proper.'<sup>16</sup>

The situation did not improve. A conversation held in 1943 between Mr Landers and Symons is recorded here :

L: Why are you not accommodating people?

S: I have no staff. The wife is doing all the work. I have had no staff for 6 months.

L: Do people enquire?

S: Yes, people want to spend weekends, from Peterborough and the country.

I cannot get staff as the girls do not want to stay because they can get work in munitions and for girls there is no-where to go.

L: Are you continuing to make efforts to secure staff?

S: Yes, I must secure some help or the wife will not be able to continue working as she is.

L: You accommodated a number of persons in the past but during the last 12 months there has been a vast reduction in your guests?

S: That is brought about by staff shortage.<sup>17</sup>

Mr Landers then returned to Adelaide by train.

Harry Symons and his wife managed to improve the situation in spite of staffing difficulties. Several years later Mr Landers reported:

Today I inspected these premises and found them in a very good state as regards repair, excepting two small stains, and not bad enough to warrant order. The dining room was closed and it was noted that the tables were not set up.

I said 'The tables are not set up.'

He (Symons) said 'We have no staff, and the wife has to do all the work.'

I said 'Are you providing meals for the travelling public?'

He said 'Yes we had 8 here for the weekend and the wife had to do all the work, and the cooking. I had to carry all the water up-stairs as there was no water in the mains.'

I said 'You are required to provide accommodation for travellers.'

He said 'There is no demand. The Man-power will have to give me a staff.'

I said 'I realise that the staff problem is acute.'

He said 'Yes, if I could get staff my wife would not have to work like she does.'

On completion of the inspection Symons asked 'How is the place?'

I said 'It is very clean and in good order.'

He said 'Well the wife has to do all the work and the washing also.'

I said 'Well the place is a credit to her then.'

He said 'We have no demand for accommodation as we are too near town.

We could get plenty of questionable guests or parties but I won't have them.'<sup>18</sup>

Publicans found the requirements entitling bona fide travellers to food and accommodation at any hour of the night or day difficult to manage. It was made even more difficult with the prohibition on serving alcohol after 6 pm. On 7 April 1939 'Harry Rupert Symons of the Belair Hotel, situate at Blackwood,' was fined for supplying liquor to someone during prohibited hours. He pleaded

guilty and was fined £5, also court costs of 12/6, to be paid within 24 hours in lieu of 14 days imprisonment. For this offence he was issued with a certificate of triviality.<sup>19</sup> Under Section 189 of the Licensing Act trivial offences included allowing a drunken person on the premises, having the bar door open out of hours, employing unregistered bar maids, and adulterating liquor. A licensee could also be convicted of permitting gambling on licensed premises and for falsifying figures in the Register of Lodgers during the dreaded Inspector's visits.

Sometimes the publican was able to take matters into his own hands. The story goes that, desperate to get rid of a regular drinker banging on the bar door on a Sunday morning, demanding a 'half and half,' the publican emptied the contents of his piss pot onto him from the window of the bedroom above shouting 'Here's a half and half for you alright! Half is mine, half is my wife's!'

Soon after World War Two, the Belair became a destination for holiday makers. Its country location close to the city made it attractive to motorists in the grip of petrol shortages and it was possible to arrive at the hotel, and visit the Belair National Park, by train. From October 1946-July 1947 there were 625 lodgers. Mrs Symons was still doing all the work on her own, and they kept advertising for staff.

The Temperance Movement continued as a force in Blackwood during the 1940s and into the 1950s. The Loyal Temperance Legion met monthly, their meetings being reported regularly in the newly established local paper:

The Loyal Temperance Legion met on 18 March with Ron Coombe in the chair. Minutes were read by Barbara Harwood. There were 15 children present. Miss Harry gave experiments showing the difference between alcohol and water. She also spoke on the work of the LTL. The evening concluded with games.

*The Coromandel* 6 April 1946 p.4

At the end of the war some were euphoric and eager to share the benefits of the district. How long before a grand hotel would be built on Main Road in Blackwood, 'so that visitors from all over the world can come to the best hotel in the best town of the best state of the best country'? was a question

raised in *The Coromandel* 24 April 1953. This was followed by suggestions for building a community hotel at Windy Point. The Blackwood Woman's Christian Temperance Union expressed opposition to the idea, commenting on the social devastation caused by alcohol. (Letter from WCTU Blackwood *The Coromandel* 16 December 1960)



**1953 aerial photo, Belair Hotel in centre.** (Photo Keith Rainsford, O.L. Wilson collection, courtesy Mitcham Heritage Research Centre)

## TIMES OF CHANGE

In spite of the fact that the population of Belair had doubled between 1923 and 1948 Blackwood and Belair were considered rural areas into the 1950s. Blackwood was the first country railway station on the Melbourne line with stock yards, facilities for shunting and a water tank for steam engines in the railway yard. Residents could order library books from the Country Lending Service and these were collected from the station. Department stores sent deliveries by train to Blackwood and Belair. It was common to travel by bicycle though many of the roads were muddy and unsealed. Those with motor cars carried chocks of wood or several bricks in the boot to put behind the wheels when parked on a steep slope, and it was usual to carry a spade in case of getting bogged.

Yet change was approaching. A reporter in the local paper commented that 'refuelling for horses is not now deemed so important as 90 years ago and the horse trough in front of the hotel has been removed'. Rural properties, among them Hannaford's dairy and orchard and the Laffer property, were subdivided. The Belair Progress Association in conjunction with the SA Railways agreed on the name of 'Pinera' (steep hill) for a station near Overway Bridge.

Locally killed meat became a thing of the past as Blackwood came under the control of the Abattoirs Board. 'Are we in the Metropolitan Area?' (*The Coromandel* 10 April 1953 p 12.) became a local topic of discussion. Residents worked together to fund the establishment of the Blackwood Community Hospital and the Blackwood Memorial Hall was opened in 1956. More petrol bowsers appeared and motor garages continued to open, among them Wilkins, and Keith Darwin's Independent Motor Garage on Main Rd.

Wilkins, later  
Armstrongs, Motor  
Garage, Main Rd  
Blackwood. (Photo  
R. Sabine, courtesy  
Mitcham Heritage  
Research Centre)



Expanding subdivision and population growth caused problems. No longer would open pits and pans as lavatories be tolerated. Septic tanks or chemical disposal units were required. In clay soil it was difficult for the effluent to soak away and roadsides became choked with evil smelling liquid waste. Advice for all was readily offered in the paper.

Most of the disposal of liquid wastes in the unsewered areas of Mitcham presents a problem by reason of the clay nature of the soil. This prevents a ready dispersal of the fluids by soakage. Evaporation remains the most

important medium of disposal and can best be obtained by keeping the liquids in the shallow top soil which should be cultivated. The growth of suitable moisture absorbent plants is an asset for a larger part of the year-- (*The Coromandel* 24 Oct 1952)



**One of the last outdoor lavatories, Blackwood**

*(Photo R. Sabine, courtesy Mitcham Heritage Centre)*

## THE MCKENZIES AND THE SPRIGGS

When Hugh Duncan Leslie McKenzie and his wife Dorrie Alvina took over the hotel in 1949 a septic tank had already been installed. A vivid picture is created by the memories of Mrs Valerie Dawn Sprigg, who recalls moving into the hotel with her parents Hugh and Dorrie McKenzie and aunt Mrs Kessner:

I always remember going into that kitchen. There was the big black wood stove with a round black water fountain on top. It had a brass tap. It was a huge dark kitchen. We lived in a flat across the passage from the dining room, with our own separate back door.

For several years I caught the train to work in the city. I remember there was a white turnstile gate on the way up from the Station. Dad kept several race horses and trotters over the line in a paddock with two cows. You'd often see Ronald (Val's future husband) exercising the trotters early in the morning ...

She remembers too that the black smoke from the steam trains spoiled the sheets hanging outside drying from the wash, already dusted with the white kalsomine dust which drifted down from the ceiling of the laundry.





Belair Hotel c.1949, McKenzie family, from left Mrs Kessner, Dorrie McKenzie, Hugh McKenzie, and friends. (Photo courtesy V. Sprigg)

Holiday makers came to the Belair for regular vacations, with the honeymoon couples always being accommodated upstairs. On one memorable occasion there were so many bookings that her parents had to give up their own room.

There were Christmas holiday times and Christmas dinner was every one's favourite. In Val's words:

We had the same customers year after year, usually about 40 people. It was all cooked by my mother and my aunt Mrs Kessner. Mum and I were on our feet all day never stopping to eat. We filled up on the left overs when they'd all gone home. There was always a Christmas pudding with threepences and sixpences in it. If too many came back for second helpings we had to use bottle tops instead. I didn't like that. There was always a shiny Christmas tree with tinsel and presents for all the children.

Life for holiday makers and the boarders living at the hotel was comfortable with home cooking, notably Mrs Kessner's apple strudel. Scoops supplied the meat, Jim Scoop delivering for some years with a horse-drawn wagon. For special occasions pasties cooked by Mrs Stratfold were obtained from Stratfold's bakery. Val recalls Bob Parkin delivering the papers, and that the beer kegs which were stored at the cold stores near Blackwood railway station were delivered by



Clem Brady. The Mackereths provided huge orders of vegetables, and frequent visits were made to Dunns Delicatessen and the chemist in Blackwood. Saturday was a busy day with regular customers in the bar, especially during the afternoon. With children of her own, it saddened Val to see that some drinkers left their children in the car.

By 1953, with petrol more plentiful to fuel machinery, and new building materials available, it was time for a total renovation of the premises. At last the bar would be modernised. Mr Landers, still Senior Hotel Inspector, approved a plan which would remove the western walls of the bar and lounge and extend the space by 18 feet. The wall between the passage and bar would also be removed. There would be a new door into the bar from the Main Rd. The counter would be extended from 34 feet to 69 feet and replacement sinks with chrome taps would be made of the new hygienic stainless steel.

The front parlour would be converted to a saloon bar and new ladies' conveniences installed. Kitchen and dining room facilities would be improved with wire screens on the windows and an electric fridge costing \$42. There would be a new ramp and door from outside down into the cellar, which would now have the earthen floor cemented.

The improvements would also extend to the accommodation facilities upstairs. Tradesmen were instructed to:

Build up archway from stair hall to passageway and remove wall between passage and bedroom No. 3 extending area of bedroom. Break out new doorway from bedroom to stair hall.

Build up existing doorway to bedroom No. 2 and break out new door way to western passage way.

Convert eastern portion of stair case hall to a block of ladies' conveniences to contain a WC, a bathroom and a hand basin.

Replace corrugated iron partitions in existing shower and bathrooms and tile walls, remove basin from shower room to bathroom and fix alcove and seat in shower room. Renew front wall of WC. This block to be reserved for males.

In addition an area 18 feet by 49 feet 6 inches would be added to the western wall, to provide a bottle shop. Mr Landers forwarded the proposals to Mr Eldridge of the Licensing Commission and Mr Eldridge 'had no objections.'<sup>20</sup>

The first drive-in bottle shop opened in South Australia in 1955. RSL clubs, proliferating after World War Two, became an attractive option for drinkers affected by early closing. Here they could spend evenings eating, drinking, and socialising.

**BELAIR HOTEL**  
*Here's how . . .*  
TO HAVE YOUR  
**BEER WINES & SPIRITS**  
*Delivered Free to your Door!*  
Simply Ring UW 1003

*The Coromandel, 5 October 1956*

To counteract the drift away hotels began to open bottle shops where patrons could purchase alcohol for drinking at home. Discounting was common and one local resident recalls her husband driving as far as the Edinburgh and Torrens Arms Hotels in Mitcham to save 2d per bottle of beer. The Belair Hotel advertised free home delivery of beer and spirits, beginning in 1956.

The 1954 earthquake which badly damaged significant Adelaide buildings occurred during the night and at first the McKenzie and Sprigg family mistook the rumbling for one of the goods trains which frequently rattled the windows of the hotel. The renovations of the building had just began, and the back of the hotel was precariously balanced on stilts, known as 'toms.' When the walls began to crack Dorrie McKenzie, clad in her night wear, rushed up the stairs and down again with the hotel finances. However, in the bar only one glass was cracked. This earthquake was described in *The Coromandel* 12 March 1954;

Last Monday the people of our district with other parts of the State experienced a terrifying earthquake, so frightening that many have been nervously affected. The resultant damage throughout the district was very heavy indeed, many homes and buildings will need extensive repairs.  
(Rev. R.T. Wylie)

It was possibly due to earth movement during the earthquake that Val and her cousin Kathleen became imprisoned in the upstairs lounge. The door and the window became tightly jammed. It was not until they had been waving frantically for some time that they were able to attract the attention of someone out in the yard. Val recalls their panic finally subsiding and they collapsed among the cushions on the couch in fits of giggles.



**Oakbank Special Easter 1953, at Glenalta railway crossing.**

*(Photo Lionel Bates, courtesy National Railway Museum)*

Another noteworthy occasion was when Mr McKenzie frightened an intruder in the passage, and then recognised him as a local lad from down the road.

With the steam trains so close a constant watch for bush fires was kept during the summer months. A fire, believed to have been started by a passing train, was extinguished at the back of the hotel in 1953. Fire fighters and residents seeking refuge crowded into the hotel, the McKenzies making a never ending supply of sandwiches. Again on Sunday 2 January 1955 the whole district was threatened by a blaze of unknown origin, with one front of the fire burning along Gulf View Road.

At one stage of the proceedings the 3 local units were so busy attending to burning buildings it appeared as if the fire would leap the Main Rd between Gulf View Rd and the Belair Hotel and sweep through the thickly timbered area of Hawthorndene ---

*The Coromandel* 14 January 1955

At the time there were pleas for people to turn off their own hoses to increase the water pressure for the fire fighters.

Hugh McKenzie died suddenly in May 1955:

The sudden death of Hugh McKenzie will come as a shock to his many friends and acquaintances. Well known licensee of the Belair Hotel Mac's popularity could be gauged by the business his hotel continued to hold during the last 6 years--- Well known for his interest in sports he was patron of the Blackwood Football Club until last year, and has been a successful race-horse and trotter owner. He leaves a widow and married daughter.<sup>21</sup>

After her father's death Val ran the hotel with her mother and husband until 1961. Valerie Dawn McKenzie had married her husband Ronald Melbourne Sprigg from the hotel in 1950. Before becoming the publican Ronald had worked for a while in the bar. The couple's first son was born at the Blackwood Hospital and their children attended local schools.

By now at the hotel there were six tables in the dining room, seating twenty four guests. The tariff was 24/- per day, bed and breakfast were 12/-, lunch 5/- and a night meal 6/-. Electric fans were installed in the dining room. There were fourteen lock-up garages for motor cars, though some of these were not on the premises.

Residents still recall the McKenzie and Sprigg family with great affection.

## A SUBURBAN HOTEL

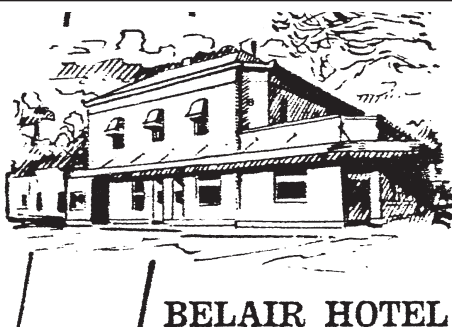
Meanwhile urbanisation of the district was continuing. The Mitcham Council set up a council garbage collection in July 1956. People were instructed that:

The collector will not remove material other than empty food containers, bottles, broken glass, crockery, and all waste materials and remnants of vegetable, animal, and mineral matter usually resulting from the feeding and clothing of human beings.

*The Coromandel* 11 May 1956

The area in the immediate vicinity of the Belair Hotel was changing. Increased traffic caused an accident involving a truck and train at the Glenalta Crossing, the truck ignoring the ringing wigwags. The Glenalta Roadhouse opened across the road advertising afternoon teas, hamburgers, devonshire teas, and grills at all hours. There were Balfours cakes and food available from the new freezers

of this modern grocery store. The new Belair Primary School stood on Main Rd. along from the hotel and Petherick's land, now part of Glenalta, was included in the Sun Valley subdivision. The Glenalta Railway Station and the Belair Hotel were considered draw cards for buyers looking at the Sherwood Estate in the south west part of Glenalta.



**BELAIR HOTEL**  
Belair Hotel, 1961, from promotional material for the subdivision of Sherwood Estate, Glenalta (*Courtesy Mitcham Heritage Research Centre*)

Woolworth's opened in Blackwood in 1964, followed several years later with the opening of Foodland, spelling doom for many of the smaller family concerns along Main Rd and Cliff St (now Shepherds Hill Rd).

In the mid 1960s the South Australian Director of Post and Telegraph, Mr J.R. Sullivan, notified householders of new postal boundaries with post codes. The confusion which had long existed concerning the boundaries of Belair and Blackwood was now at an end. The district was officially divided into Glenalta, Belair, Blackwood, Eden Hills, Bellevue Heights, and Hawthorndene. Street numbering continued, the Belair Hotel being at 141 Main Rd, Blackwood 5051. Blackwood and Belair were now considered outer suburbs of Adelaide.

## THE MILNE ERA

The Milne family took over the hotel in 1961. Marlie Milne recalls the Belair's transition from a country pub in a rural area, providing hospitality to visitors to the city, to a non-residential suburban hotel serving the local drinking community. In Marlie's words:

At first we lived on the premises. It was not very flash up the top, with our room, our son's room, and a lounge for us. It was still 6 o'clock closing then and that's when we went upstairs. We worked hard to provide a service for the local community. We had afternoon teas for celebrations and it was fashionable to have luncheons.

Thus it was reported in *The Coromandel* that:

Jane Hendy and Christopher Curnow, who announced their engagement a few weeks ago, celebrated with a party at the Belair Hotel on the 4th of March. Jane's ring, a lovely sapphire diamond, was particularly admired.

*The Coromandel* 16 March 1967

In September the Belair Branch of the Mothers' and Babies' Association held a successful fundraising luncheon and advance notice was given of the 'Festival of Christmas Trees Luncheon,' to be held in October (*The Coromandel* 29 September 1966). Christmas lunch remained an important annual occasion.

Marlie continues:

We did Christmas lunch year after year. And the Festival of Christmas trees. We were helped by my son Robert. My husband Ray was friends with every one. He remembered all their names. He knew the managers of the breweries.

Residents have happy memories of Christmas times at the hotel, being served personally by Marlie, Robert, and Ray. Visitors to Blackwood recall drives through the hills, having lunch at the Belair as part of the day out. The Milnes became their personal friends.

*The Coromandel*, November 1966



**R. G. & M. J. MILNE**  
**AND STAFF**  
OF THE  
***Belair Hotel***  
MAIN ROAD, GLENALTA      PHONE: 78 1003

***Wish everyone a Merry Christmas  
and a Happy and Prosperous  
New Year***

## MEMORIES OF THE BAR

Residents of the 1950s and 1960s remember the U shaped bar, introduced to help cope with the 6 o'clock swill when drinkers crowded to scoff down as many as four pints of beer in the hour after work. There was a stainless steel drain at the bottom of the counter and rails to rest your feet on. Drinkers enjoyed the atmosphere in the bar in those days, with regulars such as Sid, and Charlie, who had his particular spot at one end of the bar and woe betide anyone who raced him to his stool.



**Plaque marking Sid's corner** *(Photo P. Knight, courtesy Belair Hotel)*

There was also Stan who came regularly on the 5 o'clock train in the 1990s.



**Plaque marking Stan's Corner in the Snug Bar** *(Photo R. Sabine 2007, courtesy Belair Hotel)*



There was the Polish artist, who spoke little English, and painted pictures in the bar from morning till night.



**BELAIR HOTEL THEN AND NOW:** A familiar landmark for local residents, the hotel's facade has altered little in the past 40 years shown in the painting (inset) of the hotel in the 1930s which hangs in the hotel lounge; and our photograph of the hotel today.

**Insert showing the work of the Polish painter** (*The Hills Gazette, 18 December 1974*)

It was before the blitz on smoking and residents recall viewing the scene in the bar through a thick haze of smoke.

There was the occasion when in a rain storm the bar ceiling was bulging with water seeping in from a leaky gutter. The down pipe was blocked up by debris and a tennis ball. Aided by a helpful poke from a broom handle, the ceiling came down in the bar, drenching customers and diluting the beers.

One resident recalls the 'Geriatric Corner' where over their drinks regulars covered topics ranging from women's liberation, marital difficulties, religion, the ordination of women, unions, and the economy. There was the amazing time when a client's daughter rode her horse right up to the bar to get some money from her dad, and the horse was served water and the rider lemonade, and the time when sherry was secretly poured into the whisky bottle to improve



the taste for a fussy client known as 'Razor Blade,' and the time when a drinker, 'Black Stick's,' attention was diverted while his drink was siphoned from his glass. Bewildered, this client did not return to the bar for a week. Ray Milne, fondly known as 'Father' because he referred to every one, however old, as 'son,' presided over the bar. On Saturdays there was always a 'copper' on duty outside, to control the fights that broke out after the football, local Sturt supporters strongly defending their team. For patrons of 'Geriatric Corner' the time spent at the pub was the highlight of the day.

## TEN O'CLOCK CLOSING

The greatest change to hotel life for some years occurred with the introduction of late closing in September 1967.

There had been a major review of South Australian licensing laws in 1966 when the work of the Sangster Royal Commission resulted in the Bill to amend the Licensing Act, and on 28 September 1967 10 o'clock closing was introduced. Bar maids were reinstated in South Australia and the Australian Hotel Association instigated training for all bar staff. By 1968 there was equal pay for men and women working behind the bar.

The Coromandel,  
8 September 1967

## 10 O'Clock Closing

**STARTS TONIGHT**

*Enjoy your drinking in comfort at the*

## **BELAIR HOTEL**

**MAIN ROAD, GLENALTA. PHONE 78 1003**

### **SUPERB LOUNGE AND BARS**

- Soft and relaxing music.
- Barbecue from 6 p.m.
- Open until 10 o'clock nightly.
- Drive-in bottle department.
- Excellent lunches.
- Cabarets and functions facilities.

**PARTIES CATERED FOR . . .**

**PHONE: 78 1003**

Some were wary of the effects of 10 o'clock closing on drink driving. A reporter in *The Coromandel* had commented when late closing became the norm in NSW:

Without commenting on the merits or otherwise of 10 pm closing the NSW Police Commissioner has given these figures, comparing 1954 with 1955. Ordinary arrests for drunkenness have increased by 11.8 per cent, to 81,000, the actual increase being 8,600 extra cases. Road accidents have increased from 31,000 to 37,000, an increase of 133.8 per cent, and convictions for drunken driving have increased by 5.7 per cent. It would be interesting to see how much of the increase is due to the incidence of 10 o'clock closing, and how much to the increased use of motor cars.

*The Coromandel*, 11 May 1956

However, to curb drink driving South Australia became the first state to introduce breath testing. There was a .08 limit on blood alcohol reading, with police using a breathalyser.

Extended hours meant that bars were now no longer the homely domain of male drinkers, where woes could be poured out with the drinks and commiseration supplied. Hotels, including the Belair, had been designed for a different life and times and buildings had to be altered to accommodate new tastes. The bar lost its intimacy with these developments. Freed from the effects of the 6 o'clock swill, patrons were able to spend an evening dining at the hotel. Several hours could be pleasantly spent listening to soft music in the lounge bar.

**Yes . . . now on**

**SUNDAYS**

from noon . . . you can partake of a delicious

**BARBECUE LUNCH  
& DRINKS**

**Give the family a treat . . . they'll love it**

in the comfortable Lounge of the

**BELAIR HOTEL**

MAIN ROAD, GLENALTA

PHONE 78 1003

*The Coromandel*, October 1967

On Saturday nights it was possible to wine dine and dance to a live three-piece band, or sit in the Beer Garden on a summer's evening. The hotel became a family venue offering child-sized meals, and a Sunday barbecue lunch and drinks.

The Coromandel, October 1967

**Spend Saturday night**

at the

**BELAIR HOTEL**



- **WINE**
- **DINE**
- **DANCE**

Untill 11.30 p.m. — 2 hr. 3 piece band

***It's gay, bright and breezy . . .  
bring your friends***

Marlie Milne recalls the change to late closing with mixed feelings. Extended hours meant fewer problem drinkers and the presence of women and families deterred the pick-up girls who used to lurk about seeking custom. No longer was it necessary to serve alcohol to men whose wives and children were left in the car in the car park. But organising food over extended hours meant that Marlie and her kitchen staff were never off their feet. In her words:

At first we did all the cooking in the kitchen. I don't know what I would have done without my friend the late Helen Wood from Blackwood. She was very capable. We had up to 25 casual staff, mostly kitchen hands, washing dishes. We were never off our feet. We were cooking, washing dishes, and serving meals from before lunch up to 10 pm. Sometimes I felt as if I never went to bed--- With the barbecue it was easier. Jack Kernick brought the meat for the Sunday barbecues. They were popular. There were only salads to prepare, less hours in the hot kitchen.

Marlie also recalls opening an intimate saloon bar for women and families. It was shaped like a ship and featured a picture of the vessel the *Coromandel*.

It was at the end of the main bar. There was the parlour and the Snug Bar. Women and families would come in. I insisted that the children sit down, they could get under the feet of the waitress with a tray of drinks. There was a space for them to play.

The Valley Room, overlooking the hills as far as Mt Lofty, was opened in 1973. Here the Milnes extended personal welcomes to diners. On a foggy winter's day there was a warm log fire and in summer customers admired the leafy view over the hills. Ray and son Robert were able to discuss the merits of over 400 wines from the hotel bottle shop, the House of Wine. The hotel was advertised as being 'The Top Spot in the Hills for Wining and Dining'.

The Hills Gazette, 17 April 1973

A sample menu in April 1973 describes the house special, a choice of 'sizzling barbecued steaks- rump, porterhouse and t-bone.' This was served by an immaculate bow tied Swiss waiter, a loyal member of the Milne's staff. Ray recommended a 1970 Mount of Olives red or white table wine as the perfect accompaniment to the steak.

From the bottle shop there was fast home delivery of all bottle supplies for those planning functions at home.

The Hills Gazette, 21 March 1973

## VALLEY ROOM

### BELAIR HOTEL



\*Join Ray and Marlie Milne in the VALLEY ROOM this Easter...

- Good Friday — CLOSED.
- EASTER SATURDAY — Normal Trading. Dinner 12 noon-2 p.m.; 6.30 p.m.-8.30 p.m.
- EASTER SUNDAY — 12-2 p.m.
- EASTER MONDAY, 12-2 p.m. and 6.30 p.m.-8 p.m.
- TUESDAY — Normal Trading.
- ANZAC DAY — OPEN 12 noon.

## BELAIR HOTEL

Main Road, BLACKWOOD. For reservations Phone 78 1003

# BELAIR HOTEL



**THE TOP SPOT IN THE HILLS  
FOR WINING AND DINING**

- JOIN RAY, MARLIE AND ROBERT MILNE IN THE VALLEY ROOM — FOR DELICIOUS BARBECUED STEAKS — OVER 400 RED AND WHITE WINES.



● FOR FAST, FREE HOME DELIVERY OF ALL BOTTLE SUPPLIES, RING 78 3680.

## BELAIR HOTEL

MAIN ROAD, BLACKWOOD 78 1003

## PROBLEMS OF URBANISATION

At this time the community was facing several issues brought about by urbanisation. When would deep drainage, to cope with the effluent produced by the closely settled subdivisions, be a reality in the hills? It was no longer possible for the overflow from septic tanks to permeate gradually through the soil at the bottom of the block. Instead it now flowed into the neighbours' or ran down the hill into the street. Many a resident can recall the unmade gutters at the side of the roads flowing with a green evil smelling sludge. In April 1970 at a special meeting of the Public Works Standing Committee it was pointed out that:

the rapid growth of the hills areas had brought about the situation where it was virtually impossible to satisfactorily dispose of septic effluent and sullage wastes. The serious health hazards which exist were emphasised and the fact that there was a high incidence of gastro-enteritis in the unsewered areas. The Committee was advised that pathogenic bacteria had been tested from samples of effluent taken from ... Glenalta and that conditions were rapidly worsening.

*The Coromandel*, 23 April 1970

Work began in stages during the next financial year, but due to the nature of the hills terrain it was several years before all citizens were satisfied.

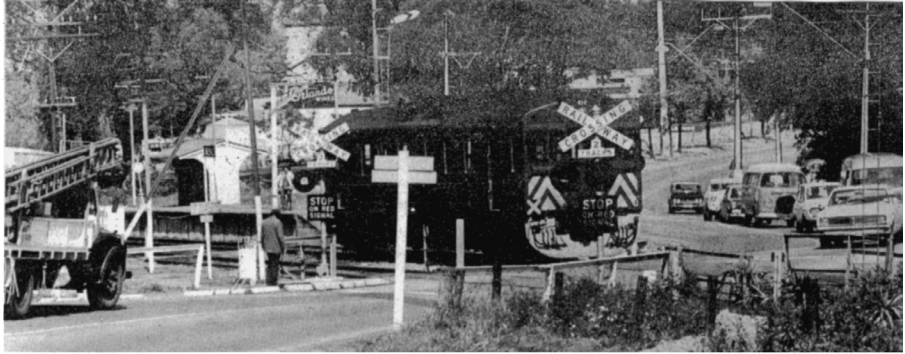
With the machinery involved in deep drainage, plus rapidly increasing motor traffic the road outside the hotel and the nearby rail crossing came under extensive criticism. The Town Clerk of the Mitcham Council claimed that :

the upgrading of our roads is like a mirage ... it keeps receding and receding. Although Blackwood Main Road is in the hills, it is serving an urban need. It should be widened and have proper drainage. The road is no credit to the council and no credit to the State.

*The Hills Gazette*, 17 September 1976

In September 1973 *The Hills Gazette* recorded that modern flashing warning devices had replaced the old wig-wags at the Glenalta railway crossing :

Local real estate agent Mr Peter Sims said last week the upgrading would increase the safety of the crossing. More than 140 trains pass through the crossing each day. Residents had previously complained that warning devices could not be heard from inside the cars and on many occasions they had driven over the crossing only seconds before a train flashed by.



# New warning lights go up

Modern flashing warning devices have replaced the old wig-wags at the Glenalta railway crossing.

Testing was completed several weeks ago and the lights have been in use since.

Local real estate agent Mr. Peter Sims who four months ago echoed (through the Hills Gazette of May 23) the feelings of concerned residents, said last week the upgrading of the crossing would increase the safety of the crossing.

More than 140 trains pass through the crossing each day.

Residents had previously claimed warning devices couldn't be heard from inside the cars and on many occasions they had driven over the crossing only seconds before a train has flashed by.

● ABOVE: The new warning devices are pictured in action as a train crosses the main Belair Road.

● RIGHT: The warning on the killer crossing as it appeared in the Hills Gazette of May 23.

The Glenalta railway crossing The Hills Gazette, 26 September 1973

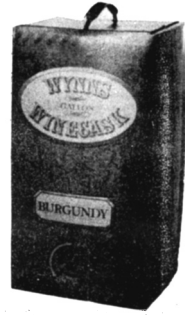


## A HOTEL MOTEL

During the 1970s to cater for an increased number of motoring travellers hotel-motels were springing up all over Australia. The next development for the Belair was to become for a very short period the Belair Motor Hotel.

Accommodation facilities were upgraded for families and garaging increased. Outside more cars could be parked bringing diners, wedding guests and party goers to new improved facilities.

# WYNNS



CONGRATULATE THE  
BELAIR MOTOR HOTEL  
ON THEIR NEW BARS

The Hills Gazette, 18 December 1974

# BELAIR MOTOR HOTEL

**THE DIRECTORS, MANAGEMENT AND STAFF WISH ALL HILLS RESIDENTS A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A PROSPEROUS 1975**

OPEN CHRISTMAS DAY - 9 a.m.-11 a.m.

FRANK SCHEMBRI  
Director  
JOE ELLUL  
Director  
JOHN FARRUGIA  
Manager

FOR FREE HOME DELIVERY PHONE 278 1003

The Hills Gazette, 18 December 1974

## ENTER FINE DINING

Hotels were facing an ever growing challenge from an influx of fast food eateries and the restaurants offering international cuisine which were springing up everywhere. Managers at the Belair Hotel in the 1970s and 1980s accepted this challenge and wining and dining continued to be a feature of hotel life. The choice of food was extended to include Indonesian and Chinese cuisine. There was however always the traditional Sunday roast.

Intimate dining was available in the new Coromandel Room. From 'Dining in the Hills with Nick Hopton:'

One could hardly go past the Coromandel Room in the Belair Hotel for excellent food and friendly service. This well patronised hills hotel has gradually built up a reputation for providing fine fare---The warm cosy atmosphere was a pleasing aspect of our visit on a recent Saturday night.

*The Hills Gazette, 14 March 1979*

The menu on offer included a choice of prawns and oysters, piping hot french onion soup, and a main course of grilled whiting brushed in butter with coleslaw salad and beetroot, or a fillet steak .Dessert was a choice of fluffy lemon pancakes and creamy ice cream, or blueberry flavoured French cheese cake. The meal was accompanied by fine wines, and coffee in clear glass cups and saucers rounded off a meal with 'a pleasant atmosphere, attentive service, a variety of fine food with freshness and flavour served hot, and a good range of leading wines.'

At the same time in the Valley Room, with new wood panelling, sumptuous carpet, and new sound system, there was dining, dancing, and a floor show. By day business luncheons took place and it was possible to cook your own barbecue. The Belair Hotel had become a more sophisticated venue. Allen Cassin, Adrian Langtry and Kevin and Bev Jenkins were among the hoteliers during these years.

*The Hills Gazette, 5 July 1978*

**BELAIR HOTEL**  
MAIN ROAD, BELAIR. Ph. 278 1003  
**UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT**  
THE  
**COROMANDEL ROOM**  
IS NOW OPEN FOR  
● LUNCHES 12 noon to 2.30 p.m.  
● DINNERS 6 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.  
Or relax by an open fire whilst enjoying the fine bar service.  
THE  
**VALLEY ROOM**  
Excellent COUNTER MEALS are available in the  
Valley Room 11.30 a.m.-2.30 p.m., 6 p.m.-8.30 p.m.  
The Valley Room not only provides the patron with quality food but also a  
picturesque view of the valley.  
YOUR NEW HOSTS KEVIN AND BEVERLEY JENKINS WELCOME OLD  
AND NEW FRIENDS.

Throughout South Australia hotels took advantage of the extended opening hours to support local clubs and establish social clubs. The Belair Hotel Golf Club was formed and Blackwood Football Club held regular Thursday night bingo evenings, a free supper an added attraction. The Lions Club conducted

meetings over dinner in the Coromandel Room, a venue which:

With its modern décor, warm log fire and tasteful lighting, has proved most popular for Lion fellowship for their meeting, during which dinner is served.

*The Hills Gazette*, 18 August 1976

## THE EIGHT BALL CLUB

In the 1970s six additional pool tables were set up. The Belair Hotel entered the popular Eight Ball Competition playing teams from St Leonards Inn, Cowandilla, Warradale Hotel, the Cremorne Hotel, the Broadway Hotel, the Morphett Arms, and the Torrens Arms Hotel. In 1981 Belair was the proud winner of the Inter-Zone Championship. In the Second Division was the Old Buffers Team, who played 22 matches and:

Won a few,

Lost a few,

But met and made

A lot of friends.

Erica Harnett was treasurer of the club for many years. She recalls being in the two member cheer squad for the Old Buffers Team with Val Moller waving blue and white banners so enthusiastically that the squad was awarded a trophy as well as the team. Annual Dinners were keenly attended by team members and their wives many of whom were the loyal chauffeurs. The Eight Ball Club members remember a lot of fun and matches continued until the 1990s.

**The Honour  
Board, Belair  
Hotel Eight  
Ball Club** (Photo  
R. Sabine 2007,  
courtesy Natalie  
Hale)





The Eight Ball team and cheer squad. Team members included Mick Harnett, Bob Hale, Bill Morphett (Scrubby), Tom Moller, Lee Clark, and Charlie McTaggart.  
*(photo R. Sabine 2007, courtesy E. Harnett)*

## THE BLUE ROOM, THE GREEN ROOM

Many residents remember the Green Room, opened with free champagne flowing in December 1982. Gigs, Variety, and Live entertainment included 'Prime Time' on Saturdays, 'The Honey Mooners,' 'The Nazz,' 'Mr Jazz,' 'Night Flight,' 'Highly Strung,' 'Risqué Business,' 'Two's Company' and for older patrons the 'Under Cover Band.' There was also the sophisticated Blue Room, with silver service for weddings and other special occasions. There was a royal blue patterned carpet, and chairs upholstered with blue velvet.



The new Blue Room, wedding setting for Margaret and Bob Dikkenberg  
*(Photo courtesy M. Dikkenberg)*

Margaret and Bob Dikkenberg recall that their wedding was the first function held in the renovated Blue Room on a very wet day in April 1983, with a cosy log fire burning in the great open fire place. The room was extended to include a dance floor by opening a partition. Wedding guests attended the ceremony and then dinner was elegantly served at the long tables set up with white table cloths setting off the blue serviettes and blue candles. The dancing continued well into the night.



**Wedding of Margaret and Bob Dikkenberg, 3 April 1983** Bride Margaret Laurel Ayliffe, groom Rene Robert Dikkenberg, best man Paul Frost, bridesmaid Lee Dunn.

*(Photo courtesy M. Dikkenberg)*

In the Club Bar bistro and carvery meals were served. A menu of the day includes crumbed prawns fried in tomato sauce or garlic, and curled in a creamy white sauce. There was also the choice of baked avocado and fillet steak Mexicanne or a pastry case filled with chunks of lobster in rich, light tomato and onion sauce. The sweets were wheeled in on a trolley, among them luscious looking wine trifle, banana mousse, pavlova and cheese cake.<sup>22</sup> The hotel employed the internationally trained chef Barry Kaye at this time.

## THE HOTEL AT RISK

The Blackwood and Belair localities were seriously threatened by fire on Ash Wednesday in the summer of 1983. From the picture windows at the back of the hotel building diners could see clouds of smoke rising from the hills stretching towards Mt Lofty and in a roaring wind on a long summer evening flames were outlined against the sky. Homes were lost on Adelaide's outskirts on this occasion, and some people lost their lives. Melted lawn mowers and the shells of mansions near Mt Lofty and in Waterfall Gully became part of the landscape for many months.

Threatening to staff of the hotel was a robbery which occurred in the 1980s, the armed offenders being escapees from a NSW gaol. A large amount of cash was stolen, the robbers making their escape in a stolen car.

Gambling, often a clandestine part of hotel life, finally became legal with the introduction of the TAB in South Australian hotels in 1983. The Belair Hotel was one of the first to be connected to the central TAB computer. For some years previously a bookie had operated on and off in one corner of the front bar. This offence could mean the loss of a licence but before the days of legal gambling the bookie was accepted as part of the life in most South Australian hotels.

## INTO THE NINETIES

Past publicans' wives mentioned the social isolation and some stigma associated with their position. Nowadays the hospitality industry has changed with hotel staff being trained for specific and prestigious positions in the bars, dining and gaming rooms and in management.

Hotels continue to compete for custom with a growing number of restaurants, fast food outlets, alcohol shops, and clubs. Childrens' menus, games corners, half serves, and babies' high chairs have been introduced to encourage family participation in hotel life.

Families with young children who want to eat early can book between 5.30 pm and 7.30 pm on Saturday nights. Free 'Space Invader' machines near the bar should be an enticement for any youngster, allowing parents to enjoy a kid friendly atmosphere at the restaurant. After 7.30 on Saturday night the music kicks in with a 60/40 dance band to help diners kick up their heels after dinner.

*The Hills and Valley Messenger*, 29 September 1993.



In the early nineties The Green Room was revamped as the Conservatory with a central self-service smorgasbord. Live bands performed at week ends. Melbourne Cup Luncheons, Christmas functions, Mothers' Day, Fathers' Day, New Years Eve and Valentines Day were all celebrated.

**Belair Hotel**  
Celebrates  
Mother's Day  
Sunday, May 14  
*Lunch or Dinner*

★ ★ **\$15<sup>95</sup>** ★ ★

FREE BAILEYS GIFT  
Basket Raffle  
Complimentary  
Flower  
and a Baileys  
for Mum

Bookings essential  
**Phone (08) 2788777**  
**141 Main Road**  
**BLACKWOOD**



25880/08L3-S H 7.3-5/ARC

**BELAIR HOTEL**

**OPEN 7 DAYS  
LUNCH OR DINNER  
FAMILY RESTAURANT**

Carvery and Smorgasbord  
Adults **\$9.95**, KIDS 0-4 **\$4.50**,  
5-12 **\$5.90**  
• Soft Serve Ice-Cream • Icy drinks  
FREE VIDEO GAMES FOR CHILDREN

**LUNCH – Mon.-Sat.**  
**DINNER – Mon.-Thurs.**  
**SUNDAY – Family day**  
**OPEN FOR LUNCH & DINNER**

**EARLY BIRD SATURDAY NIGHT 5.30-7.30**  
**\$9.95 – OPEN 7 DAYS LUNCH & DINNER**  
Lunch: 11.30 a.m. Dinner: 5.30 p.m.



**141 MAIN ROAD, BLACKWOOD**  
**PH. 278 8777**

18C86-06L2511 W.G.Z. 23.1 UAPC

The Hills and Valley Messenger,  
29 September 1993

The Hills and Valley Messenger,  
3 May 1995

During the week cheap counter lunches offering the services of the TAB and Front Bar Sky Channel viewing attracted customers. In the evenings there was the Wednesday Pasta Night, the Thursday Schnitzel Night with karaoke, and the Friday Basket Night, with chicken and fish and chips. Children were attracted by the ice crush drink machine and soft serve help yourself ice cream machine.

The Hills and Valley Messenger,  
23 November 1994



## FAMILY RESTAURANT

Soup . . . Pasta . . . Hot Main Dishes . . .  
 Carvery Roasts . . . Salad Bar . . .  
 Hot and Cold Sweets . . .  
 Soft Serve Ice Cream . . . Icy Drinks . . .  
 Fresh Fruit . . . Bread

ADULTS	CHILD	CHILD
	2-4	5-12
<b>\$9.95</b>	<b>\$4.50</b>	<b>\$5.90</b>



**.. ALL YOU CAN EAT**

**10%** DISCOUNT LUNCH TIMES  
 EXCLUDING SPECIALTY DAYS. MON. TO SAT.

**FREE ENTERTAINMENT SAT. NIGHTS**

SATURDAY, MAY 15	<b>MR. JAZZ</b>
SATURDAY, MAY 22	<b>HIGH GLOSS</b>
SATURDAY, MAY 29	<b>HIGHLY STRUNG</b>
SATURDAY, JUNE 5	<b>UNDERCOVER</b>

VARIETY ENTERTAINMENT IN CONSERVATORY 8 P.M. TO MIDNIGHT

**141 MAIN ROAD, BLACKWOOD PHONE 278 8777**

H1174480A-12may93 418997



UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT ROGER & SUE ANDREWS



For  
your  
dining  
enjoyment

Open  
7 Days

LUNCH & DINNER  
A-LA-CARTE BISTRO

**WEDNESDAY**  
Pasta Night **\$4.90**  
Incl. Salad Bar

**THURSDAY**  
Schnitzel Night **\$4.90**  
Incl. Salad Bar

**SATURDAY**  
Smorgasbord Dinner Dance **\$20**  
Per Person

**SUNDAY**  
Smorgasbord Lunch **\$15**  
Per Person

**ENTERTAINMENT THIS WEEK**

- FRI. FEB. 5 PIANO BAR 8 'til Midnight.
- Music for the Mature aged — LIVE!
- SAT. FEB. 6 "UNDERCOVER" Band

**TOP VALUE**

**SIP'N SAVE**



**\$18.99**



**\$16.99**

**"Cheapest Beer in Town"**

141 MAIN ROAD, BLACKWOOD PHONE 278 8777

The Hills and Valley Messenger,  
February 1993

So successful were these attempts to attract custom that the Belair Hotel was awarded an Australian Hotel Association Award for Best Casual and Family Dining for two years running, 1994 and 1995 and again in 2001.

The Hills and Valley Messenger,  
13 September 1995

Hotels have often adopted an identifying local theme. Proximity to the railway line to the Eastern States means that a train theme is ideal. From the former Overland Corner Café and Coffee Shop the train to Melbourne could be seen snaking its way through the hills. Photos of impressive steam locomotives can be seen in the hallway of the hotel and advertisements for rail journeys feature in the Front Bar. For some years a railway signal stood outside the entrance to the drive-in bottle shop.

**The signal outside the Bottle Shop**  
(Photo R. Sabine, courtesy R. Sabine)

<b>BELAIR HOTEL BOTTLESHOP</b>	
Management & Bottle Shop staff of Belair Hotel wish to thank patrons for their nomination for the 1995	
<b>SMALL BUSINESS AWARDS</b>	
★ THIS WEEKS SPECIALS ★	
TEACHERS SCOTCH WHISKY \$ <b>19<sup>99</sup></b>	BERRI 5 LITRE CASKS \$ <b>8<sup>99</sup></b>
DEAKIN ESTATE WINES \$ <b>6<sup>99</sup></b>	PETER LEHMANN SHIRAZ \$ <b>8<sup>50</sup></b> OR CLANCYS
SPECIALS AVAILABLE FROM WED SEPT 13 TO SAT SEPT 16	
<b>141 MAIN RD, BLACKWOOD PH. 278 8777</b>	



In the mid-nineties Mitcham City Council was approached concerning the introduction of the Pokies to the Belair Hotel. Now no longer would South Australians have to join bus trips for a weekend interstate to play the pokies.

The Hills and Valley Messenger,  
2 December 1992

Finally after much anticipation in May 1995 the Gaming Room with thirty-six machines was opened with the latest games and many prizes to be won. Cheap \$3 meals were available in the Coffee Shop. The Pokies had arrived at the Belair Hotel.

The Hills and Valley Messenger,  
22 February 1995

**BOOKINGS  
ARE NOW OPEN**


**FOR THE  
SUNRAYSLA**

**"POKIE  
CONNECTION"**

**3 NIGHTS  
ACCOMMODATION**  
First class coach  
travel from  
Adelaide. All  
transfers —  
visit 6  
clubs

**Only  
\$167 per person  
ALL INCLUSIVE**  
For further details and bookings ...  
PH (08) 391 1133 ask for CHERYL

**SUNRAYSLA**

  
**MILDURA WENTWORTH**



**FAMILY RESTAURANT  
CARVERY & SMORGASBORD**  
ADULTS \$10.95  
KIDS: 0-4, \$4.50, 5-12 \$5.90  
Soft serve icecream  
Iced Drinks  
Free Video Games for the kids

**SATURDAY NIGHT  
DINNER DANCE  
\$13.95**  
Carvery and Smorgasbord  
7.45 till late  
Bookings Essential

**EARLY BIRD SATURDAY NIGHT 5.30-7.30 - \$10.95**  
**OPEN 7 DAYS LUNCH AND DINNER**  
**LUNCH: 11.30 A.M. DINNER: 5.30 P.M.**

**POKIES COMING SOON**

**Senior Citizens welcome - 10% off food**  
**141 Main Road, Blackwood. Ph. 278 8777**

• Lunch: Mon.-Sat.  
• Dinner: Mon.-Fri.

## COME INSIDE

The upstairs rooms of the hotel provided quarters for staff and accommodation for holiday makers until the 1960s, and there have been occasional boarders since then. Some believe that a ghost haunts the upstairs bedrooms. A previous staff member recalls that none of the bedroom doors will stay shut

Inside the history and tradition of the Belair is recorded on the walls. A plaque marking Sid's Corner graces the wall at one end of the long counter in the Front Bar. Stan Atkinson's spot, commemorating his prompt arrival by train after work for many years, is marked on the wall of the Snug Bar. The long table, the meeting spot of a group of local drinkers throughout the 1990s, is preserved at one side with the obituaries of some who no longer drinking there carefully cut from the newspaper and pinned to a board above the table.



**The long table Main Bar**  
2007 (*Photo R. Sabine 2007*)



**The Snug Bar 2007**  
(*Photo. R. Sabine 2007*)

Staff speak of the friendly atmosphere among the regular customers in the Gaming Room. Amid great excitement one customer won a car on the Friday night \$50 wheel. Sadly, others have lost money.

It is now 2008. Patrons arrive by car, train and on foot to refresh themselves 140 years after the first horse-drawn travellers stopped for the same purpose. From the 19th to the 21st century the Belair Hotel has catered for the changing needs of the community. It continues to do so today.

## **HOTELIERS AND PUBLICANS OF THE BELAIR HOTEL**

### **1869-1993**

1869-74	Robert Burfield
1875	A.J. Liddle
1876	Robert Burfield
1877-79	Henry Cliff
1880-81	John Foach Hillier and Mary Hillier
1882-83	Edward Easter
1884-86	Thomas Dunn
1887-88	Helene Masson (plus tap room at Blackwood Station)
1889-90	William Rounsevell
1891	Jasper T. Levy
1892	Easom John
1893-95	Adolph Heise
1896-98	William Delmont
1899-1902	William C Martin
1903-05	Ellen McArthur
1905	Thomas Summers
1906-10	Ethelwyn Wilson
1910-11	Oliver Toleman
1911-12	Charlotte Toleman
1912-13	Clarence Penny
1913-16	Ellen Cloonan



1917	Thadiaz Cloonan
1917	Robert Kestevin
1918	Robert Marshall
1919	Ethel Noble
1920-22	Arthur Payne
1922-27	Agnes O'Leary
1928-31	Herbert Gillmore and Lillian Gillmore
1932	James Bryan
1933-35	Claude L. Hunt
1935-36	James Rhodes
1936-49	Harry Symons
1949-55	Hugh McKenzie
1955-60	Dorrie McKenzie and Ronald and Valerie Sprigg
1961	Ronald and Valerie Sprigg
1961-73	Raymond and Marlie Milne
1974	John Farrugia
1975	Allan Browning
1975-77	Adrian Langtry
1977-78	Allan Cassin
1978-79	Kevin Jenkins
1979-81	Michael Willshire
1981-82	Paul Clark
1982	Brenton Lessue
1983-85	Allen Cassin
1986	Helene Shaw
1987	Allen Cassin
1988-91	Gerald Calderbank
1991-93	Tony Cavaivolo
1993	Roger Andrews
1993-	Belair Hotel Pty Ltd

In addition to this list there were some short term relieving managers of the hotel.

## SOURCES

- Interviews with Colin Goodenough, Marlie Milne and Valerie Sprigg.
- B. Ashton, *Holy Innocents, a History of the Anglican Church in Belair*. History Committee, Church of the Holy Innocents, Belair, SA 1998
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- D. Kirby, *Barmaids, a History of Womens' Work in Pubs*, Cambridge University Press, 1997
- A. Roberts, *Conversations in Pubs*, Adelaide 1991
- P. Sumerling, *Down at the Local, a History of Hotels in Kensington, Norwood, and Kent Town*, City of Norwood, Payneham, and St Peters, 1998
- South Australian Government Gazette*
- Government Record Group (GRG) 67/76 Licensing Applications 1906-09 (State Records SA)
- GRG 67/40 Inspectors' Reports on Hotels (SRSA)
- GRG 67/57 Returns of Convictions (SRSA)
- Mitcham City Council Ratepayers Letters Box 3

## ENDNOTES

- 1 See Cockburn, R. *South Australia; What's in a Name?* 1990 edition, p. 22
- 2 Now part of Cedar Ave Reserve
- 3 Charles Hall, an early employee of the National Park, lived in a cottage west of the hotel 1897-1936.
- 4 *South Australian Government Gazette* 1887 vol. 1 p.208
- 5 GRG 67/76 Licensing Applications 1906-1909
- 6 *South Australian Government Gazette* 1913 Vol. 2 p. 657.
- 7 GRG 67/40/14
- 8 GRG 67/40 Inspectors' Reports on Hotels 1916/1917
- 9 GRG 67/40 Inspectors' Reports on Hotels 1919
- 10 GRG 67/40 Inspectors' Reports on Hotels 1919
- 11 GRG 67/40 Inspectors' Reports on Hotels 1920
- 12 GRG 67/40 1923
- 13 Mitcham City Council Ratepayers' Letters Box 3 1929-34