



Morialta

1984-2009

Owen Burgan

ANDERSON CORNER



Morialta

1984–2009

The story of a local community

**“Dedicated to the preservation of the
environment”**

Researched and compiled by Dr Owen Burgan

for the Morialta Residents’ Association

2011

Morialta 1984-2009

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I personally wish to thank John Coetzee who reviewed the final draft and gave me his permission to include his comments in the Foreword.

Finally if it hadn't been for Dennis Whitford there would have been no project.

Foreword

As Mayor of the Adelaide Hills Council at the time this project commenced I was pleased to be given the opportunity to write this foreword to this updated history of the activities and achievements of the Morialta Residents' Association (MRA) and its members.

Owen and his late wife, Joan, came to live in Morialta at the end of 1995 after he had retired from the Northern Territory University. Owen was a member of the MRA Committee for nearly a decade. For many of those years he was Secretary and Editor of the Newsletter.

In 2006 the Adelaide Hills Council gave the MRA a grant to write the history of the Association from 1984 and to produce a website. Visit it at www.mra.asn. All proceeds from the sale of the book, and the future publishing rights, go to the MRA.

These comments by John Coetzee in his review of Owen's book speak for themselves.

"Thanks for letting me see '*Morialta 1984 – 2009*'. I must congratulate you. I don't think local history can be done better. You cover all the relevant issues, your writing is lucid and concise and the illustrations fit beautifully into the text."

Bill Cooksley

Preface

This publication about the activities and achievements of the MRA and its members covers the period following on from Elizabeth Warburton's 1983 publication *The Making of Morialta* and ends in 2009.

Owen Burgan, using his experiences and records of the MRA as the Secretary during the recent years to 2009 has given us the several-year commitment needed to prepare an account of the major events in this second period. As in the first decades of the MRA much has again been achieved that present residents need to know about to fully appreciate the area we call “Morialta”.

The late Lance Anderson, in the foreword to Elizabeth Warburton's publication wrote:

I sense that she sees the chronicling of events that have shaped our environment as a gentle reminder that we should not take things for granted, and that given a little encouragement, we can all contribute towards a good future for the beautiful place in which we live. (1)

Owen, like Elizabeth, has provided an ordered account of what otherwise may have been lost.

Dr Peter H Sydenham

President

Morialta Residents' Association

1. Warburton E. (1982) *The Making of Morialta*, Morialta Residents Association, p.1.

Introduction

This section sets the scene and provides a background so that readers have an understanding of the journey they are about to commence.

Chapter 1

“About us and our area” provides readers, particularly newcomers, with information about the area we live in and a brief history of the Morialta Residents’ Association. *‘What’s in a name?’* examines the derivation of the street names and “Morialta” itself.

Chapter 2

“The Greening of ETSA”, apart from the first four pages, is a condensed version of Lance Anderson’s 1992 publication. It is the story of our small community living in the Adelaide foothills adjacent to the Morialta Conservation Park and its 20-year battle to have the overhead electrical and telephone distribution system replaced with an underground system.

Chapter 3

“The Saga of Lots 100 and 101” traces the MRA’s efforts from 1970 to persuade governments of the day to purchase part of the total block of 75 hectares all in the Hills Face Zone which stretches from Moores Road in the North East, down to Spring Gully Road, across to Wandilla Drive and onto the Falls Road. It abuts the Morialta Conservation Park at the ends of Wandilla Drive and Spring Gully Road.

Chapter 4

“The Name Change” outlines the process by which the MRA sought to change the name of our part of Rostrevor, which is in the Adelaide Hills Council area, to “Morialta” – the survey – an overview of the proposal – the outcome.

Chapter 5

“Our Patch Activities” describes the efforts of the MRA and its members over nearly 40 years. It covers the work conducted under the auspices of the ‘Our Patch’ organisation, Planet Ark and National Tree Planting Days, Clean up Australia Days and the restoration of the Fourth Creek banks.

Chapter 6

“Life Membership Awards” contains the citations provided when the MRA’s last five Life Memberships were presented to Lance Anderson, Bob Dickson, John Osborne, Kathleen Brewer and Graham Dickson in recognition of their outstanding and sustained contribution to the MRA.

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Chapter 1: About Us and Our Area

We live in the part of Rostrevor bounded by Spring Gully Road, Arcoona Avenue, Stradbroke Road and Wandilla Drive. For over four decades we have referred to this area as 'Morialta'. In 1968 there were fewer than 30 houses. By 2009 there were 135. (1)



Figure 1.1: Map of Morialta

This area was originally an 80-acre country section number 857, District A, Hundred of Adelaide, which was purchased as an investment property for £80 in 1839 by Thomas Hodgson, a surgeon from Halifax, Yorkshire. (2) Until 1997 it was in the East Torrens Council area. Since then it has formed part of the Adelaide Hills Council (AHC).

When the area was opened up in 1919 as Rostrevor Park this what it looked like.

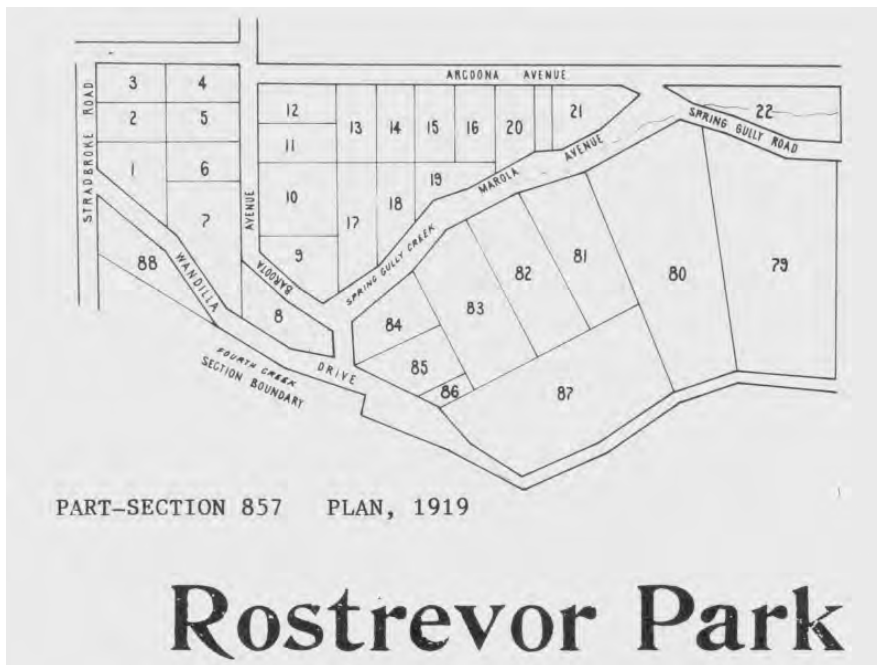


Figure 1.2: Map of Rostrevor Park from original sale advertisement

Figure 1.2 shows a part of the original sale advertisement. Graham Dickson, a long time resident and former land agent, has a copy of the original poster. With the exception of Werona Place, Weemala Crescent and Tatiara Grove it is unchanged from when the area was opened up as Rostrevor Park, in January 1919.

The area was known as Rostrevor Park until 1970 when it was decreed that all superfluous additions to suburb names be removed (3).

In 2001 the Geographical Names Unit expanded our part of Rostrevor to include land defined as Lots 100 and 101, thus almost trebling the size of "Our Patch". (4)



Figure 1.3: Lot 100 and Lot 101

“Our Patch”

Local residents speak about and enjoy the beauty, the serenity and the unique nature of their neighbourhood. If perchance you visit our neck of the woods you will see why. Author Lance Anderson described the area in the following way:

It's a leafy area bordering the northern boundary of the Moriata Conservation Park and rising steeply to give splendid glimpses of the city, right out to the Gulf. Giant century-old river red gums run the length of Spring Gully Creek, which both divides Marola Avenue and unifies the area. These old tree more than any other feature stamp the area with its character and capture the hearts of its residents. (5)

Add to this a burbling creek, the absence of overhead power lines, the narrow winding roads, the absence of formal footpaths, the vibrant bird-life and the resident koalas and you will appreciate how lucky we are to live in this unique area.

A brief overview of the Moriata Residents' Association

In the 1920s there was a residents' group called the Rostrevor Progress Association which encompassed our area and a part of Rostrevor in the

Campbelltown Council area.

The Morialta Residents' Association has operated for more than 40 years, representing local residents. Members recognise that Morialta is a suburb with its own unique identity and issues, especially those related to the environment.

The area's character, its semi-rural 'bush' environment, has tended to attract residents who have a love of nature. Residents of this enclave have made a conscious commitment to nurture this distinct character and over the years have planted many thousands of native trees and native shrubs.

First meeting in 1968

The Association's first meeting was on 17 October 1968. Because of the close proximity of the Morialta Falls and the Morialta Conservation Park the new body was called the Morialta Residents' Association.

The key focus among early members was to protect the interests of residents of the land known as Section 857. The objects of the Association were to:

- Preserve and enhance the indigenous qualities of the area.
- Prevent ugliness, whether from development, neglect or any other cause.
- Promote a public awareness of the factors affecting our environment
- Make representations to Council and other authorities regarding works, amenities and services in the area.
- Cooperate with other bodies having similar aims.

Over the years the Association has met regularly to discuss local issues. A number of sub-committees have been formed to focus on key topics, including the environment (Fourth Creek and Spring Gully Creek); road safety; 'Our Patch' (including National Tree Day); Clean-Up Australia; Lot 100 (including obtaining a

grant of \$150,000); a name change effort; and the history of Morialta. It also operates a social committee and periodically publishes a newsletter.

Morialta residents have always had a deep awareness of the natural environment in which they live and have worked to protect and nurture it, treating it with the sensitivity it deserves.

Points of difference

The issues facing Morialta have been different from those that have affected the rest of Rostrevor. The way that these issues have been approached has been, to some extent, unique and pioneering. Examples include:

- Development and retention of narrow streets (1960s).
- Protection of gum trees in Marola Avenue from destruction during laying of a major water main (1960s).
- Purchase by a local resident of a portion of what is now the Morialta Conservation Reserve from a developer and later selling it to the state government (at a loss) in order to protect it from an inappropriate, polluting industry. This resident later became a founding member of the MRA.
- Purchase by local residents of a developer's land to ensure that it was subdivided more aesthetically.
- Undergrounding of power and phone lines, with a significant cost contribution coming from Morialta residents (1980s).
- Native tree planting within the Morialta area to improve the streetscape and along Fourth Creek within the Morialta Conservation (ongoing).
- The 'Lot 100' campaign.

What's in a name?

Many newcomers to the area ask about the derivation of the street names such as Arcoona, Baroota and Tatiara and the word 'Morialta' itself. This chapter investigates their derivations.

Most of the material for this section was supplied by Chester Schultz, the researcher for the Southern Kurna Place Names Project in 2008-2010, and Dr Rob Amery (the University of Adelaide, consultant linguist). Both are members of the Kurna-controlled language reclamation group Kurna Warra Pintyandi.

Dr Phillip Jones, Senior Curator in the Department of Anthropology at the South Australian Museum supplied the specific details of the original painting by George French Angas.

The street names

It was popularly believed that many of the Aboriginal-sounding street names such as Arcoona, Baroota, Tatiara and Weemala were Kurna words. Contemporary research indicates that although many of them did derive from Aboriginal names for other places in South Australia, none was associated with the Kurna people. One possible suggestion was that the developers asked the appropriate government department, perhaps the Nomenclature Board, for some 'nice sounding' Aboriginal words. This idea is supported by this statement by Stuart Cockburn in his introduction to a reprint of the 1908 publication by his father Rodney Cockburn.

"Aboriginal names are as mellifluous as a bar of good music." (6)

Morialta

Before white settlement this area was home to the Kurna people. When the first white settlers came in the 1830s, the Kurna people who roamed the Adelaide plains were still living their traditional lifestyle here. Rodney Cockburn claimed in his 1908 publication, *South Australia, what's in a name?* that Morialta derives from an Aboriginal word meaning 'ever flowing' and refers to it as "...that charming resort below Norton's Summit. It is situated in a valley designated officially Glen Stuart, a name now completely overshadowed by Morialta." (7) He probably assumed the alleged meaning, which may have become a traditional family belief, from one of the Bakers who had owned the 'Morialta' mansion.

The following description has been attributed to Rodney Cockburn; however, the State Library of South Australia was unable to verify this.

Before white settlement this area was home to the Kurna people who roamed the Adelaide plains. The foothills were the Eastern boundary of their hunting grounds. They came to the Gorge in spring to collect wattle gum, in autumn to hunt possums and in winter to shelter in the caves and cut bark off the trees to trade with the River Murray tribes.

Schultz suggests it probably comes originally from some SA Museum source. (8)

Some curiosity has lingered about popular references to the word Moriatta, found in the most well-known local sources written by Jim and Elizabeth Warburton. In his 1977 publication *Five Creeks of the River Torrens*, Jim Warburton wrote: "Only one of the five creeks retains a linguistic link with its first human contacts: Moriatta (ever-flowing) of the Kurna Aboriginal tribe remains in the form of Morialta Falls and the Morialta Conservation Park." (9)

In her 1982 publication *The Making of Morialta* Elizabeth Warburton wrote:

The hills and valleys of Moriatta were familiar to the Kurna tribe of Aborigines who once roamed the Adelaide Plains. They marked the tribe's easterly camping, where they came in spring to gather wattle

gum, in autumn for possums, and in winter for shelter. (10)

It is intriguing that this description is so similar to that attributed to Rodney Cockburn, cited earlier.

Even though it has not been stated directly, these references imply that “Moriatta” was deemed to be a Kurna word.

Manning’s *Place names of South Australia* (1990 edition) also makes reference to “Moriatta”.

“In 1847 John Baker built a house at Norton’s Summit, which he called Morialta, corrupted from an Aboriginal word moriatta meaning ‘running water’ or ‘ever flowing’.” (11)

Discussions with the Kurna-controlled language group Kurna Warra Pintyandi have established that in all probability the spelling and the meaning of ‘Moriatta’ is a mistake, and that the explanations which are often given almost certainly come at second or third hand from Baker family traditions, which themselves were second-hand. No Adelaide creek then or now was ‘ever-flowing’, including Fourth Creek; though many of them did quite often overflow.

All of these incorrect references to the word ‘Moriatta’ can perhaps be attributed to what was the state of knowledge at the time. Research now focused on what was the correct derivation of the name ‘Morialta’ and how and why this error had occurred.

It is appropriate when referring to the Kurna people to address the controversial issue of the name that has long been given to “Our Patch”. The name ‘Morialta’ has been the subject of many years of conjecture, not only because it has been

implied that the word is a derivation of the Kurna word 'Morialta', but also because the area that prompted its naming has never been precisely ascertained.

As with many other Aboriginal place names in Australia, the early records were based on what people heard and subsequently wrote down as best they could without linguistic training. Translations from the oral to the printed word are often unreliable. There are three possible sources of the name 'Morialta'.

In 1931 Webb (12) recorded his guess that the name was derived from the Aboriginal mari-yatala: mari – 'east' and yertalla or yatala – 'flowing water'; thus 'water flowing in the east' or 'eastern waterfall'.

But three meanings were originally given in 1840 for the Kurna word yertalla: 'water running by the side of a river; inundation; cascade'. 'Cascade' is only one of them, so Webb made some assumptions here.

According to Schultz in 2009, (13) the word could come more easily from 'mari yelta', Kurna for 'the cool or fresh East.' Yelta is an unrecorded word easily deducible from the known reduplicative form 'yelta-yelta'. In this case and in yertalla the 'ye' is pronounced 'ya' as in 'yarn'.

Alternatively, if 'Morialta' came from 'mari yertalla' it would mean something like 'eastern inundation or flooding waterfall', but only if the settler had mis-heard the consonants and reversed the letters l and t. This phenomenon has been observed elsewhere with South Australian place names such as Nuriootpa being pronounced by some people as 'Nurioopta'. Additionally, the idea of 'inundation' or flooding could be important to the naming, and is addressed further below.

Thirdly, but most frustratingly, the word, like the name London, might not have had any known meaning. This cannot be ruled out, even when the parts of the word seem to resemble known words.

Another conundrum, never fully resolved, also exists.

In 1844 the colonial artist George French Angas made watercolour paintings of the first and second waterfalls lower in the gorge known then as 'Glen Stuart'. This had been named after the property at the top of the Fourth Creek gorge run by landowner Charles William Stuart, also known as 'Glen Stuart'. This is in the heart of what we know today as Morialta. Arising from this painting, confusion later arose that has fostered many decades of dispute. The original painting which is now in the National Library of Australia (NLA) in Canberra has a handwritten inscription on the back.

Dr Philip Jones provided these comments.

An examination of this work (in Canberra) and the pencil inscription on the reverse in George French Angas's hand writing does appear to read 'Moriatta'. (14)

The full inscription reads: 'Upper falls of Glen Stuart. Adjoining the Moriatta [sic] Estate of C.D.E. Fort..'. (15) The NLA was not able to decipher the remainder of the name. The name seems to disappear from the record soon after and it is only John Baker's name which seems to be attached to the Morialta estate.

This puzzle was solved only at the very last stage of the writing of this history. Warburton in her article in the Journal of the History of Collections identifies this name as Fortnum who was Charles William Stuart's half brother who was in Adelaide from the end of 1840 until the middle of 1844. He acquired from Charles

Stuart the 78 acre Block 827 and changed its name from Glen Stuart to Morialta. (16) When he returned to England the land was acquired by John Baker who built a mansion which he called Morialta.

The cause of the confusion arose from the time that the artist RW Giles was commissioned (in 1846) to create a lithograph copy of the 1844 original, to be published as a print in *South Australia Illustrated*, a huge volume exclusively reproducing South Australian paintings. In the title and text accompanying this painting, the word 'Moriatta' appeared: the only known source anywhere which gives this spelling.

On a high resolution copy of this illustration supplied by the State Gallery of South Australia this title appears at the bottom of the image:

“LOWER FALLS OF GLEN STUART

ON THE MORIATTA RIVULET IN THE HILLS NEAR ADELAIDE” (17)

On the National Library of Australia website this text appears:

“Lower falls of Glen Stuart on the Moriatta [i.e. Morialta] Rivulet in the hills near Adelaide” (18).

Schultz suggests that this text may have been written by the library archivist who added “Morialta” as an explanation. (19)

This word “Moriatta” was almost certainly written in error, as a misjudged transcription of Angas' habitual cursive writing, as seen even now in the Art Gallery of SA on the back of his surviving original watercolours and in his notebooks. He was not careful in the way he crossed the letter 't'. Schultz says 'It' could be mistaken for 'tt' in cursive if:

1. the 'l' had no discernible loop; and
2. the cross of the 't' extended to the left across the 'l'.

It is probable that in the haste of publication the editor misinterpreted 'lt' as 'tt'. Hence Morialta could have been interpreted as Moriatta. (20)

Supporting evidence for the error theory is the fact that the spelling 'Morialta' had been recorded as a place name in a letter by Stephen Hack in May 1837, though he did not record the location any more exactly than "in this neighbourhood", that is, somewhere around Adelaide. (21) Hack was exploring for much of 1837–38, using Kurna guides, meeting Kurna people on the way and sometimes recording a place name or two in his letters. This was seven years before Angas visited Glen Stuart.

One might have thought that this error would have been acknowledged over time and that Morialta would have been accepted as the accurate version. But until now Angas has been the earliest source known to historians of the name.

Where and what was 'Morialta'?

This summation of the debate was provided by Schultz.

The second matter of conjecture is less complicated to address, but also leaves a residue of doubt and provides a source of continued conjecture for historians. Kurna words generally are applied to specific places, rather than to broad areas. However, no-one can be certain whether the place name Morialta specifically referred to an exact location or not. Was it the falls, the creek, the gorge, or the 1849 mansion built on the hilltop after the Angas painting had been completed? The artist George French Angas made the earliest record of its application to a

more precise place, describing it as “a 'creek' or 'rivulet, which flows through Glen Stuart, a rocky romantic pass”. According to Angas, ‘Moriatta’ (or more accurately, ‘Morialta’) was the [Fourth] creek, not the falls. How this suggestion came to him is not recorded. It is very unlikely to have been from the Kurna people, but more probably early white settlers.

Angas could not have got it from the John Baker property on which the mansion named Morialta was built (c.1849). This property was owned by others in 1844 when Angas was painting the Falls. Baker probably transferred the name from its previously accepted creek location. It was not Charles William Stuart's earlier property ‘Glen Stuart’ (1837– c.1850), which was also near the top of the gorge.

If the name did refer to the creek, it must be remembered that Aboriginal traditions do not give one name to the entire length of a river, but are likely to name many sites along it. So the name could have originally applied anywhere along the upper parts of Fourth Creek including the flood plain of Rostrevor, where inundation was also possible and where Stuart had also owned land for a few years from 1838) and might have gone quickly into use by the settlers as a name for the whole creek, in European settler style.

Thus the exact location of ‘Morialta’ has been lost, though it was probably known to some very early settlers in 1837. All we can conclude is that it refers to the general area of the upper reaches of Fourth Creek. It is not known which references Stewart Cockburn used when updating his father's 1908 book *What's in a name?*, for the 1990 re-issue, but today there is little doubt about the spelling “Morialta” in one of South Australia's most widely used references. (22)

ENDNOTES

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Chapter 2: The Greening of ETSA

***The tale of a local community and an electricity authority
who were “poles apart”***

by Lance Anderson

1992

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About the author



Lance and Betty Anderson first discovered Morialta in 1956. Four years later they built at 16 Marola Avenue and stayed there , except for a short spell at Woomera, until they left to go to Tasmania.

Lance helped found the Morialta Residents' Association in 1968. In 1970 he initiated moves to eliminate the stobie poles from the area – a role he pursued, as far as his professional commitments as an engineer and other duties allowed, for the next 20 years. At one time or another he served as President, Secretary, Treasurer or committee member of the Association. However, his most significant contribution to the Association occurred during the period October 1989 to December 1990 when he interrupted his retirement and accepted the challenge of finishing off what he had started so many years before - to finally bury the stobie pole.

Acknowledgements

I would like to extend a sincere thank-you to the many residents and friends of Morialta who campaigned relentlessly over a 20-year period for underground electrical services in the Morialta area. To all of you who – fought side-by-side in critical meetings, worked tirelessly on delegated tasks, wrote copious letters to the authorities and powers to be, made hundreds of telephone calls, pounded the pavements during repeated door-knocks and newsletter distribution runs, and provided support and encouragement in general – your efforts, spirit, enthusiasm and good humour were a great source of inspiration and comfort throughout the course of the long campaign.

A sincere thank-you is also extended to those ETSA employees, local Council members and MPs who lent support and played their part in getting the job done.

Finally, to all involved who shared a vision of leaving a greener and more aesthetically pleasing environment than which we entered, may I express my heartfelt appreciation and gratitude. Without your help we would not have succeeded.

Preface

This is the story of a small community living in the Adelaide foot-hills adjacent to the Morialta Conservation Park and its 20-year battle with the authorities to have the overhead electrical distribution system replaced with an underground system.

The community saw several Councils and State Governments come and go and also ETSA managers and policies change, as indeed did the composition and interests of the residents and their Association. However its direction on undergrounding remained steadfast throughout – the flame once kindled was not going to be easily extinguished!

The journey has been written from the perspective of the Morialta Residents' Association which had the support of the residents throughout the long campaign. It is written in some detail in the hope legislators and other community groups will benefit from the experience. If there is a moral to this story, it is that perseverance will finally win the day, provided, of course, you are fighting a cause in which people believe.

Burying the stobie pole

The quest to place underground electrical and telephone connections to homes of MRA members and their neighbours was one of the Association's longest-running campaigns.

It took 20 years to finalise.

It is a story featuring myriad administrative and political twists and turns, fraught with complexities, promises and backflips, managed (or not, as sometimes occurred) by an ever-changing cast of bureaucrats, councillors and politicians. It also demanded the administrative attention and strategic actions of a series of MRA chairmen, as well as a number of committee executive members, charged in their volunteer capacities with managing often conflicting, but always complex, communications and negotiations.

This extraordinary effort highlighted the best elements of the MRA's cultural organisation and operations during the period 1970–90, and illustrated the powerful effect that collaboration among skilled people, backed by a strong membership united in purpose, can have in a community.

The raw numbers appear to tell an uneventful story: only 90 properties in what was then the District Council of East Torrens, featuring the undergrounding of a mere 3.25 kilometres of power and telephone lines along about seven winding roads, over 20 years.

However, despite what appears to have been a small logistical exercise in a small hills housing pocket, the motivational aspect was fundamental to MRA members – conserving the environmental ambience of their tree-clad streets and gardens.

Some big gum trees were more than 200 years old and needed to be protected in their full beauty. Nothing was more important to every family that had chosen to live in this small, semi-rural community.

MRA member, Lance Anderson, who was to become deeply involved in some of the negotiations in the latter part of the story, was to write a detailed record.

Providing early context, he wrote this about the charter for the MRA:

The emphasis was on preservation and enhancement of the area rather than for development per se. Close interaction with the local Council was encouraged. Suffice to say here that many battles have been fought over the years and many won. One was to convince Council of the need to keep the roads narrow and to resist their straightening when they were sealed. The success of this was commemorated by a plaque awarded by the Civic Trust of S.A. to the East Torrens Council and located on the Village Green at the foot of Marola Avenue.

But the mother of all battles was to save the trees and reduce the risk of starting bush fires – the battle to rid the area of the unsightly overhead electrical distribution system and to have it placed underground. (1)

The underlying motif of summer bushfire in the South Australian bush accompanies much of the story and the scale of threat peaked with the devastating 1983 Ash Wednesday bushfires – roughly half-way through this MRA history. As years passed and further undergrounding negotiations repeatedly bogged down, there was no denying the crucial desired outcome – to acknowledge the risks inherent in overhead power lines in bush-dense suburban settlements and make safe the living environment.

ETSA had its own solution which is still current today. Either cut down the trees or massively prune them.



Figure 2.1: ETSA's pruning, September 1984

The theatre of this particular history featured a broad range of players. They included administrators of the District Council of East Torrens, DCET, (under which the MRA members' homes are administrated and rated) and the adjoining Campbelltown City Council; various ministers of the Government of South Australia and at least one of its departments or branches, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, NPWS. To that cast is added Telecom (the then national, Commonwealth Government-funded telco company); the Electricity Trust of South Australia, ETSA, (the then state electricity supply authority); and the State Ombudsman.

To continue the drama metaphor, in the chorus – whose members were to prove crucial at times – were newspaper journalists and members of the state opposition, among others.

The 20-year saga dominated the attention of a number of key MRA personalities, including (in no particular order) Roy Amstadt, Bob Dickson, Paul White, Ron Sinclair, Lance Anderson and Jim Warburton, as well as a number of energetic general members, including John Osborne, with his electrical expertise; Bill Brewer, with his accounting and communication skills; and Graham Dickson and Rob Taylor, whose wine-sale fundraising activities often saved the day. There also were a large number of unnamed others whose donations of time, money and general advices smoothed the rocky pathway over the decades.

Six broad themes dominate this particular history and perhaps dominate every history where a small, relatively unsupported community must negotiate for a change that key decision-makers are reluctant to address because of its complexities and the number of policy players on the stage. They include: indifference (lack of will); quibbling; policy confusion; the complexities arising from changing laws; pride and prejudice; and the characteristic vagaries of long-term campaigns.

Most notable of all, however, was a seventh. It was the MRA's ability to maintain the momentum, with members continually faced with the weary friction of the crawl of authority's pace as its records files expanded, bulging with administrators' and ministers' euphemisms promising action, but with little to show for many of them as the years passed. Lance Anderson recorded:

The Association soon learnt that it was not just a question of money. [Executive members] would also have to continually lobby, organise and arrange, to seek out and clear bottlenecks and most importantly, to retain the support of the residents. In short it was a policy of self-help. This then was to be the approach to saving the trees. (2)

The residents' support worked two ways. For example, in the early days in 1972

when a poll was taken, an important vote (for legal reasons) to approve commencement of the undergrounding campaign was passed by a two-to-one majority. Almost 20 years later, however, when the last cluster of power and telephone infrastructures were being undergrounded, the MRA had to adopt a range of approaches to assist a number of owners to finalise the task.

During the long campaign, administrator indifference coloured countless communications and meetings. Equivocation among senior administrators across a sweep of authorities was rife, difficult to anticipate and always challenging to address.

Much of it stemmed from poor policy or nonexistent policy, or policy owned by others with which a particular administrator disagreed. It thrived in government ministers' offices, despite the occurrence of major political motivations at times.

Ash Wednesday and its aftermath

Thirteen years into the MRA campaign on February 9, 1983, the Ash Wednesday fires exploded, some of which were sourced to clashing power lines on hot, windy days. Fourteen people died, 97 were injured, 96 homes destroyed and stock losses totalled \$11 million. It led to a number of working party inquiries, among them the Scott and Lewis investigations. These left no doubt that undergrounding was the way of the future in areas such as Morialta, and myriad other South Australian places, and ETSA shouldered the full responsibility to act, later broadly agreeing to pay half a community's undergrounding costs. Seventeen years later, this was denied. Lance Anderson:

Well, at least it could be seen that ETSA had fully recovered from the shock of Ash Wednesday and was once again its old confident self! In spite of repeated interchange [sic] with the ministers the state was adamant – it had not accepted the Lewis Report, or at least the

recommendation referred to, nor had it any intention of so doing. (3)

There was often considerable confusion among decision-makers – not surprisingly considering the number of ‘authorities’ involved. They crowded the stage at the best of times and illustrated the political complexities that arise when a hierarchy was difficult to clearly establish. Lack of policy, or changing policy, also made higher-level political determinations difficult to make, and when they were, they came stamped with a caveat that they may be unmade in subsequent administrations. Much MRA effort was spent learning this frustrating lesson.

Changing laws became a feature as the years passed. In one case, a 1976 MRA victory over the amendment of the Local Government Act was undone 13 years later. In that instance, the focus was a return to cost-recovery principles, a matter potentially catastrophic to the progress of campaign by 1989. Lance Anderson:

This was indeed a serious setback, for it was this very requirement that had crippled the original undergrounding project in 1972. The Association had lent its weight to having the Act amended and in 1976 this had been successfully achieved so that all could share equally in the costs of undergrounding! The 73 per cent of residents who had ... endorsed the project on the understanding that each property owner pay \$1,150 for the civil cost would almost certainly revolt again as they had so many years before! (4)

The matter was eventually addressed, but highlighted the roller-coaster administrative ride on which MRA executive members were to be carried during the 20 years it took to resolve.

Both pride and prejudice prevailed at different times, particularly when the press campaigned, spearheaded almost at the very beginning by well-known *The Advertiser* journalist, Stewart Cockburn and, much later, when the state opposition played a role, this time when Cockburn’s (later) wife, Jennifer

Cashmore, campaigned as an opposition MP in the (MRA's) electorate of Coles. Additionally, occasional local government acquiescence on a key policy sticking point sometimes teased the traditional caution and taunted the hesitation in the government offices, prompting hubris, which stymied the electorate's changed will, sometimes based on economic or other administrative fears, real or imagined. Both characteristics were evident in the offices of senior council bureaucrats and state government administrators and ministers.

Given these myriad campaign characteristics, it is inevitable that a chronology of events is long and detailed, but Anderson covered it in fine detail. The frustrations remain self-evident. However, as covered in this chapter in this publication, the period can be segmented thrice.

The western section of Wandilla Drive

In the first third of the history, only this small area was undergrounded. Anderson reflected at its conclusion:

What can be stated with ... certainty is that the length of trench totalled 350 metres and that the time taken from the Association's first initiating its undergrounding project until completion of Wandilla west in 1984 took just 14 years. So the undergrounding of the area was now progressing at a rate of 25 metres a year! At this rate it would take all of 130 years to underground the whole area. So the Association realised it would have to lift its game! (5)

The next third, following the Ash Wednesday bushfire and the sudden emergence of enhanced political will, saw the undergrounding of lines in Wandilla Drive east.

Anderson recorded:

By now a total of 750 metres had gone underground in the area: the total time to achieve this was 17.5 years – a rate of progress of some 43 metres per year! This was not good, but a distinct improvement on the situation existing when Wandilla west was completed! (6)

By early 1988, another 2.5 kilometres remained to be done and at this rate it would take another 12 years of campaigning and hard work to achieve it!

At this point when only 20 per cent of properties remained capture to the stobie pole infrastructure, myriad complexities involving mainly MRA members themselves significantly increased the tension. Perhaps indifferent that a long-sought-after target was so near achievement, some members presented final hurdles, including lack of conviction that the need was urgent, apathy, financial hardship, technical problems – or mere long-term absence.

The rest of the area

ETSA's preliminary designs were received by the Association in April 1988. These plans did not include Arcoona Avenue, the boundary between Councils. However, the MRA was galvanised into further action when it was realised that only part of Baroota Avenue was included. After prolonged discussions and negotiations ETSA gave reluctant agreement to include both Arcoona and the full length of Baroota in the project.

And then on November 25 1989 what the MRA had long been waiting for actually happened. B C Tonkin and Associates placed an advertisement in *The Advertiser* calling for tenders to carry out "some 2,500 metres of trenching and back-filling at Rostrevor".

On January 31 1990 B C Tonkin recommended that the Council accept a quote from Richardson Constructions.

After a subsequent public meeting public meeting the Council sent letters to all

residents giving them their cost estimates and asking them to answer the survey question – are you prepared to pay for the undergrounding?

These were the results:

FOR	84%
AGAINST	16%

The long years of struggle by the MRA had been vindicated! The President quickly organised a small celebration for the main participants and subsequent press releases produced some favourable publicity over the next few days.

Moving the dirt

Then on April 23 Council sent a schedule to the Association showing that the trenching would commence on April 24 and conclude on July 3 1990.



Figure 2.2: Trenching starts April 1990

The commencement date was accurate but it was not until September 13 1990

that the trenching was completed. This represented a rate of approximately 119 metres per week. The trenching went relatively smoothly with some rock encountered at the top of Tatiara and large floaters in front of 22 Baroota Avenue, where the trenching concluded.



Figure 2.3: Trench digger June 1990

Richardson Constructions endeavoured to ensure that access was not denied to properties by following a plan of only opening a small section of trench on any given day and doing its best to have it filled the same day. Overall it was very successful.

Through the eye of the needle

Anderson observed this tense and challenging period as one in which executive members may have faced their most demanding hour, hence the heading above:

This heading was chosen because of the sensitivity needed to bring the project to a successful conclusion. How to get the last of the residents to complete and pay for the final link in the chain, the

service-pit-to-house connection, without coercion from the authorities, would require considerable delicacy. For without these connections the project would never terminate. ETSA stobies would be left to disfigure the streets and anger all those residents who had already dug deep into their pockets to rid the area of the poles. (7)

In a way, it was a final test of the collaborative culture of the MRA at this time, and slow but skilled face-to-face negotiation paid dividends.

Removal of the stobies

Once the last of the street to house connections had been made ETSA was able to demolish the overhead system. On November 8 1990 the first stobie was jacked away before a light-hearted gathering of residents, the Mayor and ETSA workers and management representatives. Corks popped, cameras clicked and history was made!



Figure 2.4: Celebration time for the MRA on the November 8 1990



Figure 2.5: Lance Anderson shakes hands with ETSA Engineer Geoff Slade

The removal of the stobies then continued on throughout November and December. There was a small delay when an ETSA bird lover spotted a brood nesting in a cross arm. A week on and the pole was removed as the young took wing:

On December 21 1990, just four days before Christmas, the last stobie pole in the area was extracted from the property of Eric Smith at 24 Baroota Avenue. Perhaps it was fitting for Eric to be at the end of the queue as he had been an ETSA engineer before his retirement and the removal of the last stobie pole from his property somehow symbolised ETSA's resistance to undergrounding and, under public pressure, its final acceptance. (8)

What did it really cost?

On the achievement of the MRA's goal in 1991, Lance Anderson reflected on the actual cost (in 1990 dollars) – which had individually ranged between \$1000 and \$4000 per resident, depending on the street, the nature of access to the home, and therefore the difficulty of the work required:

What did it really cost? The short answer is – nobody really knows. Plausible figures were never obtained for the earlier stages, nor were they obtained in [the] final phase. ... [But] ... the proportions paid by each of the parties were: ETSA, 45 per cent; residents, 46 per cent; and council, 9 per cent. (9)

Many, many hours of unpaid effort were contributed by members of the community over the years. Indeed, simple calculations show that this effort, if costed on the same basis that applies to ETSA and Government officers, would undoubtedly exceed the figure shown above for the ETSA cost. Much of this effort could have been saved had common sense attitudes and procedures applied from the outset.

In hindsight, it's clear that this had been a very good outcome, given that early communications, commencing in December 1972, had suggested that residents would have to meet the full costs, which were estimated to be substantial.



Before



After

Figure 2.6: Pictures taken before and after the stobie pole removal

Celebrations

And then after all had settled down there was the unveiling of a plaque to commemorate the successful completion of the 20-year battle.

It was considered appropriate that Jennifer Cashmore (previously

Adamson), now an opposition back-bencher, should unveil the plaque. She of all the politicians approached over the years had been the only one to do battle for the residents and actually achieve positive outcomes. It was also fitting that she should be accompanied by her husband, Stewart Cockburn, for it was way back in 1972 that he had been the first journalist to so forcibly present the project to the Adelaide community. (10)

At the celebration of the achievement, a plaque, donated by the Council was unveiled. It stated:

**A COMMUNITY WORKING TOGETHER
MORIALTA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
DISTRICT COUNCIL OF EAST TORRENS
ETSA TELECOM
IN 1990 ALL OVERHEAD WIRES
WERE REMOVED AND PLACED UNDERGROUND
IN ORDER TO PRESERVE THE ENVIRONMENT**

Fittingly it was mounted on the same stone in Anderson Corner as the plaque awarded to the Council by the Civic Trust in 1972 for its outstanding treatment of the streetscape in the area.



Figure 2.7: The unveiling of the plaque April 1991

ENDNOTES

1. Anderson L. (1992), *The Greening of ETSA*, Morialta Residents' Association, p. 4.
2. *ibid.* p.5
3. *ibid.* p.22
4. *ibid.* p. 19
5. *ibid.* p. 11
6. *ibid.* p. 17
7. *ibid.* p. 30
8. *ibid.* p. 32
9. *ibid.* p. 35
10. *ibid.* p. 33

Chapter 3: The Saga of Lots 100 and 101

Introduction

This chapter traces the MRA's efforts over nearly 40 years from 1970 to persuade the governments of the day to purchase at least that section of Hills Face Zone land from the crest down to the roadway to protect it from development.

The McCarthy land

The total block of 75 hectares all in the Hills Face Zone, stretches from Moores Road in the North East, down to Spring Gully Road, across to Wandilla Drive and onto the Falls Road. It abuts the Morialta Conservation Park at the ends of Wandilla Drive and Spring Gully Road.



Figure 3.1: McCarthy land is the area 13

This land was farmed for many years by the McCarthy brothers who had bought this land in the 1920s. They operated a pig farm and ran horses. Local children

such as Peter Gould-Hurst's daughter Sally, were allocated a horse to look after. In 1969 they sold a small block of approximately one acre and 34 perches or .4 hectares. It can be seen as you enter the Park from the eastern end of Wandilla Drive as it turns left. This is the area shown in blue on the map. There is still a fence there today.



Figure 3.2: Small section sold in 1969

The new owner had plans, approved by the East Torrens Council, to build a three-level house on this sloping block where motor bike hill-climbing races had been held in the 1920s, known as 'Motorbike Hill'. He also intended to use this site for polishing semi-precious stones. It was presumed that the wash water would be discharged into nearby Fourth Creek.

In April 1970 the recently formed Morialta Residents' Association, because of its

charter to preserve the natural environment, became involved as soon as it heard of this sub-division. Correspondence began with the government of the day and other appropriate authorities. Letters were sent to the Minister of Lands, the Minister of Environment and Conservation, the State Planning Authority, the East Torrens Council, the Member for Coles and the owner himself.

A series of public general meetings were held and deputations were sent to the authorities listed above urging the government to buy this vital piece of land. It was feared that otherwise there would be increasing pressure to further subdivide the rest of the privately owned land adjoining this site which ran back up into the crest of the hill.

So began the MRA's efforts to persuade the Government to acquire this land and increase the area of the Morialta Conservation Park.

Not all residents agreed with this concept of interfering in private land ownership but the majority view prevailed. All of the authorities agreed that the acquisition of this land was very desirable but stressed that funds were needed for more pressing projects.

But the MRA's perseverance was rewarded. In December 1973 the MRA made a successful representation to its local Member of Parliament, Attorney-General, the Hon. Len King. The Government agreed to the compulsory acquisition of this small parcel of the land and to recompense the owner.

Lots 100 and 101

In March 1996 a delegation from the MRA, comprising Graham Dickson, John Osborne, Eric Webb, Brian Morrison and our local MP Joan Hall, met with David Wotton, the then Minister for Environment and Planning, and submitted a proposal urging his Department to purchase the remainder of this land, now just less than 75 hectares, that was then owned by the developer Joe Emanuel but had been put on the market because of his financial problems.

In December 1996 the Government for various reasons was not interested in acquiring all the land even though Minister Wotton said that “it was an embarrassment to us that we do not own that land.” He was only prepared to make an offer of \$400,000, which was rejected. In so doing the Government missed an invaluable and cost-effective opportunity. (1)

In April 1997 the MRA wrote to David Wotton as MP and Minister for Environment and Planning concerning the remaining parcel of land:

This parcel of land is of critical importance to the environmental integrity of the central area of the Park, the Fourth Creek Gorge. Few visitors walking between the picnic area between and the Kiosk would be aware that in that section, the whole of the hillside enclosing the north side of the Gorge, extending in places to within inches of the bitumen road, is privately owned.

The Mordialta Residents’ Association stresses that the purchase of this land **NOW** represents a ‘once only’ chance to preserve the natural character of the Gorge. Failure to act could lead to the loss of this unique environment – a great loss to our State and its future citizens, as well as its tourist potential. (2)

In July 1997 this reply was received:

Officers of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) have assessed that of the whole parcel of land comprising some 74.69 hectares, a site of 20 hectares adjoining the Morialta Road is worthy of retention and addition to the Park.

Negotiations with the agents of the mortgagees have been in place for some time. I have been advised that they have not, at this time, supported the concept of dividing the land and selling the small parcel that National Parks and Wildlife wish to acquire.

I understand that an offer to purchase made by the DENR in December 1996 was rejected. The agent has revealed that an offer in excess of \$500,000 would receive favourable consideration. This amount is well above the Valuer-General's valuation. (3)

In 1997, long after the Dunstan Government had introduced the Hills Face Zone (HFZ) concept, the McCarthy brothers commenced removing the top of a prominent hill on their property but were prevented from continuing by the Department of Planning. While it was claimed that the flat area was only being created to store fertilizer, it was presumed that the McCarthy brothers had been contracted to prepare the site for a house to be constructed.

Later in 1997 they sold the land, now just less than 75 hectares for \$840,000 to the prominent Adelaide Land Developer, Joe Emanuel. He had visions of subdividing it and had, even while the land was still owned by the McCarthys, actually flattened the top of that prominent hill in preparation for the construction of a house which would have been highly visible from the Adelaide Plains. It is understood that the then Department of Planning instructed him to cease all earthworks as he did not have approval.

Early in 1998 the following article was published in the *Payneham Messenger*. (4)

**Emanuel plan for large Hills Face home knocked back by
Commission**

A plan by prominent Adelaide developer Joe Emanuel to build his own dream home above Rostrevor has been rejected by the S.A. Planning Commission. Mr Emanuel applied to build a massive house in the Rostrevor section of the Hills Face Zone overlooking the Adelaide Plains. But earlier this month his proposal was refused by the commission because of its size.

Morialta Residents' Association member Jim Warburton said he believed Mr Emanuel should not be allowed to build so high on his property because it was in the Hills Face Zone. He said Mr Emanuel should consider building his house further down the hill so it would not mar the hills view. "All sorts of things have been allowed in the Hills Face Zone and that should not be allowed. I think that people ought to get a very clear signal that they can't fool around within the Hills Face Zone."

In April 1998 the MRA wrote to Ms Dorothy Kotz, the new Minister for Environment and Planning, seeking a meeting with her about government acquisition from the mortgagees of the whole area of nearly 75 hectares. In September 1998 Mr Emanuel was declared bankrupt in the Federal Court in Adelaide. He was obliged to sell some of his numerous property holdings and the

land came under the control of an Administrator. The mortgagees were jointly owed \$520,000.

The State Government was only prepared to offer \$400,000 and so missed an invaluable opportunity to purchase this land to add to the Conservation Park. In the absence of any offers exceeding the owed amount of \$520,000, the property was put up for sale by auction with a reserve price of \$520,000. When an outstanding interest bill was paid by an unknown source, this meant that the land still remained under the control of the Administrators and the land was taken off the market.

In 1998 the Webb family decided that their business, Spring Gully Pickles, had outgrown its Spring Gully premises and made arrangements to move to a green-fields site at Dry Creek. They kept the MRA fully informed about their intentions and explained that it was necessary to develop the land in order to minimise the cost of moving.

The proposals for the land below the Hills Face Zone included arrangements for the creek to be opened up and made a feature of the area. The land was subdivided into seven separate titles. No problems were anticipated except for the fact that Lot 7, which was partly within the HFZ, was large enough to be subdivided. The MRA requested that the Adelaide Hills Council require a Land Management Agreement be registered on the property to prevent any further subdivision. Although agreed by all parties, the responsibility for this requirement was never established and the LMA was omitted. This was to cause problems

later.

In 1999 the then owner of Lot 7 was able to divide it into two allotments, Lot 71 and Lot 72, both of which were more than 1000 square metres. The MRA made a submission to a full Council meeting pointing out that the upper portion of the land was contiguous with the McCarthy land and could be used for a boundary relocation. When the Adelaide Hills Council rescinded its original approval, the owner appealed to the Environment and Resources Dispute Court, which was of the opinion that the Adelaide Hills Council had no grounds for refusing the original application, since no additional blocks of land had been created within the HFZ. The subdivision was therefore allowed to proceed.

On February 24, 1999 this article about this land was published on the front page of the *Payneham Messenger*. (5)

Save our 'beautiful' patch

The Morialta Residents' Association fears a privately owned block of land of nearly 75 ha, bounded by Moores Road, Spring Gully Road, Wandilla Drive and Falls Road, may be carved up for housing.

The group has called on the State Government to protect the land, by absorbing it into the Morialta Conservation Park. Association spokesperson, John Osborne, said, "If the Government would buy the whole lot, valued at \$417,000, we'd be very pleased. However the Government has said it can't afford to buy the whole land. In this

case it would suffice if only a stretch of land on the northern face of the Morialta Gorge was added.”

On July 28 1999 this article appeared in the *Payneham Messenger*. (6)

\$766,000 paid for leafy ‘retirement retreat

A consortium of investors bought a large patch of Hills Face land for nearly twice its estimated value for a Victorian woman living in Malaysia who wants to “retire” to the wooded site.

Purchase of the nearly 75 ha piece of Rostrevor land was part funded by a trust formed to raise money for the Women’s and Children’s Hospital and Minda Homes Incorporated The sale of the land, next to the Morialta Conservation Park, is the focus of residents’ fears the site will be subdivided for housing.

Victorian-based Chempaka, a consortium of Victorian and Malaysian investors, bought the land from the receivers for \$766,000 on June 19th 1998. This amount was well above the Valuer-General’s estimated \$417,000 value.

Chempaka Director Richard Longworth said “It (the land) belongs to my sister who lives in Malaysia.” He said his sister, Angela Hijjas, had bought the land for her retirement. “She saw it and saw how beautiful it was.” However, he said it was “always a possibility” that attempts would be made

to subdivide.

The MRA found it difficult to believe that the new owners would have bought that land if they didn't believe that they could persuade the Adelaide Hills Council to change the zoning of the land so that they could develop it for hobby farms, vineyards or housing. The MRA thought that this might have been a front for one of Emanuel's still functioning companies and so consulted a Legal Advisory Service. A company search revealed that Chempaka had a company board of several Victorian businessmen and two shareholders with a similar Malaysian surname. At this time there appeared to be no connection with Mr Emanuel.

However, some time later, a resident out walking encountered Mr Emanuel pegging out a line to sub-divide the McCarthy land into two separate blocks. On questioning him about this, it was admitted that the two Malaysian shareholders of Chempaka were indeed members of his family.

In 1999 the MRA as it was represented on the Hills Face Network drew on other organisations, including the Conservation Council, for support and advice. The MRA wrote to the Minister for the Environment, Dorothy Kotz, notifying her of its concerns and requesting a meeting to discuss the various options available.

The Adelaide Hills Council was contacted with a request that it reject any non-complying development application.

In August 2000 Chempaka persuaded the owner of the most easterly block, Lot 7,

in Spring Gully Road, to divide his block into two. Chempaka purchased the title to the half abutting its nearly 75 hectares. It was then able to realign the boundaries and divide the land, now 75 hectares, into two separate titles hence creating Lot 100 of 30 hectares and Lot 101 of 45 hectares.

When the MRA complained to the Adelaide Hills Council with its objection it found it had no powers to reject the division. This was of great concern to the MRA as it was hard to imagine that the company would have bought the land if it had not thought it could get around the Council and its planning regulations to subdivide or use the land for purposes which would not please local residents. The MRA wrote again to the AHC asking for all possible protection of this land against possible deleterious uses.

Following the completion of the subdivision, the larger northern block, Lot 101, was sold to Daro Fontanarosa, who proceeded to clean up and rehabilitate the pig farm buildings and erect a boundary fence around his property.

In 2002 Lot 100 was placed on the market for \$770,000.

In the same year arrangements were made to lease part of Lot 101. The lessee made an application to the AHC to set up a Paint Ball Adventure on this part of Lot 101. Following strong protests from the MRA this proposal was dropped.

In 2006 Lot 100 was bought by Daro Fotanarosa for \$900,000. In 2009 he put it on the market for \$1.9 million. The map Figure 3.2 printed at the beginning of this

chapter clearly shows the part of Lot 100 still owned privately. The section marked in blue was the land acquired by the Government in the early 1970s.

In early June 2007, members of the MRA saw a 'For Sale' sign offering for sale 30 hectares of privately owned land, known as 'Lot 100', that should always have been an integral part of the Morialta Conservation Reserve.



Figure 3.3: A section of Lot 100 within the Morialta Gorge

This land included the whole north-eastern face of the Morialta Gorge at the entrance to the Reserve and parts of Fourth Creek at the base of the Gorge.

ljhooker.com

**LOT 100
29.96 HA**

**Most Picturesque Area
Of The Adelaide Hills**

- Lot 100 - 29.96 ha (approx 75 acres)
- Zoned Hills Face
- Adjoining Morialta Reserve
- Ideal for those wanting a creating challenge

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Figure 3.4: Lot 100 for sale

In 2007, with Lot 100 coming on to the market, an opportunity arose for the MRA to encourage the government to purchase a significant portion of this land. The ultimate purchase was enough land to take the boundary of the Reserve up to the top of the ridge of the Morialta Gorge – what the MRA called ‘the natural boundary’ of the Reserve – and to have the length of Fourth Creek put back into public ownership.

Chronology of the 2007 campaign

The following is a chronology of the 2007 Lot 100 campaign:

May 2007

- Lot 100 comes onto the market

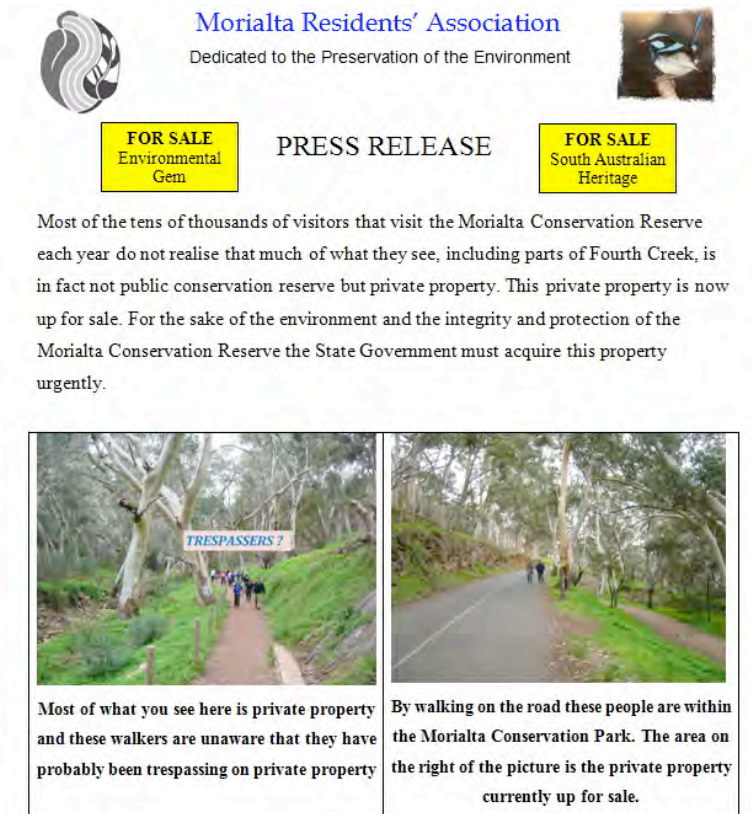


Figure 3.5: Front page of MRA's press release

June 2007

- MRA issues media release to state politicians and to the media. (Refer above for a copy of the front page of the media release.)
- MRA spends weekends at the Morialta Conservation Reserve distributing leaflets to visitors to the Reserve and urging them to contact various politicians to have the Government purchase the land. The vast majority of people expressed their support for the MRA position, with many promising to write to politicians and one even offering monetary support (which the MRA declined).
- The Hon Sandra Kanck, of the Democrats, picks up the issue and raises it in State Parliament. In reply, the State Government advises that it does not intend to purchase the land as, in their view, the land is not under threat of development and the land would create a significant management burden on the government.
- The issue is also raised in Parliament by the Hon Michelle Lensink of the Liberal Party.
- The State member of Parliament for the area in which the Reserve lies, the Hon Lindsay Simmons, urges the Minister for Environment to purchase the land.
- The Hon Mark Parnell, Greens, also makes approaches to the Minister of Environment and provided advice to the MRA.

July 2007

- Many people write to various politicians urging them to support the MRA

campaign. Many of these e-mails, which were copied to the MRA, were sincere, heartfelt appeals to the Government to purchase the land.

- A number of MRA members appear in a 'Lot 100' story airing on ABC TV's Stateline program.
- MRA keeps up communications with the Minister for Environment and the local member for Morialta.
- MRA prints the 'Help Save the Morialta Conservation Reserve' posters and distributes them at shops, cafes, universities, and hospitals.
- The Hon Nick Xenophon, Independent MLA, indicates his support for the MRA campaign and appears with MRA residents in a Messenger Newspaper article on the issue.
- The campaign receives support from the Hills Face Network, whose members write to the Minister for Urban Development and Planning.
- The Hon Alexander Downer, Minister for Foreign Affairs, writes to the state Minister for Environment urging the State Government to take up the MRA proposal to purchase Lot 100.
- The Hon Christopher Pyne, Federal Liberal, organises a petition to support the MRA cause. He receives about one thousand responses which he tables in Federal Parliament.

July 2007

- The MRA receives a commitment from Mia Handshin, Labor candidate for the Federal Seat of Sturt that she will try to secure Federal funding to support remediation of Lot 100 should the land be purchased by the State Government.

- The State Government makes an announcement that it has begun “compulsory land acquisition proceedings to ... purchase the land, or parts of it”.
- The story appears in radio and television news bulletins.

August 2007

- The MRA is concerned that the State Government may only purchase a sliver of land at the base of the Gorge, and so continues its campaign to pressure the Government to purchase at least 18 hectares (which the MRA feels is the minimum parcel required to extend the Reserve to, what the MRA called, ‘its natural boundary’).
- The Conservation Foundation of SA Inc., Adelaide Bushwalkers Inc., and the Friends of Black Hill and Morialta Inc. write, separately, to the Minister for Environment urging the Government to extend the Reserve to that ‘natural boundary’.

September 2007—August 2008

- Periodic correspondence with various parties trying to push the purchase process along and to continue to encourage the State Government to purchase the whole of Lot 100 (30 hectares) or, at the very least, the 18 hectares that will extend the Reserve to its ‘natural boundary’.

September 2008

- Received advice from the Federal Government that it would provide a grant of \$150,000 for capital improvements (such as establishing walking

trails) and / or for the remediation of the land (by, for example, removing pests such as olive trees and other introduced species).

July 2009

- Announcement that the State Government has purchased 18 ha of the 30ha block.

October 2009

- Held discussions with rangers from the Department of Environment and Heritage about their plan on how to spend the \$150,000 Federal Government Grant. The MRA believes it is a terrific plan which uses the funds to secure the long-run environmental integrity of Lot 100.

MRA's role in the campaign

The MRA's role in the campaign was to:

- Get the media, politicians, community groups and as many South Australian citizens as possible involved in the campaign.
- Persuade and, where necessary, cajole the decision makers within government to make the right long-term decisions in relation to Lot 100.
- Obtain monies from the Federal Government in order to support the State Government in remediating Lot 100 once it was purchased.
- Recognise those that contributed to the success of the campaign.
- The campaign came in 50 percent under budget!

Some comments from others

“It is rare to find a group so committed to their (simple but profound) constitution which, in the case of the MRA, has found the drive and enthusiasm to persist for almost 40 years. What an achievement!”

From a letter to the Minister for Environment, on July 14 2007, from a senior university lecturer recently arrived from South Africa, known to the MRA but chose to be anonymous.

“This is a win for the Mordialta Residents’ Association”.

Hon Christopher Pyne MP. Media release June 30 2007

“Congratulations to the Mordialta Residents Association from everyone at the Hills Face Network! A great achievement after much persistence - well done!”

Hills Face Network July 11 2009

“The Mordialta Residents’ Association has been diligent and tenacious in its approach ... I congratulate them for not letting go of their aim.”

Ms Lindsay Simmons MP; Parliamentary speech November 18 2009

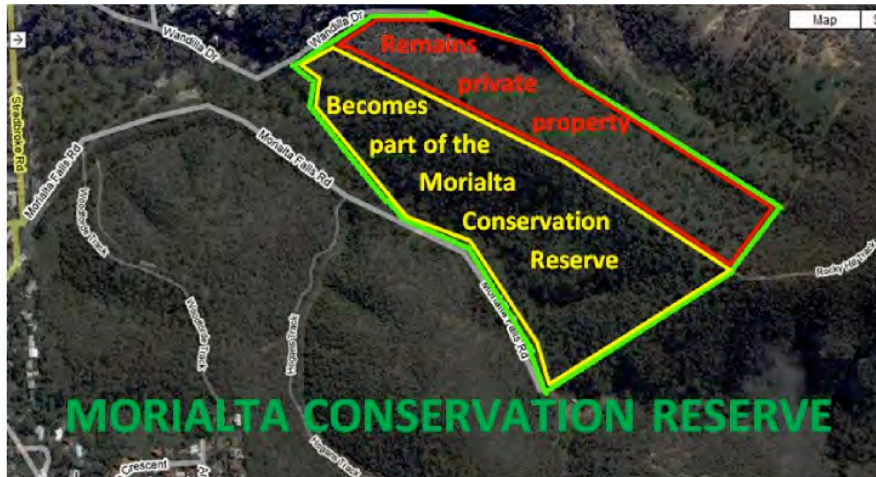


Figure 3.6: Shows the 18 ha portion of Lot 100 that became a part of the Morialta Conservation Reserve

Conclusion

Subsequently this 18 ha block of land was divided into Lot 21 and Lot 22. So after more than 40 years the MRA had achieved its goal to get the governments of the day to acquire part of Lot 100 from the crest down and add it to the Conservation Park.



Figure 3.7 The Lot 100 campaign lasted a number of years

LOT 100 CAMPAIGN: A GOOD RESULT



Figure 3.8: MRA meets the Press

ENDNOTES

1. Minister Wotton *Letter to the MRA re purchase of McCarthy land*, December 1996
2. MRA *Letter to the Minister Wotton re purchase of McCarthy land*, April 1997
3. Minister Wotton *Letter in reply to the MRA re purchase of McCarthy land*, December 1996
4. *Article published in the Payneham Messenger*, April 5, 1998, p.1
5. MRA *Letter to the Minister Kotz re purchase of McCarthy land*, April 1997
6. *Article published in the Payneham Messenger*, February 24, 1999, p.1
7. *Article published in the Payneham Messenger*, July 28, 1999, p.1

Chapter 4: The Name Change

Introduction

Not all campaigns are successful, but much is revealed in the struggle.

This chapter serves to highlight the Morialta Residents' Association's organisational and strategic planning abilities, simultaneously illustrating the complexities of local politics in and around Morialta. It also illustrates the broader state complexities involved in encouraging change whose benefits appear obvious to those intimately acquainted with their community.

The idea of seeking to change the name of that part of Rostrevor which is in the Adelaide Hills Council area to Morialta was first mooted over 20 years ago by the MRA Committee of the time. Two formal applications were unsuccessful but at least one well known resident has ever since had all his mail successfully addressed to Morialta.

At the publication of this history (2011) it had not succeeded. This was despite the Association's presentation of a cogent case over four years and much local support.

Stage 1: Establishment of a name change sub-committee

The first informal steps were taken in January 2004 when the then Secretary, Dr Owen Burgan, approached the Adelaide Hills Council and the Geographical Names Unit (GNU). He produced a summary of past applications and an outline of how to make an application.

The first formal steps were taken in May 2005 when a renaming sub-committee, chaired by the then Vice-President Dr Peter Sydenham, was formed. From that meeting a detailed position paper was produced which outlined factors to be considered, key people and organisations to be contacted and the task to be undertaken.

After this first meeting the Mayor of the Adelaide Hills Council, Bill Cooksley, was contacted: he gave his informal support.

The residents' association has my personal support for this and I am fairly confident that, if and when the Adelaide Hills Council is asked for its support, it will readily be given. (1)

Stage 2: Informing the residents

On April 5 2006 the whole of the front page of the *East Torrens Messenger* was devoted to our plans.

*A group of residents don't feel part of Rostrevor.
They want their small, bushy enclave renamed, saying:*

“Call us Morialta”



Figure 4.1: Concerned old and young residents

The full article was reproduced in the survey form shown on pages 65 and 66. After the publication of this article an informal poll of residents gave a very clear indication of the strong support for the proposal. A fund-raising activity was evidence of this: over \$2000 was raised in less than a month.

The MRA had to first approach the Geographical Names Advisory Committee. At a subsequent meeting with this body the MRA was told that it had to first conduct a formal survey of all affected households: a two-thirds majority was required before the application could proceed.

Stage 3: Undertake a formal survey of residents' opinions

In March 2006, long-time MRA resident Steve Swann joined the renaming sub-committee. He produced a professional quality two-page petition that was used in the survey discussed in this section. The form was distributed to all households.

The GNU had advised that objections to the name change should not be received from more than one third of the affected residents and/or businesses. The formal survey undertaken in late 2006 indicated overwhelming support for the name change – and that only 5 percent of all residents were opposed to it.

Survey Results

In Favour of Name Change	83%
No Response / Other	11%
Against Name Change	5%
Don't Know	1%

Given this overwhelming support a formal Name Change Group was established.

PLEASE SUPPORT THIS PETITION

'Morialta'

A new name for our suburb

Morialta 5073: it has a nice ring to it but it doesn't exist – yet!

Changing the name of our part of Rostrevor to Morialta is proposed by the Morialta Residents' Association.

We seek your support for this change.

The proposal already has the backing of the Mayor of the Adelaide Hills. The next step is this formal survey of all residents. The results will then be submitted to the Adelaide Hills Council. If it recommends supporting the proposal then the MRA will make the application to the Geographical Names Authority. The final decision is made by Geographical Names Advisory Committee after consultation with appropriate bodies, groups and authorities.

We need the support of at least 2/3 of households before the AHC will support our application.

The unique semi-rural character of our area – and the fact that we are in the Adelaide Hills Council, not Campbelltown – clearly sets us apart from the already large postcode area of Rostrevor. It is immediately obvious upon entry that our area, bounded by Wandilla Drive, Stradbroke Road, Arcoona Avenue and Spring Gully Road, is different from the rest of Rostrevor.

"Morialta" is a name long associated with our area. When it was founded in 1968, the Morialta Residents' Association chose its name because of well-researched historic connections and because its area adjoins the Morialta Conservation Park.

Why change?

Identifying our special patch with a name clearly reflecting our character – native vegetation, no overhead powerlines, wide verges and a relaxed, uncluttered lifestyle – makes sense. In emergencies involving bushfire, ambulance or police, we need to better define and pinpoint our area, especially as we sit on the boundary of the Morialta Park.



Is it too small to be suburb?

There are already at least three suburbs which are as small as Morialta would be – Medindie Gardens, Heathpool and Kings Park.

Teringie and Woodforde, which are also in the Adelaide Hills Council, have had their own separate identities for decades.

Rostrevor is now a large postcode area. More than one named area can be associated with a designated postcode – for example 5074 has both Campbelltown and Newton areas.



An informal survey of residents has indicated strong support for the name change. Now it's time for a survey of all affected homeowners.

The Morialta Residents' Association has already raised the funds needed to complete the official change should the petition be successful.

Please indicate your support for changing our area's name to Morialta by signing the petition on the reverse side

PETITION TO CHANGE THE NAME OF OUR PART OF ROSTREVOR TO MORIALTA

The Morialta Residents' Association seeks to change the name of that part of Rostrevor within the Adelaide Hills Council Boundary (refer to the plan on the reverse) to the name "Morialta".

Background

The area bounded by Wandilla Drive, Stradbroke Road, Arcoona Avenue and Spring Gully Road:

- Is in a different council area to the rest of Rostrevor and, unlike the rest of Rostrevor, receives all its services from the Adelaide Hills Council – not the Campbelltown Council.
- Is historically, topographically and environmentally quite distinct from the rest of Rostrevor.
- Is closely associated with the nearby Morialta Conservation Park.
- Interacts, via the Morialta Residents Association, with its local government quite separately from the rest of Rostrevor.
- Has its own distinct urban planning priorities.

For these and other reasons, we propose that the name of the area bounded by Wandilla Drive, Stradbroke Road, Arcoona Avenue and Spring Gully Road be changed to 'Morialta'.

Petition summary

That the name of the area bounded by Wandilla Drive, Stradbroke Road, Arcoona Avenue and Spring Gully Road be henceforth known as (and gazetted as) 'Morialta'.

Action petitioned for

I/We, the undersigned, are affected residents who support the action of the MRA in seeking this name change.

In order to commence the name change process, the Geographical Names Unit requires a 2/3 majority support from the affected residents.

Please indicate whether or not you support the name change by placing an X in the appropriate box below, and provide your name and address details.

Please complete the petition form and post this leaflet (or drop it into the letterbox):

**The Secretary,
Morialta Residents' Association,
22 Baroota Avenue,
Rostrevor SA 5073**

Yes I / we support the proposed name change to "Morialta"

No I / we do not support the proposed name change

If you are a resident but not the homeowner please mark this box

Only one vote per household is required.

Name (printed): _____

Address: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

**If you have any enquiries please call the Morialta Residents' Association
Secretary, Owen Burgan on 8365 5342**

Figure 4.2: Petition for the name change to Morialta

Stage 4: Follow-up on the survey

On August 1 2006 the AHC passed the resolution: "That Council advises the Morialta Residents Association that it supports in-principle the proposed name change for that portion of Rostrevor located in the Adelaide Hills Council area to the name of 'Morialta.'"

This was subject to a slight change to the boundaries to include all properties located in the Adelaide Hills Council area. The new proposed Morialta boundary encompassed a small portion of Montacute with two new properties on Spring Gully Road.

Stage 5: Formally request a name change

On August 20 2007 the MRA asked the AHC for its in-principle support for its proposal to include the Morialta Conservation Park into the proposed suburb of Morialta.

Because the Department of Environment and Heritage, which is the custodian of the Park, did not oppose this proposal, the AHC on November 6 2007 gave its in-principle support.

In December 2007 the MRA submitted a formal submission to the Geographic Names Unit. This lengthy document was so well researched and presented that it was felt that there was every chance of the proposal being accepted. The full submission appears in Appendix 3 by permission from the MRA.

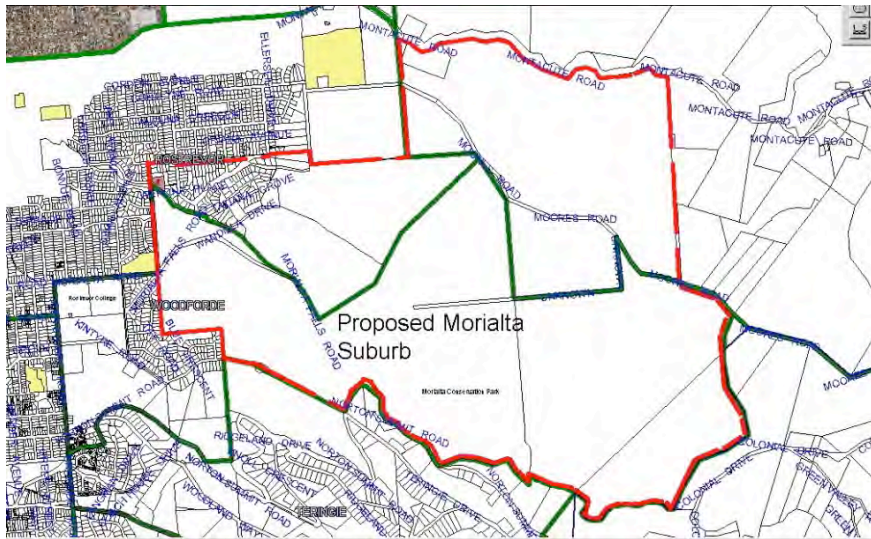


Figure 4.3: Proposed Morialta suburb including Lot 100 and Lot 101

Figure 4.3 shows the area the AHC intended using in its 2009 application on behalf of the MRA, shows so clearly how much bigger “Our Patch” part of Rostrevor, (boundary shown in green) was after it included Lot 100 and Lot 101.

Overview of the first application

The submission submitted to the Geographical Names Unit addressed a range of themes. A core principle was that the proposed suburb of Morialta abutted a National Conservation Park of the same name, and that many of the residents wished the park to extend beyond the park's boundaries into the suburb of Morialta itself:

For its entire history, 'Morialta' has served as a buffer between suburbia and the Adelaide Hills,” the submission argued. “Believing that Morialta is a special place that deserved special attention, residents of the area have committed significant amounts of time,

energy and money to preserve the natural heritage of the area. This has resulted in a marked softening of the interface between city and hills. Tangible fruits of this work include undergrounding power lines, narrowing of streets, restricting developers and development activity, planting of thousands of gum trees and other native vegetation as well as playing a significant role in looking after Spring Gully Creek, Fourth Creek and the north-western part of Morialta Conservation Park. None of this would have been accomplished without residents of the area believing that 'Morialta' was a special environment that needs to be preserved. Over time, new residents move into the area and it is vital that they too believe that Morialta is a special place deserving of special efforts to maintain the environment in which it finds itself. This will be more easily achieved by formalising the identity of the area as Morialta.

The Geographic Names Unit had advised that the proposed borders should draw a suburb of a regular shape and avoid elongated or separated areas, which might hinder community development. The committee's map demonstrated that the existing boundaries were irregular and proposed more regular ones.

"Ours vastly improves the regularity and identity of the boundaries," it concluded. There were some strong arguments justifying the proposal. Key stakeholders would not be affected if the name were changed; in fact, some parties would benefit. There was no problem envisaged for Australia Post. A number of long-standing residents already were recording their address as Morialta and always got their mail. Others also found it easier to tell a taxi driver that they lived in Morialta – because to mention Rostrevor invited the driver to take a more northerly route. There also were significant benefits for police and emergency services, especially the CFS. In the past, residents had complained that arrival of emergency services had been delayed because they tended to focus on Rostrevor

proper when looking for an address. It was submitted that the CFS saw the focus area of the submission more as Morialta than Rostrevor. There would be no effect on the State Transport Authority as no public transport serviced the area.

By then the application had the full support of Mayor Bill Cooksley. The MRA argued that Morialta was a distinct environment that fell within the Marble Hill ward of the Adelaide Hills Council. The rest of Rostrevor lay within the Campbelltown City Council. When put to the Adelaide Hills Council, the application received unanimous support.

The submission also addressed confusion created by the existing suburb name. “It is not unusual for residents in the area subject to this application to receive literature from the Campbelltown City Council – as often even their own people who are letterbox distributors think that we are a part of that council,” it stated.

In conclusion, the MRA highlighted what its members considered obvious:

The great majority of residents of the area subject of this application feel that they already live in ‘Morialta’. The MRA, on behalf of the overwhelming majority of residents, is simply asking that the Geographic Names Unit formalise the name that has been in current usage for well over 40 years. It is an odd situation to have an area thought of by almost all its residents as being Morialta called by another name. Morialta has its own unique history as well as its own set of issues and needs that are quite different from the rest of Rostrevor.

The submission was delivered in December 2007. Ten months of government deliberations within the GNU followed, but, despite the weight of the argument,

in September 2008 the Unit rejected it, ostensibly because of SA Police operational complexities:

Extensive consultation was undertaken with emergency service organisations and Australia Post. No contacted agency reported any problems with servicing the residents in your part of Rostrevor. However, the SA Police stated that the proposed new suburb could cause service delays in non-urgent situations as it would then be serviced from Mount Barker.

Then there was this sentence that appeared to discount the MRA's evidence supporting the provision of more 'regular' boundaries. It also elevated to a higher level of importance the new and different notion of the importance of 'stable' boundaries and introduced a previously unanticipated critique of the MRA's bid:

As stable suburb boundaries are essential for the efficient delivery of services to the community, and the residents' request was predominantly based on social differences, the Surveyor-General recommended to the Minister for Infrastructure, Mr Patrick Conlon, that the matter be declined.

The GNU's (and, by extension, the Surveyor-General's and the Minister's) view that the MRA's request was 'predominantly based on social differences' demonstrated their complete lack of understanding of the intrinsic merits of the proposal. In the case of the MRA application, the so-called 'social differences' characterisation must have been stretched to breaking point. It is the MRA's view that the inherent merits of its proposal were obvious.

The MRA was also disappointed to find that there appears to be no appeal process when it comes to the decisions of the GNU. Nor is there any redress in

relation to poor customer service in relation to the GNU process (including perceived levels of activity / inactivity or the competence of the personnel assigned to the case).

The MRA team found the entire process to be wholly unsatisfactory and was taken aback at the lack of professionalism displayed by the Unit. For example, the MRA had to continuously prod the GNU over a long period of time to get any understanding of case-file progress. The Unit's communication was abysmal. It was as if our application had been stuck in a dead-letter office.

The MRA would have to periodically visit the GNU office to get any update. They would invariably repeat the line that they were currently making enquiries when it was patently obvious, and they finally admitted, that they were had not even commenced the enquiry process. More disturbing was the fact that the case officer had already made up her mind that the application would be unsuccessful even prior to making those enquiries.

Finally, the Surveyor General failed to specifically address any of the arguments contained within the MRA submission. In short, there seemed to be a complete lack of accountability within the geographical name change process and the lack of an appeals process only accentuated this. An important issue at stake was one of integrity. Are all applicants being treated equally, or do property developers who submit contrived names to the GNU to help sell a housing estate get preferential treatment?

Stage 6: Notification that the request had been declined



Figure 4.4: Letter received from AHC on 29 September 2008

Figure 4.4 is a copy of the letter received by the AHC on September 29 2008 informing them that the MRA proposal to create a new suburb of Morialta had been declined.

Stage 7: March 18 2009 public meeting

More than 80 residents and representatives from the Adelaide Hills Council came to this meeting. Those in attendance were dismissively advised by the Surveyor General, Peter Kentish, as to why the Resident’s Association application to change the name of that part of Rostrevor, which we refer to as “Our Patch” to Morialta had been declined. Mr Kentish reluctantly attended at the request of the Hon Lindsay Simmons MP and the Mayor of the Adelaide Hills Council, Mr Bill Cooksley, who both supported the MRA submission.



Figure 4.5: Public meeting held on March 18 2009

Stage 8: Morialta naming group

In brief and rough chronological order, the following has transpired since.

Late in that meeting, the Morialta Naming Group of Lisa Morrison, Nick Malbon, Harry Wierda and Roger Catchlove was formed to plan an approach to re-submitting another application to enable the name change to occur.

Shortly after its first meeting, the group was invited to meet with Bill Watt, Geographical Names Unit, and Bill Cooksley, Mayor Adelaide Hills Council. At this meeting they were advised by Bill Watt that another submission from the Resident's Association would not be accepted or considered.

He went on to suggest that perhaps an approach from the Adelaide Hills Council, based on matters of good governance and improved service to the residents of the broader Council responsibilities might be favourably considered by the authorities. As a by product of that meeting, Bill Watt agreed with Bill Cooksley that the appeal of such an approach by the Council might be improved should the residents of Woodforde also agree to be included in a larger area to be known as Morialta. It was also recommended that an involvement of the traditional owners of the area should be solicited.

Subsequently, and in rapid sequence, after a meeting with two Woodforde residents, followed by a brief straw poll of other residents in that suburb, it was decided not to pursue the possibility of including the Woodforde residents in a future application by the Council for the name change.

By now it had become clear that the Morialta Naming Group (MNG) could not effectively proceed without some indication from the Council as to:

- whether they, the Council, would submit a name change application in their own right; and
- as to how the Council intended to couch a potential application.

Consequently, at a meeting on the July 17, which the MNG had requested with Bill Cooksley and Mark Salver, Mayor and Planning & Development Director of the AHC, respectively, Mark Salver agreed to raise the issue of the name change at the Council's monthly meeting which was held on Friday July 24. A letter of support offering the MRA's active assistance was forwarded to Mark, prior to that meeting, to be presented to the Councillors.

During this time, the MNG had also met with Lindsay Symonds, State MP and Rob Amery, a representative of the Kurna Warra Pintyandi. Both of these people kindly agreed to offer their support for the name change, in writing, to the Council should the Council decide to go ahead with a submission.

Subsequently the Council informed the MNG that it was prepared to present its own application to change the name of our area to Morialta.

Stage 9: Adelaide Hills Council Resident Survey—Suburb name change from “Rostrevor” to the name of “Morialta”

On September 14 2009 the AHC sent a letter to all residents within, and adjoining, the affected area giving them the opportunity to vote for or against the proposed name renaming of that part of Rostrevor, including the Morialta Conservation Park, which was within the AHC's local government area.

Only one vote was permitted per household and replies had to be received within 14 days. The favourable 83% support from eligible households again exceeded the Geographic Naming Unit's (GNU) new minimum requirement of 75% approval, up from a two thirds majority.

However, many residents of Woodforde and Montacute very strongly objected to the AHC proposal as it took a significant land area within the Conservation Park from their suburb to make up the proposed new 'Morialta'. More than 65 percent of the Woodforde suburb is Morialta Park land. They have no representative residents' group but that did not deter them from raising a petition against the proposal that included over 140 residents' signatures.

On September 25 2009, a long-time Woodforde resident, Neil Mason, sent a personal letter about the proposed suburb name change from 'Rostrevor' to 'Morialta', to Marc Salver, Director, Planning and Development Services, Adelaide Hills Council.

The Woodforde objections were fuelled by feelings that the name-change bid had gained strong momentum because of a lack of awareness of the opposition of those outside the Morialta focus area – simply because they hadn't been consulted.

Stage 10: Council follow-up from Resident Survey

The Council after approaching the GNU for some clarification about the

boundaries of the area which would actually form the new suburb then continued the process at its December 1 2009 meeting.

The President of the Morialta Residents' Association, Dr Peter Sydenham, accompanied by Roger Catchlove, the Chair of the Naming Group, was very pleased that the residents represented by the Association had again so positively expressed their continued desire for the name change. He also expressed his appreciation of the manner in which the AHC had approached this matter. But this deputation said that the proposal, as it stood, was not workable for several reasons and thus should not go to the GNU at this time.

Approximately 40 Woodforde residents attended the meeting and they also made several deputations. As their interest was to defeat the proposal it was not surprising it resulted in several very strong statements being made to support their case, including some that were quite erroneous and hurtful. This resulted in a very vigorous debate in which President Peter Sydenham asked for understanding by Woodforde residents of the situation of 'Morialta' as a twist of history that still needs rectifying.

The MRA representatives also spoke for the motion to be defeated as it was clear it would not get up as defined: relationships with the Woodforde residents were seen to be too valuable.

The AHC then put its decision to the vote not to pursue the matter and that course of action won the day.

After the meeting many Woodforde residents showed support to MRA representatives for our situation if it can be structured more comfortably. They made it clear that they welcomed closer relationships with us and many new contacts were made that will be useful in the future. Their warmth was so unexpected considering the situation.

Many of the helpful things said by the Woodforde residents in, and after the meeting, made it very clear that our cause was not lost on our neighbours and the AHC.

The name change issue will not be abandoned and the Sub Committee will continue to work on the cause into the future. The MRA has long experience with struggle and adversity but remains optimistic that its case remains strong.

Stage 11: The end? Quo vadis? Listen to the people!

This was the headline on page 1 in the *East Torrens Messenger* on December 8 2009.

Residents block new Morialta suburb

By Katelin Nelligan

STRONG opposition from Woodforde residents has halted a call to rename a section of Rostrevor as Morialta.

Adelaide Hills Council voted last week to not support the name change, suggested by the Morialta Residents Association, after more than 140 Woodforde residents signed a petition against it.

The residents were concerned the Morialta Conservation Park would no longer be in their suburb of Woodforde, but would become part of the new suburb of Morialta.

Figure 4.6: Headline in the *East Torrens Messenger* on December 8 2009

This was an accurate report which clearly presented the opposition case put by Woodforde residents. But by a bizarre twist when the story was continued on page 5 this was the heading. This second part of the article is shown in full on the next page.

Morialta suburb name victory

■ From Page One

Yet, in a council survey of 132 households in the affected area – bounded by Stradbroke Rd, Arcoona Ave and Spring Gully Rd – 83 per cent were in favour of a change, mainly because of the area's semi-rural feel.

Woodforde resident **Janan Basheer** said the conservation park had always been in the suburb of Woodforde and should remain that way for history's sake.

"We would become a very small suburb if the name change occurred and we know, as far as councils and elections go, the larger the area, the more power you've got," she said.

Neighbour **Neil Mason** agreed: "It would take away 65 per cent of the existing suburb of Woodforde – the Morialta Conservation Park," he said. "The name Morialta is a generic name that



Do you agree with the Woodforde residents? Log on to our website, follow the story link and have your say.

www.etmessenger.com.au

shouldn't be attached to a suburb." Morialta Residents Association member **Roger Catchlove** said he was not surprised by the council's decision.

"We have no wish to inadvertently cause a fractured relationship with our neighbours or the council," he said.

"We strongly believe there are going to be opportunities in the future to discuss matters with Woodforde residents."

Katelin Nelligan

Figure 4.7: *East Torrens Messenger* on December 8 2009

ENDNOTES

1. Cooksley W. (2005) *Letter* re his informal support for the Name Change, June 5
2. *Formal Request for Name Change on behalf of the Residents of Morialta*, The Morialta Residents Association, December 2007
3. Ibid, p.112
4. Geographic Names Unit, *Letter* re rejection of Name Change application September 29 2008
5. Ibid

Chapter 5: “Our Patch” Activities

Environmental management and tree planting

In 1998, the Morialta Residents’ Association decided to adopt sections of Fourth Creek and a minor tributary as "Our Patch", under the auspices of the River Torrens Catchment Water Management Board. The sections involved were Fourth Creek from Stradbroke Road to the end of Wandilla Drive (opposite No 36) and Spring Gully Creek as far as the road bridge.

Under the leadership of John Osborne a group of residents, including John Thorn, Kath Brewer, John Weadon, Barbara Dickson, Owen Burgan and Gerry Piper met on Wednesday mornings to remove exotic species and to plant native species germinated by Kieran Brewer, from locally collected seeds. The efforts of the group were supported by seasonal grass cutting by National Parks and Wildlife staff and spraying by various contractors.

Between 1998 and 2005 nearly 3500 seedlings were planted in the two sections of “Our Patch” with a strike rate of approximately 95 percent. In 2001 the MRA received a special grant of \$3000 to purchase 340 extra trees and to cover the costs of spraying etc. In 2002 the MRA was awarded a “Certificate of Appreciation” by what was now the East Torrens Water Management Board for its ongoing tree planting efforts.

In addition to this under the leadership of Kathleen Brewer a wider range of residents also took part in “Our Patch” activities on occasions such as National Tree Day and National Clean up Day.

Over the years, the work involved in digging holes for over 200 seedlings in a few

short weeks became too much for the group because of old age and infirmity. After a stint of eight years the Wednesday group of willing workers finally decided to cease activities.

However, in 2004, the work was able to continue because arrangements were made by one local resident, Paul Byford, a teacher at Stradbroke Primary School, to bring his class along for several weeks during the planting seasons. In an interview for the "East Torrens Messenger" he said that not only were the students learning a lot, but also they were taking ownership of "their patch" of the Park. The group of nearly 30 students and several of their parents initially planted 300 trees in the Park's north-western corner. By the end of spring they had planted another 200.

The photograph on the next page shows how nature lovers young and old were turning a section of the Park back to native bushland and in working together upheld the credo of the MRA: "Dedicated to the Preservation of the Environment". After the last day of planting, the MRA provided a morning tea of party pies, sausage rolls and seemingly endless drinks.

In recognition of the contribution made by the MRA over such a period of time, it is not charged the normal hiring fee of \$150 when it uses the Meeting Room in the Park for meetings or other functions.

The MRA hopes that in the near future a new generation of residents will continue to protect the environment, perhaps concentrating on "Our Patch" rather than the Park itself.



Figure 5.1: The young and the old preserving the environment

Road alignment

When our local roads came due for modernisation and, inevitably sealing, the pressure and conventional wisdom was there to widen them and remove the curves imposed by big ancient gums and natural land forms. Baroota Avenue, for example, followed virtually the same path as it did when Chummy Austin in the 1920s brought his bullock team carrying big logs along it.



Figure 5.2: Chummy Austin and his bullock team

The MRA was able to convince the Council that modern services and facilities could still be delivered without embracing the rigid grids, which mark so much of the suburban “progress” on the Adelaide Plains.

It is only since 2000 that Wandilla Drive was sealed!

The result of these endeavours by the MRA was to enable our unique area to retain much of its rural feel.

Inappropriate subdivisions or land use

Back in the 1970s developers eyeing our then still vacant acres were keen to carve the area into regimented blocks: straight lines and rectangles which yielded as many allotments as possible. The persuasion of the MRA ensured on several occasions that any subdivisions preserved our rural feel. Outstanding examples of course are the prevention of the establishment of a caravan park in a section of land visible in the Park as you enter from Wandilla Drive, a marble crushing plant on land on the other side of the road and a paint ball operation on land up above the end of the road. The greatest achievement of course was the government acquisition of a large part of Lot 100 and its inclusion in the Park.

Flood mitigation dam proposal

Lobbying by our residents led to the scrapping of plans for a large flood mitigation dam to be built on the picnic grounds of the Morialta Conservation Park.

This scheme, promoted by the Campbelltown Council, would have scarred this delightful spot with a 100 metre long dam with 10 metre walls.

Rounding of the banks of Fourth Creek

The long campaign to have restored the natural slope of the banks of Fourth Creek abutting Morialta Conservation Park illustrates the stamina required of an association of residents to bring about local change.

The purpose was to increase flood capacity, improve safety and restore the amenity of the natural environment.

For 45 years residents have been urging the state government to address a

problem caused by the dumping of fill on the banks of the creek, sometimes turning gentle slopes into steep cliffs, risky to children playing in the area, reducing the potential for local eucalypt regeneration, and elevating the risk of local flooding.

As long as the MRA has been in existence, this campaign has been a priority; however, by 2010 the MRA's attempts remained unfulfilled.

The creek verge restoration campaign commenced among local residents in the early 1960s. A 1.05-metre diameter pipe had been connected to the hills reservoir at Wattle Park. It ran down Marola Avenue and through what is now known as Morialta Conservation Park. Despite local protests, the soil excavated for the pipe trench was spread along the banks of Fourth Creek.

Around this time there were major earthworks at Lot 88, a large, privately owned block abutting Stradbroke Road. This ran along 100 metres of the creek with a 200-metre frontage to Wandilla Drive. The owner arranged for spoil from sewer excavations to be dumped on the land by the Engineering and Water Supply Department (E&WS). So much was dumped that the EW&S provided a bulldozer to spread it. The owner had plans to use the site for housing or a caravan park. However, residents worried about the risk that some of this would enter the creek and complaints prompted the local MP to stop the spoil supply.

Residents made sustained efforts to get the state government to purchase this land. In a theme that was to repeat at other times in other places, the owner wanted £6000 but the government was only prepared to offer £2000.

After prolonged negotiations in 1965, to prevent building and further dumping,

local resident Bob Dickson, who in 1968 became a MRA stalwart when the Association was incorporated – decided to act. He lived opposite the site. He purchased land on the northern side near the Stradbroke Road Bridge for £2350. He then offered it to the government at the purchase price. Eventually, in 1968 the government bought it and it became part of the reserve. It actually cost Bob Dickson £1000 more than he received but what a gift he gave to the community!

The 30 years that followed featured a history of government policy announcements, poor or fragmentary implementation of them and much hesitation to commit to MRA proposals, despite well-researched submissions. Ample evidence illustrates decades of MRA perseverance – and frustration.

In August 1981 the MRA responded to a state government call for submissions for the planning for the management of the Park. It made 22 recommendations, several of which related to the need to address the creek verge issue. However, within two years it became clear that most of its recommendations would be ignored by the state government.

In March 1983, although no plan was in place, the state government called for tenders for earthworks and clearing. A month later the MRA wrote to the Director of National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS) describing the key proposals as grossly inappropriate and condemning construction in advance of planning. It sent a deputation to the Director of National Parks and Wildlife Services and to the Environment Minister.

The response was a letter from the Director NPWS with assurances that the proposals of March 1983 would be dropped; the creek banks would be “laid-back”; and that no more car parking would be introduced. However, in May 1983

the car park was expanded. The MRA protested. It was too big and inappropriately landscaped. The Director later admitted that the car park decision was “unfortunate” and that it would be “reinstated in the long term.”

In the same year the NPWS released its long-awaited Draft Management Plan for the area. The MRA again highlighted the problem of extensive creek filling over the years with too much focus on development, such as the works depot. It stressed the need for conservation and protection to preserve the area’s natural character. Bob Dickson supplied many charts and diagrams like the one shown below.(1)

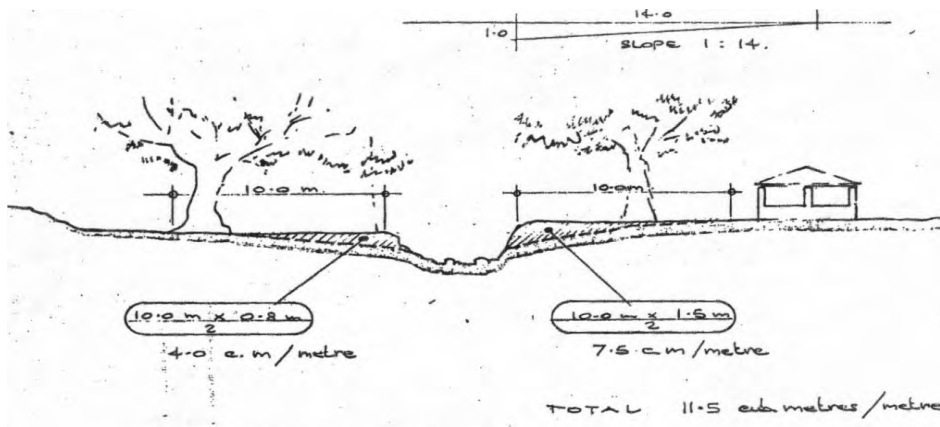


Figure 5.3: Rounding of Fourth Creek banks

Four years were to pass before the MRA again had to remind the state government of the need for action. In 1989 it wrote about continuing creek filling and the enlargement of the works depot. It published and distributed a pamphlet illustrating these concerns. Acting proactively, it also submitted to the Environment Minister a detailed proposal to undertake a pilot study for work along 300 metres of creek immediately east of the bridge on Stradbroke Road. The proposal featured diagrams, calculations, a supporting statement from a

hydraulic engineer and a quotation from an earth-moving contractor for carrying out the work and removing the soil. It appeared to have been favourably received; however, by 1991 it was clear that work had stalled because of concerns that the grading of the creek banks might cause root damage to mature red gums. The MRA even offered to raise funds and in early 1992 met with the Regional Manager, Lofty Region, at the site. However, no decision was made.

In 1995 the MRA reminded the state government that the 1983 Draft Management Plan had never been adopted as a final plan even though the MRA had updated its comments twice, in 1987 and 1992.

Three years later, Bob Dickson responded to a survey about the Park, and in 2004 repeated his comments in a letter to the Environment Minister. (2) It resulted in a meeting when he and two other MRA members met with three representatives from the Department for the Environment and Heritage (DEH). On December 12 2004 Minister John Hill wrote back, responding to the contouring proposal for the creek banks. Money was the problem. He wrote:

I am advised that although my staff was impressed with your cross-sectional diagrams and can well see some benefit of the proposed works, it is considered that this submission is likely to have difficulty in competing with other funding submissions.

There are also many mature and semi-mature red gums growing along the banks and recent plantings have been undertaken by the MRA and others. Further earthworks will be contentious with some community members because of the risk to natural regeneration of plants and volunteer plantings.

I am advised that DEH has consulted with the Torrens Catchment Water Management Board who advised that, 'after a detailed site inspection, the Board staff concluded that there was little benefit to the watercourse from any proposed earthworks' but that 'there may be recreation and/or safety reasons for battering the bank in one or two locations, where this can be done without impacting negatively

on the existing riparian vegetation. (3)

The Minister concluded: "I am informed that the meeting agreed that Ranger, Eric De Smit, would investigate the public risk issues with a DEH Safety Officer and yourself, and submissions for works may result." (4)

The MRA can find no evidence that this occurred.

In November 2005 major flooding along the creek damaged its banks. It was seen as an opportunity to contact the government with some constructive suggestions. The MRA pointed out that "essential restoration of the flood damage to Fourth Creek within the Morialta Conservation Park provides an opportunity and incentive for re-grading of the creek banks to increase flood capacity, improve safety and to restore the amenity of the natural environment."(5) It recommended the engagement of professional hydraulic engineers, with a brief to restore the natural creek bank environment. Copies of information that attached to the MRA's 1991 submission accompanied the letter.

The January 2006 government response appeared to be encouraging when Environment Minister John Hill wrote:

The flooding of Fourth Creek early in November 2005 and the resultant damage to creek banks within the Park may appear to provide an opportunity to re-examine the proposals put previously by the MRA.

Assessment and planning for restoration works is currently being conducted by the DEH with professional engineering advice at this and other sites on the western slopes of the Mount Lofty Ranges. I have requested that the proposal raised by your association is given consideration as part of this process. (6)

However, in the same week a letter from the Acting Director of Regional Conservation contrasted the Minister's encouragement, and dampened the MRA's optimism:

I am aware of the concerns held by members of the MRA and that Regional and District staff have a good appreciation of the matter. While the desirability of the MRA proposal is understood, competing works of a higher priority have, to date, unfortunately prevented the allocation of resources to such a project. (7)

In March 2006 Bob Dickson wrote to the MRA and suggested that it widen interest in the project by dedicating a newsletter to the issue and sharing the information with local and state newspapers and MPs. He then met with two members of the MRA and all agreed to approach the new elected state MP for Morialta, Lindsay Simmons. She had already shown interest in Park matters.

In April Ms Simmons agreed to discuss them with Gail Gago, Minister for Environment and Conservation. On the MRA's behalf Ms Simmons contacted Minister Gago informing her of the background and passing on the MRA request that her department investigate the possibility of combining the efforts of repair of the recent flood damage with the restoration of the creek banks to their original condition.

In May the MRA contacted Keith Downard, a member of the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management (NRM) Board, supplying him with copies of all relevant information. The MRA informed him that it had discussed the issue with the Ranger who had supervised the initial regrading carried out using limited insurance claim funds. It was anticipated that further work would be carried out.

However, in October the Minister's response left the MRA back where it had begun. The government recognised that in the 1960s a substantial volume of excavated overburden had been distributed along the banks of the Creek in the Park by the then EW&S Department, but this was before the land was designated as a Conservation Park. After Minister Gago's department had consulted with the Mount Lofty NRM Board, she concluded "that more would be lost by carrying out extensive earthworks than would be gained." The department's view was that the 2005 flood damage at Morialta had been minimal. Despite this, her letter ended encouragingly:

Following initial remedial work after the flood event, DEH is currently finalising planning and documentation for significant restoration works. The concerns of the MRA have been considered as part of the planning process and some selective laying-back of creek banks may be undertaken, dependent upon the impact on native vegetation and competing priorities.(8)

At publication date, the bank restoration campaign objective remained unfulfilled. While the MRA felt that yet another opportunity had been lost to address a potentially dangerous situation – one it had been warning about for nearly 20 years – it remains convinced that its long perseverance and the weight of its arguments will one day result in action that will restore the creek verge environment to its natural state.

ENDNOTES

1. R. Dickson: *Drawings of regrading of creek banks*, submitted to the Environment Minister to Minister John Hill, March 21, 1989
2. R. Dickson: *Letter re creek banks to Minister John Hill*, November 12, 2004
3. Minister John Hill: *Letter creek banks* to the MRA, December 12, 2004
4. Ibid
5. MRA: *letter* to Minister John Hill re creek banks, November 12 2005
6. Minister John Hill: *Letter* to the MRA re restoration of creek banks, January 10 2006
7. Acting Director of Regional Conservation: *letter* to MRA re work not to be undertaken, January 14 2006
8. Minister Gail Gago: *Letter* to the MRA re possible restoration of creek banks, October 20 2006

Chapter 6: Life Membership Awards

Introduction

Over the years there have been a number of residents whose actions have made a real difference to our living environment. This chapter outlines and acknowledges the outstanding contribution made by five of them. Their sustained contribution to our area has been remarkable. It was with great pleasure and appreciation that the MRA presented them with Life Membership Awards at formal ceremonies held fittingly on Australia Day. In 2008 John Osborne and Bob Dickson received their certificates from Mayor Bill Cooksley. Lance Anderson's certificate was sent to him in Tasmania. In 2009 Graham Dickson and Kathleen Brewer were presented with their certificates by our then Member of Parliament, Lindsay Simmons. The testimonials are reprinted in full.

Bob Dickson

Bob's work to enhance the local environment and amenity of the district started well before the MRA was founded in 1968.

After moving into his current residence more than 50 years ago he was shocked to discover that a long strip of land opposite his house in the Morialta Conservation Park, including Fourth Creek itself, was in fact privately owned and was to be offered for sale with the potential to subdivide or establish a caravan park. After long drawn-out negotiations with the owner Bob purchased this piece of land and held it for some time until the Government could be persuaded to take it over and amalgamate it with the rest of the Park.

Later Bob, and other neighbours, had serious problems with neighbours on Stradbroke Road who had set up a marble crushing business, causing excessive

noise and dust problems with the activity extending over weekends. At this stage the attitude of the District Council of East Torrens (DCET) to planning was:

“You can do what you like down there.”

After protracted and difficult negotiations with the DCET and other authorities the activity was halted and the owner placed the property on the market. Fearing problems from a new owner who might have taken advantage of the large buildings and sheds, Bob purchased the land, removed the buildings and cleaned up the site.

It was this type of undesirable development that was the catalyst for the formation of the Morialta Residents' Association (MRA) in November 1968. Bob was successfully nominated as the inaugural President of the MRA and spearheaded the development of our sealed roads with narrow streets and kerbs with natural stone features. This resulted in an award from the Civic Trust: the plaque is located in Anderson Corner.

With other concerned residents in the early 1970s Bob led the way to convince the government of the day to compulsorily acquire a small, but particularly important parcel of land at the eastern end of Wandilla Drive. This land had been subdivided from the McCarthy Farm land and the owner had been granted approval for three-story house with an area to be set up for his opal cutting business.

Bob, whether on or off the MRA Committee, has always worked tirelessly for the benefit of our area. We feel he is more than worthy of Life Membership.

Lance Anderson

Lance was the inaugural Secretary of the MRA at its formation in 1968. Over the years he held this position and subsequently positions as Committeeman, Treasurer and President.

His greatest achievement, however, was in the period from October 1989 to December 1990 when he interrupted his retired status to accept the challenge of finishing off the project he had started many years before – the undergrounding of power lines in the area.

If it had not been for the never-ending work that Lance did over a period of nearly 20 years this major project would not have reached its very satisfying and pleasing conclusion.

Lance also worked with the Roads Sub-Committee and was an invaluable contributor to this project.

As well as representing residents as an MRA Committee member Lance also served as Ward Councillor on the DCET.

It was on the eve his return to live in Tasmania that the DCET saw fit to name our meeting place in the reserve on the corner of Marola Avenue and Baroota Avenue “Anderson Corner.”

Shortly before his death he kindly gave the MRA permission to republish in an edited form “The Greening of ETSA” which gives a detailed account of this ongoing saga.

John Osborne

When John moved into the area more than 30 years ago it did not take him long to become involved with the activities of the MRA. He has held all positions on the MRA Executive and still holds the position of Public Officer and represents the MRA on the Hills Zone Face Network. He also attends all MRA meetings and his experience and history of events is of great benefit to all new members.

Some years ago there was a proposal to build a large holding dam on Fourth Creek, within the Morialta Conservation Park. It was only through John's expertise as a hydraulics engineer that the MRA was able to convince the authorities of the potential danger of such a structure and the idea was abandoned.

In more recent times he was also able to use his expertise and experience to prevent SA Water from installing an unsightly trash rack on fourth Creek at the Stradbroke Road Bridge.

John was the instigator of the MRA's involvement with the "Our Patch" scheme and worked on this for numerous years with a small band of volunteers and then with students from Stradbroke Primary School.

Over the years John has been at the forefront of all MRA activities and was a very energetic worker on the under-grounding of the powerlines.

In 2002 the Adelaide Hills Council saw fit to give a Civic Award to John in recognition of his sustained efforts over such a long period. This award was presented to him at the Australia Day celebrations on January 26 2003.

Kathleen (Kath) Brewer

Residents live among us whose actions have made a real difference to our living environment. Kathleen is one of these.

Kathleen came to live here in the late 1960s. Within a year, in 1968, she was contributing as a committee member to the newly formed Morialta Residents' Association. She brought up five boys here, two of whom are well known – Kieran for his Australian natural vegetation skills and Simon as the current Mayor of the Campbelltown City Council.

She served the Red Cross for over 40 years, at one time being the Regional President. For several years she opened up her house as an art gallery with proceeds going to the Red Cross. She was our Red Cross door knock appeal collector each year. For her service she was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal (with bar).

In the final years that we were in the East Torrens Council area Kathleen was our Ward Councillor for two terms.

She was a long-serving MRA committee member and several times President from the 1970s until she stepped down in 2002. She continued, however, as Vice-President.

With John Osborne she was our representative on the Hills Face Zone Network. As a driving force behind the "Our Patch" organisation she made a considerable personal contribution to the preservation of our local environment. In particular, she was involved in the National Tree Day movement, where she was the organiser of many tree planting days. As well for many years, until only quite

recently, she was responsible for the MRA's involvement in the Clean Up Australia Day activities.

During her time on the committee she tackled many contentious issues – the extension of the bus route, nuisance dogs, the undergrounding of the power lines, street lighting, laying back of the banks of Fourth Creek, the early efforts to change our name to Morialta – the transition from the East Torrens Council to the Adelaide Hills Council and the purchase of land in the Park.

Her sustained contribution to our area has been remarkable.

Graham Dickson

Graham, together with his wife Barbara, came to live in this area in 1955. Before they built their present house in Marola Avenue, they lived in several houses, including an old shepherd's hut at what is now 16 Wandilla Drive.

Since that time he has been a passionate crusader in many ways to preserve our precious environment. He became concerned about an inappropriate subdivision proposed for the area and, along with several other early residents, purchased the land involved and went ahead with an alternative plan.

This resulted in the current road layout, including the then new Werona Place. The roads in the lower portion of the area were given kerbs with sloping faces, inset with bluestone fragments. The success of this endeavour resulted in a Civic Trust award and a plaque to commemorate this is mounted on a plinth located at Anderson Corner at the bottom end of Marola Avenue. He was a founding member of the MRA and was subsequently President for a number of years. He has been involved in many controversial issues including:

- Convincing the local councils to maintain the style of winding, narrow roadways already established in our area.
- Liaising with National Parks and Wild Life SA over changes to the facilities in Morialta Conservation Park.
- Applying pressure on successive governments of the day to purchase at least a portion of the McCarthy land.
- Undergrounding power lines in our area, for which a second plaque was awarded by the East Torrens council.
- Preventing or restricting unnecessary lopping of significant trees.
- Managing problems with proposed subdivisions including the Pickle Factory land.
- Protesting against the paintball activity proposed for the McCarthy land.



Figure 6.1: Kathleen Brewer and Graham Dickson with Lindsay Simmons

Appendix 1: Lot 100 Campaign: Transcript from ABC Television's Stateline Program

In June 2007, in response to the Media Release issued by the MRA, Ian Henschke of ABC Television's Stateline program approached the MRA to do a story about the State Government's refusal to purchase Lot 100.

The program was filmed on site starting at the entrance to the Park from the eastern end of Wandilla Drive. Also on the program were Alan Holmes of the Department of Heritage and the Environment, Lindsay Simmons, our local MP, Charles Parletta, a local resident who was the land agent when Lot 100 was put up for sale in 2002 and three members of the MRA, John Osborne, Trish Malbon and Graham Dickson.

Henschke started the dialogue by stating that more than 160,000 people visit the Park each year. If they enter from this entrance from Wandilla Drive they are not aware that for over half a kilometre they are walking on privately owned land.

Holmes stated that "in 2007 we do not see this as a priority for purchase: it's as simple as that."

Soon after Henschke asked:

"Does it worry you, though, that at this moment there is a part of the creek and part of this walking path on private land?"

Holmes replied:

"I would want to validate those claims before I commented. I don't know. This is a surprise to me."

In 2002 the land was offered for sale for but the Department of the Environment unsuccessfully offered \$600,000. In 2006 Parletta, just before he put the land on the market again, wrote to the Department offering to start negotiations again with an asking price of \$900,000. He never received a reply.

By the time of this report the current owners were seeking \$1.2 million. Holmes concluded by stating that his department was prepared to restart negotiations with the current or future owners. Here is the full transcript of the program.

Stateline South Australia

Transcript

Public Park, Private Entrance

Broadcast 06/07/2007

Reporter: Ian Henschke

IAN HENSCHKE: Morialta Conservation Park is one of the most popular in the State, but all is not what it seems. Part of the entrance is up for sale and that sparked demands for the Government to take action.

CHARLES PARLETTA: If the Government is interested then we can sit down and talk about it. I don't think people even know that it is private.

TRISH MALBON: It is a beautiful part of Adelaide and one that should be protected.

ALLAN HOLMES: In 2007 we do not see this as a priority for purchase: it's as simple as that.

JOHN OSBORNE: People come up here thinking they are in a conservation park. One side of the gorge is and one side isn't.

IAN HENSCHKE: More than 160,000 visitors a year go to Morialta Conservation Park. And when they do, they enter it through a spectacular gorge. But for more than half a kilometre, although it looks the same, the right hand side is publicly owned park and the left hand side, including a section of the creek that runs down from the falls, is private property.

It is easy to see how people would be confused about what is private property and what is the conservation park when you come to the top of a hill. Looking behind me, the area that's in sunlight, well that's private property. The area in shadow on the other side of the creek, that's the conservation park. The original fence between the two properties was pulled out years ago. But John Osborne, who has walked the park for decades, can still point out the bizarre invisible border between private and public.

JOHN OSBORNE: The boundary fence used to come along here, so all that beautiful hillside is all private property from here.

IAN HENSCHKE: So I am standing on private property here?

JOHN OSBORNE: You are.

IAN HENSCHKE: And the park there?

JOHN OSBORNE: That is right, exactly.

IAN HENSCHKE: Further up the problematic path a new survey peg sticks out like a

sore thumb. Grahame Dixon, a retired land agent, pointed it out. And he reckons the department could have simply solved its problem by offering to buy the lower fraction of the land - the strip just along the bottom that runs next to the creek.

GRAHAME DIXON: I think that small bit of land, which is pretty well useless to the current owner, could be acquired for \$300,000, probably, which would be less money than they've just spent down there jazzing up the car park, trying to make it look like the Glenelg foreshore, in my opinion. It is a nature park and it should be left to look like a nature park.

IAN HENSCHKE: Can you understand the residents see the car park being done up and they wonder why you haven't got the money to buy the land?

ALLAN HOLMES: Yes, but the residents don't determine what a park agency does within a park.

IAN HENSCHKE: Does it worry you, though, at the moment that there is part of the creek and part of the walking path on private land?

ALLAN HOLMES: I would want to validate those claims before I commented. I don't know. That is a surprise to me.

CHARLES PARLETTA: The residents have wanted this land to belong to the park ever since I remember.

IAN HENSCHKE: Charles Parletta was the land agent five years ago when the block was up for sale.

After a series of negotiations, the Department of Environment unsuccessfully put in an offer for \$600,000. So last year, just before it went on the market again, he

wrote offering to start negotiations again, but he says he never got a reply to his letter.

CHARLES PARLETTA: I just felt the Government, since they were looking at it before, they should have looked at it again.

ALLAN HOLMES: Look, circumstances change: don't they? At that point in time we had access to some funds. At that time we thought that was a reasonable price to pay. We don't think that the asking price is reasonable at this time. Especially considering it sold for \$900,000 less than 12 months ago.

IAN HENSCHKE: The owners also own the adjoining property, where they have put up an extensive cyclone fence on every side except the one that runs next to the park.

CHARLES PARLETTA: The owners have actually fenced everything off because they have got the cows and other animals roaming around the place.

IAN HENSCHKE: Will the owners fence off along that side next to the park?

CHARLES PARLETTA: They will if there is a sale. There is not a problem there.

(Aside to ALLAN HOLMES): What will you do if the owners started putting a fence up there?

ALLAN HOLMES: Well, we would have to deal with it, wouldn't we?

(Sound of discussion by the Morialta Residents' Association)

IAN HENSCHKE: The Morialta Residents Association and the local member have both written to the Minister for the Environment but the reply they have got back

has said quite clearly: "The very high asking price makes purchase unlikely".

TRISH MALBON: The people love Morialta Park: they walk on it every day. We see them on the weekends, everyone enjoys it very much, and so it should belong to the people.

ALLAN HOLMES: We are interested in discussing with the owner, the existing owner or new owner, how we can work better together as neighbours, with a common boundary and some management issues that you are telling you me we have.

LINDSAY SIMMONS: It is really important that this piece of land becomes part of Morialta Conservation Park. I am very concerned about what might happen if it doesn't.

IAN HENSCHKE: So after getting no joy from her Minister for the Environment, the local member has now asked the Minister for Urban Development to buy the land.

LINDSAY SIMMONS: Today the CEO of Environment and Heritage, and a member of staff from Mr Holloway's office, met with the agent. And I am not sure of the outcome of those discussions, but I think it is a really positive step that we now have all the parties talking together, and we should have some resolution out of the meeting that happened today.

Appendix 2: Further Information Relating to the Lot 100 Campaign

Press release, Democrat Sandra Kanck July 21 2007

The State Government should buy at least part of the private land adjoining the Morialta Conservation Reserve to ensure safe access and protect the integrity of the park according to Democrat MP Sandra Kanck.

“If you walk in to Morialta from the free car park then you either trespass on private land that adjoins the road or create a safety risk by walking on the road. This is completely unacceptable for one of Adelaide’s favourite parks.

I agree with the Morialta Residents Association that the Government should buy the 29.6 hectares of land that is for sale to protect the reserve. But even if the Government does not want to buy all of that land there are still opportunities to purchase areas of the Fourth Creek to improve stormwater and environmental management and ensure safe public access.

I understand there are other demands for funds but I urge the Government to think creatively about how to protect and enhance the Morialta Conservation Reserve.

Press release, Planning Minister Paul Holloway July 31 2007

The State Government has begun compulsory land acquisition proceedings to protect the Morialta Conservation Park.

Announcing the move today, Urban Development and Planning Minister, Paul Holloway and Environment and Conservation Minister, Gail Gago said the State Government decided to act after the current owner of a parcel of land adjacent to the park had placed it back on the market.

“This parcel of land had been of interest to the Department of Environment and Heritage as a potential acquisition and attempts have been made to purchase it in the past, but the current asking price of \$1.9 million remains prohibitive,” Minister Gago said.

I’m advised the current owner paid \$900,000 for the land in May last year, so he’s seeking a \$1 million profit after only 14 months of ownership

“This 30 hectare parcel of land, although not in pristine condition, is a significant piece of open space in the Hills Face Zone, and there’s considerable concern among local residents about the sale,” Mr Holloway said.

“In fact the local MP, Lindsay Simmons and Federal ALP candidate, Mia Handshin, have been particularly effective and vocal advocates for the State Government to take this opportunity to purchase the land for the benefit of all South Australians

“We’ve listened to the resident’s concerns and officers on behalf of the Department for Environment and Heritage and Planning SA have been discussing the sale with the real estate agent and exploring options for the possible purchase

of the parcel of land,” Mr Holloway said.

“The process we are beginning with today’s announcement will now see the land being independently valued by a private licensed valuer, so that a market value can be established for the whole parcel of land, as well as options on purchasing some smaller parcels,” Minister Gago said.

“I expect to receive that valuation next month and will then consider how to proceed.

“The State Government has the power to make a compulsory land purchase under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act*. Once notice to acquire has been served, no further negotiations over the sale of the land can be made with other parties for up to 18 months.”

“We are seeking to look at ways of purchasing the land, or parts of it, at a purchase price which is fair and reasonable and has been independently valued. Although the land’s biodiversity values are low, part of it would provide opportunities to improve pedestrian and develop walking trail access to one of the main lookouts in the Morialta Conservation Park,” Minister Gago said.

Letter from Lindsay Simmons to the MRA March 4 2009

I am delighted to be able to inform you that a settlement has been reached by the State Government on the purchase of a portion of Lot 100, the parcel of land situated adjacent to the Morialta Conservation Park.

I have been able to negotiate with the Minister for Urban Development and Planning, the Hon. Paul Holloway MLC for the purchase of this land under the designation of Urban Open Space. The land will now be maintained by the Department for Environment and Heritage under Minister Weatherill.

Extract from the East Torrens Messenger May 1 2009

Private land next to Morialta Conservation Park has been bought by the State Government, ending a four-decade battle to extend the park.

Morialta MP Lindsay Simmons confirmed last week the 18ha piece of bushland at Wandilla Drive, Rostrevor part of a 30ha block known as Lot 100 would now become part of the park. The announcement follows nearly 40 years of campaigning by the Morialta Residents' Association to make the land, which sits to the north of the park entrance, open to the public.

Association President Peter Sydenham was pleased with the purchase. "Although we would have preferred the government to have purchased the whole of Lot 100 we are most grateful to them for having purchased all the land south of the ridgeline," he said.

"This will go a long way to increasing the environmental integrity of the reserve." Dr Sydenham thanked the local community, politicians and media for helping champion their cause.

Ms Simmons said it was important the land be preserved as part of the park.

"It's the only conservation park that can be accessed by a regular metropolitan bus route, so it's the only park open to all South Australians," she said.

Ms Simmons said the land purchase would help stop the growth of feral plants and benefit environmental education programs at local schools. She said the land had been bought under the Urban Development Minister Paul Holloway's portfolio. She would not say what the land's purchasing price was.

**Appendix 3: Formal Request for Name Change
On behalf of the Residents of Morialta**



DECEMBER 2007

Introduction

The Morialta Residents Association (MRA) was formed nearly forty years ago and represents the interests of the residents of the area subject of this application.

The proposed suburb of `Morialta' is located within the Marble Hill Ward of the Adelaide Hills Council. The residential portion of the proposed suburb of `Morialta' abuts the Morialta Conservation Reserve and many residents consider the semi-rural nature of this residential area as being something of an extension of that Reserve.

Over the years many residents have worked hard to promote the park-like feel of the suburb. Most residents of area, both past and present, have always seen themselves as living in Morialta rather than Rostrevor. Examples of this include:

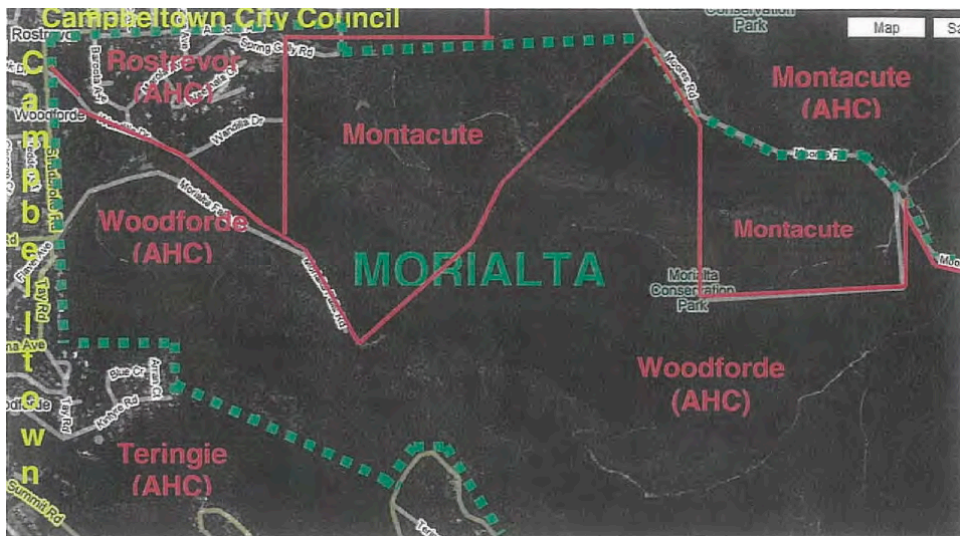
- The publishing of the 1982 book 'The making of Morialta - from farm to suburb'
- A number of residents for years (successfully) using `Morialta' in their home postal address instead of 'Rostrevor'
- The Bed and Breakfast in Baroota Avenue has for a very long time been called the `Morialta B&B'
- The Residents Association, which for 40 years has represented the residents of the area, is called the `Morialta Residents Association'

Morialta has a special relationship with nature and a special relationship with the Adelaide Hills Council, which is supporting this application. It is our understanding that, curiously enough, the Morialta Conservation Park is

actually within the suburbs of both Montacute and Woodforde. It is our view that it is appropriate that a future suburb of Morialta should also include the Morialta Conservation Park.

Therefore, the purpose of this application is to propose that the area subject of this application — refer Section 2 - be named 'Morialta'.

Area subject of this application



The map above shows a portion of the area subject of this application. It shows the current suburb boundaries, in red, with the Morialta Conservation Park falling within the suburbs of both Montacute and Woodforde. The proposed boundary of a new Morialta, shown in green, is far simpler and more regular than the current boundaries.

Morialta Residents Association

The Morialta Residents Association has operated for nearly 40 years and has always represented the residents of the area subject to this application

The Morialta Residents Association (MRA) first met on 17 October 1968 to protect the interests of residents of Section 857, adjacent to the Morialta Conservation Reserve.

The constitution states the objects of the Association as:

- To preserve and enhance the indigenous qualities of the area.
- To prevent ugliness whether from development, neglect or any other cause.
- To promote a public awareness of the factors affecting our environment
- To make representations to Council and other authorities regarding works, amenities and services in the area.
- To cooperate with other bodies having similar aims.

The MRA meets regularly to address issues that are of concern to the residents in the area subject of this application. It has a number of sub-committees that have been formed to focus on such things as the environment (including Fourth Creek and Spring Gully Creek); road safety; Our Patch' (including National Tree Day); Clean Up Australia, the history of Morialta; as well as a social committee.

A number of times each year, the MRA also publishes and distributes a newsletter to all residents within the area subject of this application.

Morialta residents looking after the environment

Recognition of Morialta as a suburb with its own unique identity and issues — especially those related to the environment — will make the management of those issues more effective

Morialta residents have always had a deep awareness of the natural environment of which it is a part and have tried to nurture that environment and treat it with the sensitivity it deserves. Consequently, the issues that face Morialta are very different from those that affect the rest of Rostrevor. The way that these issues have been solved is also unique — and, to some extent, pioneering. Examples of those issues are shown below:

- Development and retention of narrow streets without footpaths (1960s).
- Residents were determined to keep the streets narrow and have them follow the old bullock tracks that followed natural contours. After investigating overseas examples, and using money saved on the road width and footpaths (of which there are none), the curbing was lined with natural stone instead of having normal suburban concrete gutters. This effort resulted in a prize being awarded by the Civic Trust of SA.
- Protection of gum trees in Marola Avenue from destruction during laying of major water main (1960s)
- Purchase (by a founding member of the MRA) of a portion of what is now the Morialta Conservation Reserve from a developer and on-

selling it to the State Government (at a loss) in order to protect it (1965)

- Control of development (with residents, on occasion, buying out the developer's land and sub-dividing that land more aesthetically)
- Undergrounding power lines - with a significant cost contribution by Morialta residents (1980s)
- Native tree planting within the Morialta area to improve the streetscape (on-going)
- Native tree planting along Fourth Creek within the Morialta Conservation Reserve (on-going)

The Morialta environment

Over the years, the residents of Morialta have deliberately nurtured an Australian bush environment

Morialta's Bush Character

- The area has long been a distinct area with a special semi-rural 'bush' character, which has tended to attract residents who have a love for nature.
- The residents of this enclave have made a conscious commitment to nurture this distinct character and over the years have planted many thousands of native trees and native shrubs.

Morialta Reserve

- The proposed suburb of Morialta would include the conservation park of the same name. Over the years, many of the residents have worked

hard to extend the nature of the park into the residential portion of Morialta.

Unique history of Morialta

Morialta has a unique history and has developed quite separately from the rest of Rostrevor.

Morialta's unique history has been captured by one of its former residents, Elizabeth Warburton in her 1982 book *The making of Morialta - from farm to suburb*'.

This book focuses on the social and environmental history of the area subject of this application and is currently being brought up to date by a group of current residents. The Morialta Residents Association has recently received a grant from the Adelaide Hills Council to help it in this endeavour.

Eradication of power lines

In the late seventies the residents of Morialta, with the assistance of The Morialta Residents Association, embarked upon a campaign to eradicate all power lines within Morialta. It was felt that overhead power lines restricted the natural growth of native trees and detracted from the park-like nature of the suburb. It took a number of years to get this project completed and was only made possible by significant contributions by the Morialta residents themselves.

Proposed boundaries

The purpose of this application is:

- to have the area bounded by Stradbroke Road, Arcoona Avenue, Spring Gully Road and Wandilla Drive have its name changed to Morialta; and
- to have the Morialta Conservation Park south of Moores Road fall within that new suburb of Morialta. Note that there are no residents within the Conservation Park.

Significant benefit for the community and long term advantages

For its entire history, 'Morialta' has served as a buffer between suburbia and the Adelaide Hills. Believing that 'Morialta' was a special place that deserved special attention, residents of the area have committed significant amounts of time, energy and money to preserve the natural heritage of the area. This has resulted in a marked softening of the interface between city and hills. As described above, tangible fruits of this work include undergrounding power lines, narrowing of streets, restricting developers and development activity, planting of thousands of gum trees and other native vegetation as well as playing a significant role in looking after Spring Gully Creek, Fourth Creek and the north-western part of Morialta Conservation Park.

None of the above would have been accomplished without residents of the area believing that 'Morialta' was a special environment that needed to be preserved.

Over time, new residents move into the area and it is vital that they too believe that Morialta is a special place deserving of special efforts to maintain the environment in which it finds itself. This will be more easily achieved by

formalising the identity of the area as `Morialta`.

Cost and inconvenience experienced by the community as a result of the change

None identified.

Easily identifiable physical features as boundaries

As can be seen from the maps above, the boundaries that we are proposing are much simpler than the current boundaries and are consistent with both the boundaries of the Adelaide Hills Council and of the Morialta Conservation Park — the latter currently falling within the boundaries of two suburbs.

Same or similar land use areas should be incorporated in the suburban unit

The Geographic Names Unit has advised that the Suburb should be of a regular shape to avoid elongated or separated areas to assist in community development. As can be seen from the maps above, the current boundaries are quite irregular. Our proposal vastly improves the regularity and identity of the boundaries.

Type of development

No development is considered in this application. Consistent with its charter, the MRA activity monitors development and encourages development that is consistent with the semi-rural nature of its environment.

Topography

Foothills

Future development aims of the area / locality.

A major aim of the MRA in requesting this name change is to identify the area as an area of special significance so that the semi-rural nature of the area can be maintained.

Consultation process

Formal survey of residents opinions undertaken

The GNU has advised that objections to the name change should not be received from more than a third of the affected residents and/or businesses. The formal survey undertaken in late 2006 (refer Annexure A) indicated overwhelming support for the name change — and that only 5% of all residents were opposed to it.

<i>Favour of Name Change</i>	83%
<i>No Response / Other</i>	11%
<i>Against Name Change</i>	5%
<i>Don't know</i>	1%

Effect of name change on other parties

Australia Post

We don't anticipate any problem caused to Australia Post through this name change. A number of long-standing residents already record their address as Morialta and always get their mail.

A number of others also find it easier to tell a taxi cab driver that they live in Morialta — as to say Rostrevor seems to invite the driver to take a more northerly route.

Police Department & Emergency Services (including the CFS)

In the past, residents have complained to the MRA that, on occasion, emergency services have been delayed as they tended to focus on Rostrevor proper when looking for an address. The CFS also seems to think of our area more as Morialta than Rostrevor.

State Transport Authority

There would be absolutely no effect on the State Transport Authority as no public transport comes into the area.

Local Government

This application has the full support of our Council and Mayor. Bill Cooksley. When put to the Adelaide Hills Council, the application received unanimous support. Refer Appendix B.

Due to confusion created by the current suburb name, it is not unusual for residents in the area subject of this application to receive literature from the Campbelltown City Council — as often even their own letterbox distributors think that we are a part of that Council.

Granting this application would lessen that confusion.

Conclusion

The great majority of residents of the area subject of this application feel that they already live in 'Morialta'. The MRA, on behalf of the overwhelming majority of residents, is simply asking that the Geographic Names Unit formalise the name that has been in popular usage for well over forty years.

It is an odd situation to have an area thought of by almost all its residents as being 'Morialta' actually called by another name. Morialta has its own unique history as well as its own set of issues and needs that are quite different from the rest of Rostrevor.

To summarise:

- Currently there is no geographic area called 'Morialta'
- Morialta is a distinct environment that falls within the Marble Hill ward of the Adelaide Hills Council. The rest of Rostrevor lies within the Campbelltown City Council.
- Under this proposal, boundaries become more regular and more consistent with local government boundaries.
- Formally recognising the uniqueness of the area through a name change increases the chances of the area maintaining its unique semi-rural nature.
- The overwhelming majority of residents already believe that they live in Morialta. It makes sense to formalise it.
- No disruption to transport or mail services is anticipated and, it is believed that better outcomes in relation to area recognition by emergency services will also result.
- Giving the area its correct identity will serve to support the continuing nature of the suburb as a semi-rural area between the metropolitan area proper and the Adelaide Hills.
- This application has the overwhelming support of the residents and the strong support of the Adelaide Hills Council.