

# Sleep's Hill Reserve

## Lynton & Belair



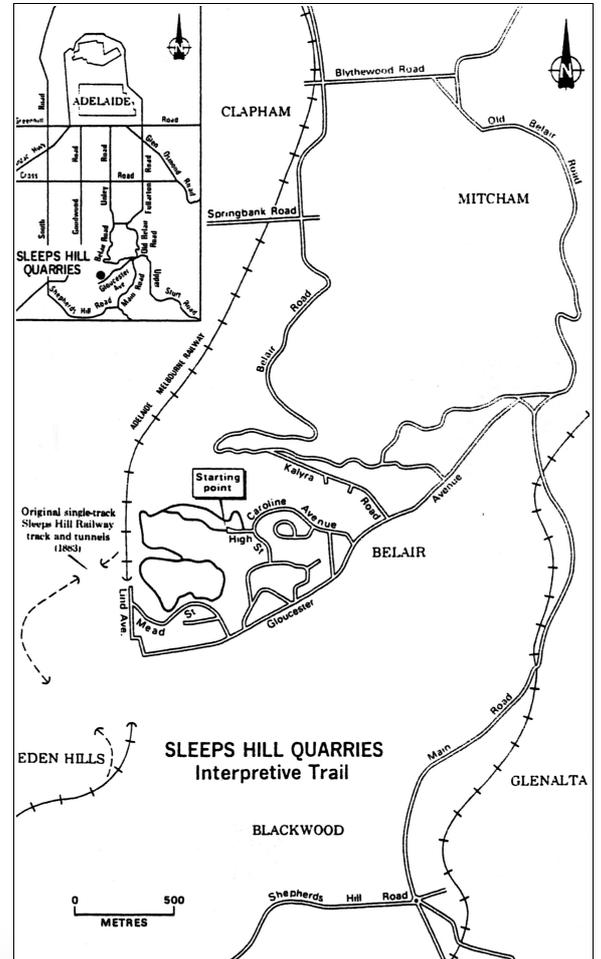
### Description

Sleep's Hill Reserve is located in Belair at its eastern point and Lynton to the north. It is an ideal reserve for walking, with well sign-posted trails. There are numerous signboards, which explain about different aspects of the reserve, such as its geological features. There are also signs indicating where the old quarry sites used to be.

There are a number of places to stop along the trail and admire the excellent views of the Adelaide plains, the city and the ocean.

### Origin of the Name

Sleep's Hill Reserve was named after a man called Samuel Sleep. Arriving in South Australia in the late 1830s, Sleep worked as a shepherd for the South Australia Company in the 1840s and 1850s. In 1853, he married a woman named Catherine Foote. Sleep also went to Victoria for the gold diggings before returning to South Australia to establish Warrakimbo sheep station, west of the Flinders Ranges. The great drought between 1863 and 1865 devastated Samuel Sleep and he died in Norwood in 1865. Sleep's Hill also refers to a group of quarries that were in use in the 19th and 20th centuries. The area now known as Belair was, in its very early days, also known locally as Sleep's Hill.



Stone crusher Sleep's Hill Siding

## Railways

The railway was a valuable means of transport for the quarry industry in Mitcham. The quarries at Sleep's Hill were able to utilise it too. The quarries were all serviced by rail sidings for stone to be transported. The Mitcham Quarry siding, connected to the main line, commenced use in 1884. Quarry traffic ceased in 1897, but resumed in 1902 when Augustus Schwerkolt bought the quarry. The Mitcham Quarry siding was incorporated into the Sleep's Hill siding in 1909. Schwerkolt's Quarry was serviced by a back-shunt from the Sleep's Hill Yard. A track came into use from the main line to Sleep's Hill Quarry in 1909. This became a double line in 1915 and the Clapham lines also extended to Sleep's Hill in 1916.



Sleep's Hill siding - c1930s

The Sleep's Hill/Eden Hills section of the line had two tunnels and two viaducts. A third tunnel, with a double track, was completed in 1919. In the 1940s, the Sleep's Hill tunnels were guarded. One contained reserves of ammunition, as well as valuable artifacts and paintings that were display items on tour from London.

The Sleep's Hill platforms ceased to be used by the 1950s. The Sleep's Hill railway station was abandoned in 1955.



Train passing through stone crusher at Lynton - 1955

## Quarrying

Sleep's Hill Reserve is well known for its quarries, in use from the early to mid-1900s. In the reserve was a company of quarries known as the Sleep's Hill quarries, but also known as the Adelaide quarries. These quarries were opened in 1915 by Burt and Timms, who had contracts to build some of the houses and many of the roads in Colonel Light Gardens.

In 1919, Adelaide Quarries Ltd formed to operate these quarries on a larger scale. By the 1950s, total production had reached 7 million tonnes. Adelaide Quarries Ltd expanded during the 1920s by buying a number of quarries close to Sleep's Hill, at Lynton. A group of three quarries, for example, was purchased in 1928. Two of these had first been opened in 1870 and were known as the Harbour Quarry and



Sleep's Hill, Lynton in the 1910c - CA Pets Photo

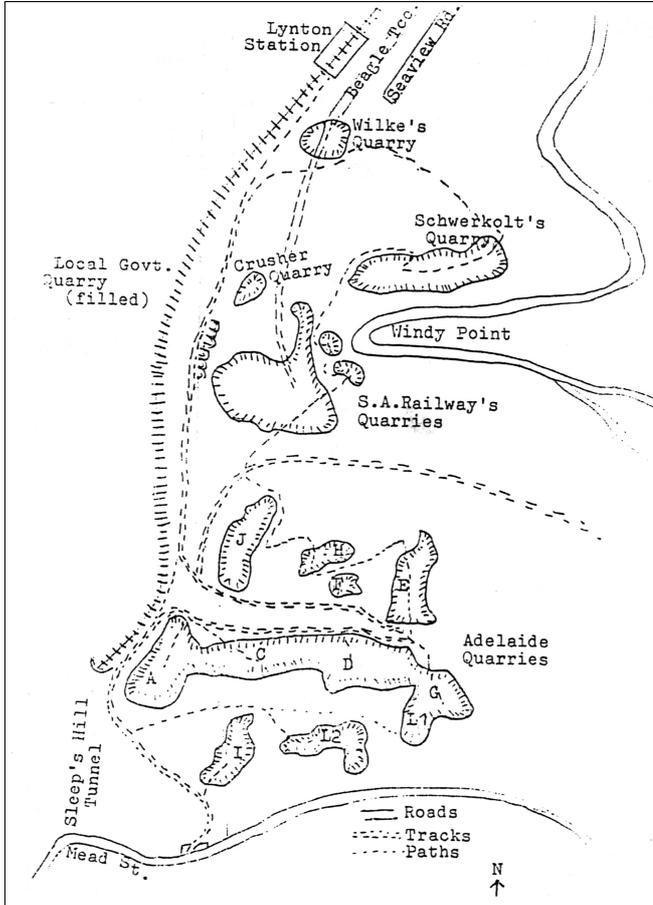
the Crusher Quarry. These were owned by Herman Leonard Julius Wilke. The third quarry was opened by Wilke and Thomas K. Johnston in 1879. The quarries were underleased to Mitcham Railway Company Ltd, then bought by Augustus Schwerkolt in 1902. Schwerkolt's son, Albert, was one of a number of men who had accidents and were killed on quarry sites. The Metal Quarries Company bought the quarries in 1924 and owned them until Adelaide Quarries Ltd bought them in 1928.



Quarry in Sleep's Hill Reserve - 1995

# Special Features

Sleep's Hill Reserve has a number of geological features. The rock is estimated to have been deposited around 750 million years ago. The vertical faces of ripple rock from an ancient seabed is reputed to be some of the best examples in the Southern hemisphere. The quarry faces are still visible and some are up to 100 feet high. There is also a good deal of native vegetation in the reserve.



**Above:** Quarries operating in the Sleep's Hill area from the late 19<sup>th</sup> to the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century.



**Above:** Interpretive trail at Sleep's Hill Reserve

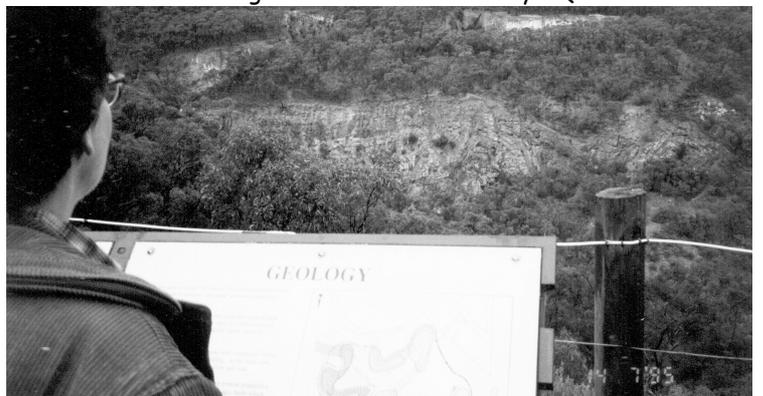
## Resources

Mitcham Local History Collection:

- BEL LT00001
- LYN BI00003
- LYN QA00001
- LYN TR00001
- MIT TR00003
- PAN GI00001
- PAN QA00001

The City of Mitcham: Quarries, 1999.

W.A. Norman *The History of Mitcham*, Corporation of the City of Mitcham, 1953



**Below:** Looking over the old SA Railways Quarries



Prepared by Mitcham Local History Service and Heritage Research Centre, 103b Princes Rd, Mitcham, SA 5062. Ph 8372 8261

March 2005