



## The 3rd Generation

# Franz Waldemar Heyne

### 1913 - 2003

Franz Waldemar Heyne (whom was affectionally known as Wally) was born at Summertown on the 10th of May 1913; his parents were Carl Franz Heyne and Wilhelmina Carolina Dorothea (Minnie) nee Lehmann.

He was baptised on the 6th of June 1913 and confirmed on the 8th of Dec 1929 by Pastor Janzow in Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Adelaide.

As a child, Wally lived in Summertown, a small town in the Adelaide Hills, South Australia. The house was a stone building with 4 main rooms and an extra room of galvanised iron where Wally and older brother Mike slept, later they were joined by their ageing and forgetful grand-father Lehman Heyne.

1924 The family moved from Summertown to a suburb east of Adelaide, Kensington. The address was originally 41 Parade East, Kensington but was changed to 41 The Parade, Beulah Park, the site of the present Garden Centre. There was no toilet in the house. The lavatory, with no connected sewerage was a long distance from the house and needed special attention. A bucket was placed through a door behind the back of the lavatory and was regularly emptied. The contents were then buried in a hole somewhere in the back yard.

Wally attended Norwood Boy's High School where he soon made a name for himself beating boys twice his size in cross-country races. He always said that he had an edge over the city boys because he had spent the previous years running up and down the hills around Summertown. Football was very popular in the hills area, and Wally remained a keen supporter of the game all through his life.

1929 Wally left school at 16 and started work at the Beulah Park Nursery. Wally drove a horse and cart (pulled by Topsy the horse) with brother Mike, selling plants around the suburbs for two years, at first not selling more than 10 shillings worth a day.

1931- When Wally turned 18 years of age a new Chevrolet truck was bought, enabling the door to door selling of plants in the country to begin, continuing for 10 years. The truck was loaded on Sunday, would leave on Monday and return on Thursday. The truck was designed with a 2 berth sleeping cabin and made regular trips to Victor Harbour, Port Augusta, Quorn and Mallala.

1939, September the 9th Wally married Vera Jean Goodfellow in the Summertown Methodist Church. Vera's father ran a deli in Summertown in what used to be the old Mt. Lofty Hotel. Vera had been his childhood sweetheart. Wally liked to tell his family and friends that as a child, Vera used to chase him around singing "Wally Heyne puts dripping on his hair". Their courtship must have been difficult due to the distance that they lived apart. One Sunday, Wally had to ride his push bike from Beulah Park to Summertown just to let Vera know that he couldn't come for dinner that evening. During the early years of his marriage, Wally drove to country fairs on weekends to sell plants.

Wally and Vera 'propagated' three children the eldest, Glen followed by Roger and then Garry. Vera ran a very popular florist shop making wreaths and floral arrangements, her reputation becoming such that people would come from miles around to have her designs. Youngest son Garry was kept in a giant wooden box (containing toys) in the room while Vera was working.

Wally would leave very early in the morning to go into the Adelaide Market and collect cut flowers, arriving back at the florist shop at the break of day. On the weekends at the Beulah Park Garden Centre, Vera baked hot scones and heated milk mixed with cocoa on a wood stove for staff to drink on cold winter days. When the florist shop on The Parade was closed down Vera would do the same during the weekdays for the staff. Many clients learnt the times of the day when Vera made her famous, delicious, large hot scones and would hang around the back door of the homestead and hint for a plate of scones. Fresh scalded cream made on top of the wooden stove, with home-made Blackberry jam was added to the scones. With the smell of the scones and hot cocoa it was no wonder people would gather!

Wally was a hardworking man, as were his fore-fathers before him and the success of the business was entirely due to Wally and Vera Heyne's dedication to building a better future for their children. Of his three sons, Glen started working in the business after he completed his time at Norwood High School and then left the business in his early years to pursue another career. After finishing school Roger and Garry both started working in the family nursery business.

You can still see some of the paving and concrete block (used for plant bed walls) laid by Wally Heyne, which he made during the night after the nursery was closed. A globe was tied to a stake and used to light the area where he was laying concrete paths.

Wally would mix concrete and fill wooden boxes with it after dinner in the back yard. Same as the paths, an extension cord was laid out with an electric globe connected on the end. Then early next morning he would pull the boxes apart to remove the concrete blocks. He would then nail the boxes back together again and coat the inside with old engine sump oil. This made it easy to remove the blocks and stop damage to the corners. Wally made hundreds of them.

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# Wally's Special Times



Times were hard and many people suffered hardships including Wally and Vera. The hours were long and the workload was never ending from daybreak to late at night.

The nursery was a safe house for the children around the local area. They were told that if anything went wrong they were to rush over to the nursery and ask for Mr Heyne (Wally) for safety and protection. Each fireworks season, Wally would ask the poor families near the nursery to come and watch his firework display.

During the Second World War, Wally could not join the armed services because he was blind in one eye. With his brother Ern and his brothers-in-law Bill and Syd taken as P.O.W.'s he was determined to do his bit for the war effort so he took up a position working the night shift at The British Tube Mills making casings for bullets. In true "Wally Heyne" fashion he threw himself into the task, exceeding quotas and earning himself the nickname "Tear Arse Heyne" from the other workers. He ran the nursery during the day and went hawking plants in the country in a Chevrolet Buckboard (ute) on weekends. Later he used a truck.

## Wally and South Adelaide Football Club

Wally loved all sports and was a keen one-eyed Panther supporter. His interest began when he was 5 years old. He became a great fan of Arnie Caust, a South Adelaide player who lived in Summertown. Wally joined the Club in 1935 and Vera soon became every bit as involved as he was. Wally had a wealth of stories to tell about some of the characters he had met over the years. He had especially great memories of 1964, the year the Panthers won their last premiership. He kept a bottle of Peter Darley red wine which he said wasn't to be opened until South Adelaide won their next premiership.

Wally was honoured with life membership with the SAFC in 1971 and became patron in 1973, a position he held until 1997. The club chairman at the time, Stuart Palmer, paid tribute to Wally's 20+ years as patron, mentioning particularly the great debt of gratitude the club owed him for his generosity in many areas, the provision of employment, and the fact that he was the club's number 1 supporter. He and Vera made many dear, life-long friends through the South Adelaide Football Club.

A reference in a South Adelaide Football Club newsletter from the early 1980's of Wally at the traditional club picnic at Happy Valley arriving in the last hours of the day, after closing the nursery, with tray loads of pies and pasties and 'turning on a selling performance that will make necessary the complete rewriting of all marketing text books.'

There followed a poem:

## Wally the Flying Pieman

**He spends each day at the garden shop Amid roses and flora and phlox, But on a Sunday in September each year, Comes Wally's call for all to hear: 'Get your meat pies here, nice and hot! Have 'em with sauce, or have 'em with not.**

**It's damned easier work than running a plot!' Cries Wally the Flying Pieman.**

## Digging Seedlings

Due to the Nursery early opening times, bundles of seedling plants (which are now grown and sold in plastic punnets) needed to be prepared well before the early morning. This meant that during the winter months it was cold, windy, wet and quite dark when preparation began.

Keeping the Coke Glass House Boiler stoked during the cold nights was a tiring task for him as it was attended approx. every 2 hours. The morning commenced each day with a starting time before six o'clock with the first task being to remove staples from the middle of Woman's Weekly magazines. These magazines were then torn in half and put into heaps, two pages were selected and the left side the top corner was folded down. These sheets were then placed on a new heap where they would be used to wrap around freshly dug seedlings.

Seedlings were dug out of the ground from seedling beds. Young plants were clumped together in moulded bundles of approximately twenty seedlings per bundle. They were then wrapped with the folded magazine pages and placed onto the paths between the seedling beds.

The bundles of seedlings were later collected and placed into wooden boxes which would be submerged into a water tank until the air bubbles stopped rising. This was conducted to make sure every part of the plants soil was wet.

Summertime was enjoyable to feel the cool water on our hands, but during the Autumn and Winter months it was a different sensation. Some years when we experienced a dry winter the ice had to be broken off the top of the water in the dip tank before using.

# MOUNT LOFTY PROPERTY

The property was situated between Mount Lofty and Mount Bonython with the rear of the property facing Sprigg Road and the front boundary bordered by the main road leading to Mount Lofty. Cleland Reserve entrance is opposite the original house which has been renovated and added to, years after Wally sold the property.

Wally Heyne bought 24 acres of land to start a production nursery. When he acquired the land it had areas containing tall trees on the flanks of the boundary, with the main central area covered with age old tangled, matted blackberry bushes mixed with small dead trees and shrubs.

The only water supply came from a tunnel up near the old house which had been dug by the original owners many years before. The tunnel had been excavated into the side of the hill and proceeded through the side of a well which is near the side of the road on the property. It then continued under the main road to the other side. The original owners were trying to find the natural spring which fed Waterfall Gully Creek.

Wally first cleared the wild scrub away from the entrance, built a low walling to hold back the water which was running out of the entrance. He then placed a small pipe to feed the water away from the main entrance. The reason for this was to explore the tunnel so with the aid of kerosene lamps we travelled (in the first week of buying the property) into the tunnel to see how far it went. We encountered many snakes whilst in the tunnel.

Wally's next approach was to clean the wild scrub from the house and renovate it so a caretaker could live on the property. The house had been neglected for many years and the only occupants living in the house were, you guessed it, SNAKES!!

The whole property was a nightmare and I often wondered how mum and dad could have ever seen a future in this steep hilled property covered with wild scrub mixed with tangled wild thorny blackberries. For anyone who has never experienced this, the best way to describe the bushes is:- masses of waving branches covered with tiny thorns that break off and become embedded in your flesh. Trying to remove them during the day was impossible due to the size and colour of them. Every time you tried to dig out the Blackberry bushes by the roots the bush next to them would lash out and grab you like an octopus.

Building the road through the centre of the property.

This was a test of willpower, strength, blood, sweat and tears for Wally. Wally employed two men to help him widen a walking track which followed the side of the hill and met into the second gully. At the centre of the property he hired a local bulldozer to cut out a platform to house a large shed. Later part of the gully opposite the shed was filled with rubbish and topped with rubble to form an area for the trucks to turn around. The following year the road was extended to the bottom of the second gully in preparation for the water storage area.

The following year sections of the second gully were cleared and fenced to keep the local rabbits out. One of the main problems was that the rabbits ring barked the young fruit trees that had been budded. I can remember my first years working at the Mount Lofty nursery on my hands and knees following behind dad, wrapping the tape around the fresh buds he had just inserted onto the trees. When the hot weather continued, we would take off our shirts to try and keep cool, but the March flies would attack us by the hundreds and leave large, stinging welts on us that would last for days.

SEarly morning and sunset were the best time to shoot rabbits. There were always plenty of rabbits to give away to customers who visited the Beulah Park Nursery and lots of stew and rabbit pies for the boys which were cooked by Vera on the old kitchen wood stove.

The Dam

A dam was built a few years later, at the bottom of the where the two gullies met. During some extreme cold mornings the dam would ice over to a depth of 1cm and Wally would have to break the ice and wade into the water and tap the pump pipe to get the pipe water moving. Later a bore was sunk at the top near the main road and a second next to the dam which was to be used as a backup if the first one failed. The bore near the main road gave more water at a shallow depth so this was used first. A pipe was connected from the tunnel water supply near the house to the dam..

Vera Heyne died of cancer at the age of 55 years.

Wally and Vera were devoted to each other and their family. They worked side by side in the nursery and there was always a welcome mat out at their home for relatives and friends.

When Vera died Wally lost the love of his life.

Wally Heyne: Until the age of 84, Wally liked to keep an eye on the Retail and Wholesale Nurseries and visited them every weekday. For the last 2 years of his life Wally resided at Clearview Manor being cared for by Robyn and the caring staff. He enjoyed weekly luncheon outings and regular visits from family and friends. A favourite pastime was playing cards and usually winning!!!

Wally Heyne 89 years of age passed away on February 27th 2003.

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