

Lost Place Names

South Australia

Adelaide has lost many suburbs over the years when, for various reasons, the name of a suburb has been changed. Did you or your relatives grow up in an Adelaide suburb that no longer exists? It might have been Elgin or Cobham Gardens or perhaps Chicago or Sassafra.

If you were someone of substance in the South Australia of the 1800s, a town name somewhere was generally bestowed upon you. For instance, Robe began life as Robetown, named after Mayor Frederick Robe, the fourth governor of SA, while a nearby coastal town Kingston was named in 1858 after the state government surveyor, George Strickland Kingston. Seasonal changes, economic highs and lows and failure of farming beyond the 'Goyder Line' resulted in many ghost towns throughout country South Australia.

During World War I, all names of Germanic origin were changed to British sounding names. By 1917 the anti-German agitation resulted in the establishment of a Nomenclature Committee, to make recommendations for changes of names of 'foreign enemy origin'. The Nomenclature Act was passed in late 1917 and the final list of 69 South Australian place names, the vast majority of which were private towns, gazetted in January 1918. Kaiser Stuhl (king's seat) in the Barossa Valley became known as Mt Kitchener and Hahndorf became Ambleside. Other States too changed German names. Queensland changed 14, New South Wales and Victoria three each, and Western Australia and Tasmania one each. Most were restored years later.

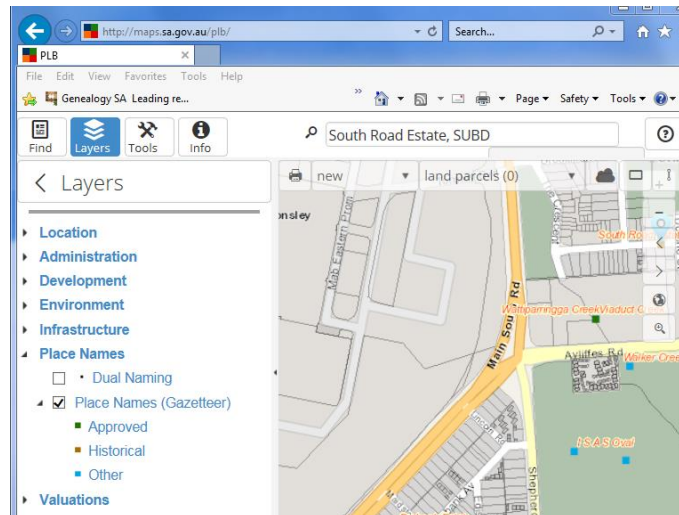
In the early 1960s, many smaller suburbs were swallowed into larger suburbs as the Post Master General's Department (now Australia Post) prepared to launch postcodes in Australia for the first time. Running through the names of suburbs that are now completely gone is fascinating. Some names have remained as an oval, a shopping centre, park or even a railway station. The Australia 1:250,000 Map Series Gazetteer lists current place names in South Australia with their latitude and longitude and a brief description of the place.

The Place Names of South Australia & Northern Territory compiled by Graham Savage, and available in the South Australian Genealogy & Heraldry Society Library is a listing of place names extracted from birth, death and marriage certificates which also indicates in which district they are.

In his South Australian History Sources (2007) Andrew Peake lists many of the place names that have been changed. (Available for purchase from the South Australian Genealogy & Heraldry Society).

Useful website links:

To locate a place name in South Australia the Property Location Browser website may be used. maps.sa.gov.au/PLB/ and instructions for using it are given at sa.gov.au/topics/planning-and-property/planning-and-land-management/suburb-road-and-place-names/place-names-search



South Australia's Property Browser shows Historic Place Names from the Gazetteer. <http://maps.sa.gov.au/plb/>

slsa.sa.gov.au/digitalpubs/placenamesofsouthaustralia as a Compendium of the Place Names of South Australia is a revised version of Manning, Geoffrey H, *Manning's Place Names of South Australia. From Aaron Creek to Zion Hill (2005)*

Manning's Place Names is also accessible on the website of the State Library of South Australia at slsa.sa.gov.au/manning/pn

A list of Germanic place names that were changed and some of those which have since reverted back to the Germanic name. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Australian_place_names_changed_from_German_names
southaustralianhistory.com.au/germannames.htm

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_cities_and_towns_in_South_Australia

Reference books which give the origin and location of place names for South Australia include:

Cockburn, Rodney, *What's in a name? Nomenclature of South Australia: Authoritative derivations of some 4000 historically significant place names (1990)*

Harris, Charles Hope, *Geographical Nomenclature of South Australia (1893)*

Praite, R and J C Tolley, *Place Names of South Australia (1970)*

Whitworth, R P, *Bailliere's South Australian Gazetteer and Road Guide (1866 – facsimile 1991)*