

SA Heritage Register

Nomination form

South Australian HERITAGE COUNCIL

To help your nomination be successful, please fill out this form with as much information as possible.

Feel free to expand the answer fields as much as you require or append information to the form.

Please note that places which have been nominated during past three years will not be reconsidered by the South Australian Heritage Council unless you can provide significant new information not provided through the previous nomination and assessment.

For assistance with this form you may contact:

Your local historical society or heritage adviser may be of assistance OR you may telephone an assessment officer in Heritage South Australia on (08) 8124 4960.

A. Nominated Place

1. Name	
Name of Place / Object:	Nantawarra Silo
Any other or former name(s):	
Is the place already on another heritage list?	Not that I'm aware of

2. Location					
Street Address:	18 Silo Road				
	Suburb / Town: Nantawarra		Post Code: 5550		
Local Council Name:	Wakefield Regional Council				
Land Description: (if known)	Title:	Volume:	Folio:	Parcel Type:	Parcel No:
	Plan Type:	Plan No:	Section:	Hundred:	
GPS Location/s: (If known)	Longitude / Easting / X			Latitude / Northing / Y (Datum =)	

3. Ownership	
Name of Owner(s):	
Contact person: (if different from owner explain relationship)	
Postal Address:	
Phone Number:	
Ownership History:	

4. Nominator (your details)	
Your Name/s:	
Organisation/Position:	
Daytime Phone:	
Fax:	
Postal Address:	

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Email Address:	
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B. Description

5. Description of nominated place or object	
Description of the nominated place or object and its current condition:	Four concrete vertical silos, built in 1956. Foundations dug to a depth of 23 feet. It is 100 feet high, 40 feet in diameter and has a holding capacity of 420,000 bushels. It's located next to the national rail line that links Australia. Appears to be in good, structurally sound condition.
Are you aware of any modifications or additions to the place or object? Can you provide dates for these changes?	Does not appear to be modified or any additions.
Do you believe there may be historical items under the ground? Should an archaeological investigation be considered?	Unsure
Date you inspected the place or object:	Thursday May 4, 2023
Have you had any contact with the Owner?	No
Current use of the place or object:	Unused
Original or former use(s):	Bulk handling of grain
Are there any current or long term threats to the nominated place or object?	Yes – demolition, to occur in May, possibly as early as TODAY, FRIDAY MAY 5, 2023. The community was made aware of Viterra's intention to demolish the silo on May 1, 2023, giving almost no time for the community to make enquiries/investigate.
Name of Builder:	S. Haunstrup & Company
Any other information:	

C. History

6. Origins and history	
Years of Construction:	Start: June 1956 Finish: January 1957
Name of Designer / Architect:	Unsure
History of the nominated place or object:	Up until 1956, local farmers delivered their grain in bags to the rail siding at Nantawarra, which were loaded onto trains and taken to Port Adelaide. Bulk handling began in South Australia in 1952 (at Ardrossan) and revolutionised the state's rich agricultural sector. The bulk handling facility at Nantawarra was built in 1956 and used up until 2004. Drillings for the silo began in June 1956 to obtain test samples before its construction could proceed. Foundations were excavated in late June to a depth of 23 feet. In early July it was announced that the silo would be 100 feet high, 40 feet in diameter and have a holding capacity of 420,000 bushels. The contractor would be S Haunstrup & Company. A continuous pour of concrete began in October. Power for the installation

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	<p>would be supplied by a large diesel engine.</p> <p>Before silo was completed, 25,000 bushels of wheat were received into a centre bin section on a trial basis. Edward Herbert (jun.) had the honour of delivering the first load. However, general receipts did not begin until January. The first shipment of 8,000 bushels from the new silo was railed in March to Port Adelaide.</p> <p>Over its four decades of use, the silo was utilised by local farmers, and was regularly filled to capacity in bumper harvests, particularly during the 1960s and 1990s.</p> <p>In later years, farmers came from long distances to deliver grain because it offered cheaper freight costs due to it being on the main rail link, direct to Port Adelaide.</p> <p>It was decommissioned as a bulk handling facility in 2004 when the major grain handling facility at Bowmans was built to service the entire lower north region.</p>
<p>Historical sources used to support your nomination:</p> <p>Please attach copies of pages from publications or newspaper articles as appropriate.</p>	<p>"Fertile Valley to Open Plain" – The Nantawarra and Beaufort Districts.</p> <p>263 pages, 1982.</p> <p>Written by Rex Penna, Published by Peacock Publications, Frewville, 5063</p>

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D. Heritage Significance

7. Statement of State Significance - Why is the place or object important to South Australia?

It is of State heritage significance because it was one of the first concrete vertical silos in South Australia. It was built in 1956, the same year as Paskeville silo on the Yorke Peninsula.

Bulk handling is a very important part of South Australia's history.

Although other states of Australia had bulk handling for many years and despite much discussion and arguments, South Australia remained a bagged state for much longer.

It wasn't until the 1950s that the first bulk handling installation was opened at Ardrossan and the success was instantaneous.

Bulk handling silos began popping up across the state taking two forms – horizontal or vertical concrete elevators. The Nantawarra silo was a vertical concrete elevator, as was Redhill and Gulnare.

The tall white cylinders were towering landmarks that could be seen from every farm in the Hundred and beyond. These first-generation silos were often the largest structure that had ever been built in their districts.

As Nantawarra Silo is located alongside the railway track, it's also been a magnificent, historical landmark for anyone travelling on the Indian Pacific and the Ghan. As recent as 2021, during the Covid19 pandemic when international travel was banned, tourism operator Journey Beyond ran "Taste of the Ghan" services. Passengers travelled on the Ghan from Adelaide to Nantawarra where they disembarked at the iconic silo, and hopped on buses to travel to the nearby Clare Valley wine area for the day. They returned to Nantawarra and headed back to Adelaide on the Ghan.

The Nantawarra silo is a significant landmark for anyone travelling on National Highway One as it's very visible from the highway (which runs parallel to the railway line).

8. Significance Criteria

The South Australian *Heritage Places Act 1993* lists seven criteria by which places are assessed as 'State significant.' Please tick the criteria you feel the place demonstrates and explain your reasons.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> It demonstrates important aspects of the evolution or pattern of the State's history.	Bulk handling revolutionised the agricultural/grain industry. Previously grain was delivered in bags to railway sidings and loaded onto trains – an extremely labour-intensive exercise. Bulk handling eliminated the need for bags, and allowed farmers to deliver/unload their grain to a facility (silo) in bulk. This made grain handling much more efficient.
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<input type="checkbox"/> It has rare, uncommon or endangered qualities that are of cultural significance.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> It may yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the State's history, including its natural history.	Many vertical silos are being knocked down, so preserving the Nantawarra silo will serve as an example for future generations to understand & appreciate how grain was stored for many decades, and the important part these silos played in our agricultural history.
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<input type="checkbox"/> It is an outstanding representative of a particular class of places of cultural significance.
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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> It demonstrates a high degree of creative, aesthetic or technical accomplishment or is an outstanding representative of particular construction	At the time it was built, the construction of vertical silos was a new way of storing grain in South Australia.
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techniques or design characteristics.
<input type="checkbox"/> It has strong cultural or spiritual associations for the community or a group within it.
<input type="checkbox"/> It has a special association with the life or work of a person or organisation or an event of historical importance.

E. Additional Information

9. Images/Maps/Diagrams/Site Plans

A full range of images including maps, site plans, and photographs will help your nomination.

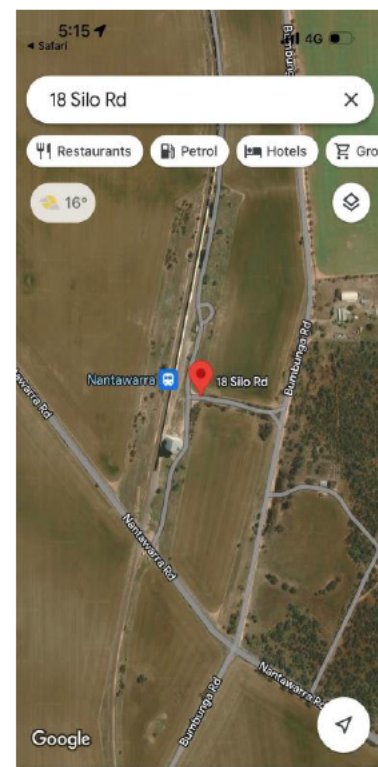
Please provide:

- a clear outline of the place or object being nominated within any maps or plans provided
- high quality images of the place or object (please list the total number of images being provided)
- the subject of each image
- the date each image was created
- the author of each image, and
- the copyright holder of each image (if known)

Paste images here:



Nantawarra Silo, photo taken May 4th 2023 [REDACTED]. Shows how prominent the silo is in the Nantawarra landscape.



18 Silo Rd
18 Silo Rd, Nantawarra SA 5550

Map of Nantawarra Silo location, 18 Silo Road, Nantawarra

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Nantawarra Silo, photo
taken May 4th 2023 [REDACTED]



Nantawarra Silo, photo
taken May 4th 2023 [REDACTED]



Nantawarra Silo,
shows close proximity
to National Highway
1. Taken May 4th 2023
[REDACTED]

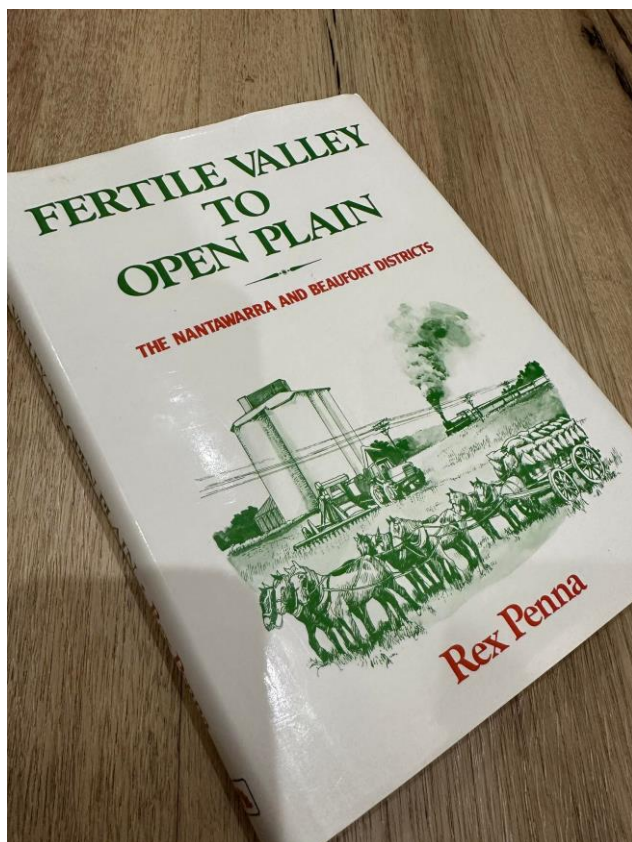


Nantawarra Silo and vehicles travelling on National
Highway 1. There are thousands of vehicles that use this
road every day. The silo is a prominent landmark for
travellers. Taken on May 4th 2023 [REDACTED].

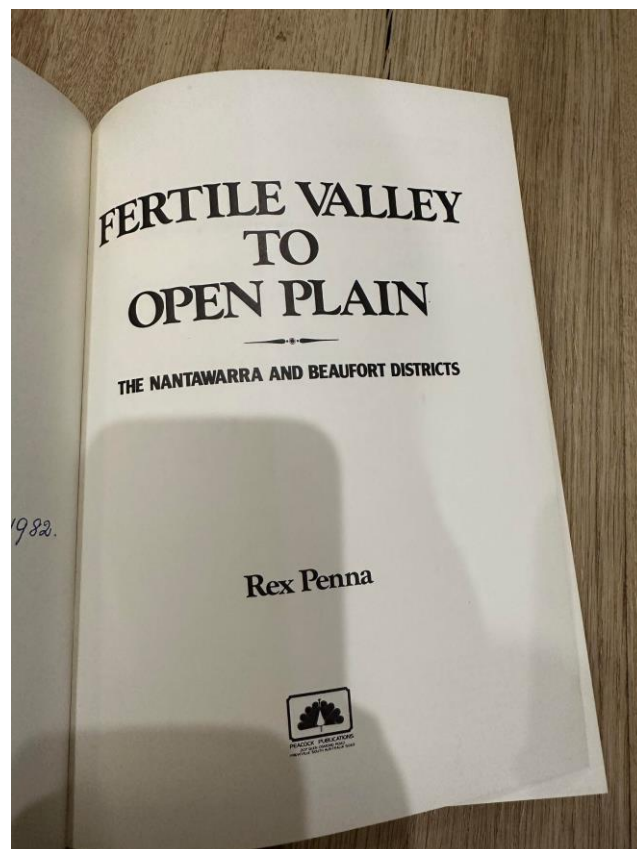
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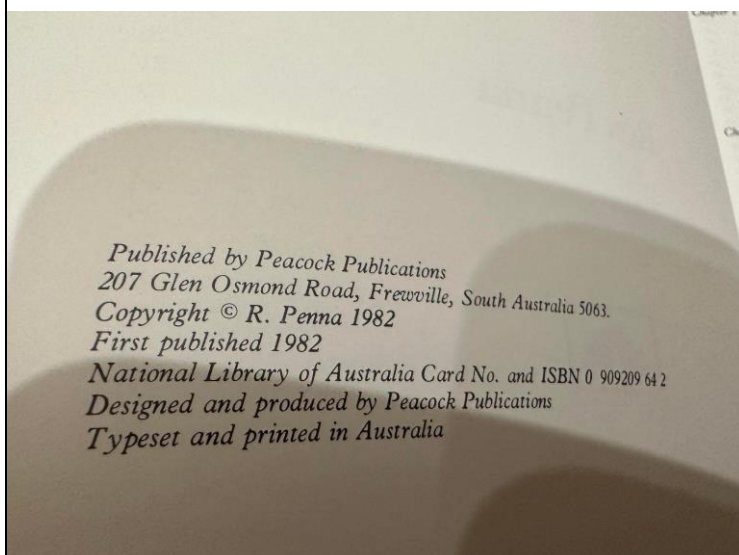
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"Fertile Valley to Open Plain: The Nantawarra & Beaufort Districts" – written by Rex Penna.



"Fertile Valley to Open Plain: The Nantawarra & Beaufort Districts" – written by Rex Penna.

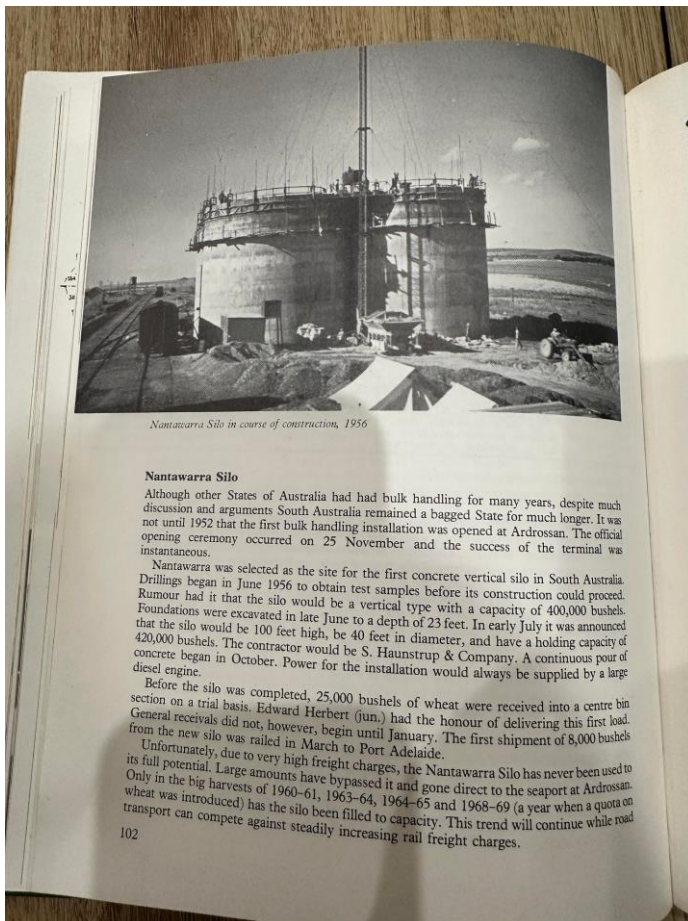


"Fertile Valley to Open Plain: The Nantawarra & Beaufort Districts" – written by Rex Penna. Published by Peacock Publications, 1982.

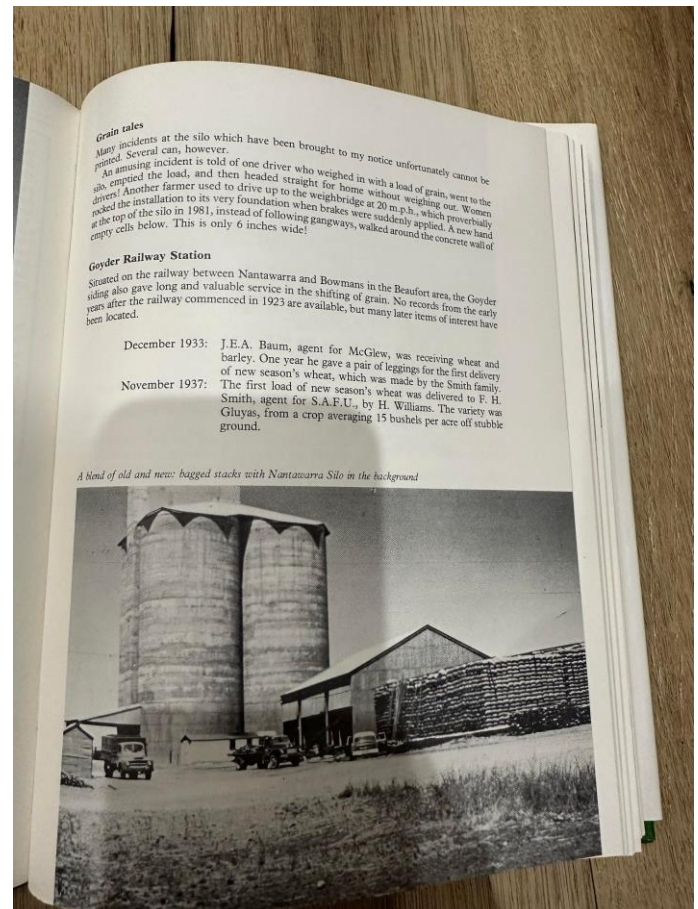
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"Fertile Valley to Open Plain" history book reports Nantawarra Silo as the first vertical silo built in SA.



"Fertile Valley to Open Plain" history book – 'the old and the new' - of the new silo behind stacks of bagged grain.



Line up of trucks at Nantawarra Silo, photo taken in 1964, [REDACTED].



Train at Nantawarra Silo, photo taken in 1970s [REDACTED].

ter  Advanced Search

icle (Adelaide, SA: 1895 - 1954) / Thu 9 Sep 1954 / Page 2 / DETAILS OF £4M. BULK HANDLING PLAN

DETAILS OF £4M. BULK HANDLING PLAN

Details have been announced of the £4,313,960 bulk wheat handling plan for South Australia, published in last week's issue of "The Chronicle."

Grain silo plants, costing £1,872,000 each, are planned for Wallaroo within a year, for Port Lincoln in two years, with another later at Port Pirie.

The scheme by growers would provide within about eight years State-wide bulk storage for 33½m. bushels of wheat—about 25 p.c. more than the average State crop.

The general secretary of the SA Wheat and Wool-growers' Association (Mr. Stott, MP) announced details of the plan.

It is now being examined by the Premier (Mr. Playford).

The plan is for:—

- Wallaroo: A £1,872,000 terminal two-steel-cell 16,000-ton capacity, with a 2m. bushel storage annexe, within a year.
- Port Lincoln: The same within two years.
- Port Pirie: The same with a 1m. bushel storage annexe.
- Port Adelaide: A 1m. bushel storage annexe.
- Thevenard: A 1m. bushel storage annexe.
- 5 bulk-handling divisions throughout the State.
- 100 bulk receiving bins (of steel and galvanized iron) at country sidings.

Mr. Stott said:—"SA, with a carryover now of 16m. bushels of wheat from the past two seasons, must urgently meet as soon as possible overseas buyers' demands for speedy bulk-loading of wheat ships."

"All of SA's wheat exports during the past six months have been made to New Zealand only by working to top capacity the State's only grain silo at Ardrossan."

"Ninety p.c. of the barley sent this year from Wallaroo was shipped in bulk after slitting of the bags."

"Because bulk-handling is more than 3d. a bushel cheaper than bag-handling, the scheme would save about 11,000 SA wheat-growers the tolls, averaging 3d. a bushel, they would be required to pay for 12 years to finance the installations."

"These tolls would then be gradually refunded."

"SA handling of bagged wheat in the 1952-53 season cost 7.175d. a bushel compared with only 4.195d. for bulk-handling in the eastern States."

"Growers throughout the State are demanding a bulk-handling system controlled and financed by growers and are strongly opposed to a Government-financed or controlled scheme."

Bins of storage capacity up to 900,000 bushels would be erected at the following bulk handling divisions:—

Wallaroo Division.—Arno Bay, Balaklava, Brinkworth, Bute, Blyth, Cowell, Hoyleton, Kadina, Moonta, Nantawarra, Paskeville, Port Rickaby, Port Victoria, Snowtown, Wallaroo.

Port Lincoln Division.—Buckleboo, Cummins, Darke Peake, Kimba, Lock, Mount Hill, Mount Hope, Peachina, Port Lincoln, Port Neill, Rudall, Tumby Bay, Waddikee, Warramboo, Wudinna, Yeelanna.

Thevenard Division.—Cungena, Elliston, Koonibba, Mudamuckla, Minnipa, Nunjikompla, Penong, Poochera, Streaky Bay, Thevenard, Wirrulla, Yanjine.

Port Pirie division.—Booheroo Centre, Collensfield, Gladstone, Guinere, Hallett, Jamestown, Melrose, Meriton, Ororoo, Pt. Pirie, Wilmington, Wirrabara, Yongala.

Port Adelaide division.—Alawoona, Andrews, Apmurra, Avon, Burra, Bordertown, Copeville, Coonalpyn, Edithburgh, Eudunda, Farrells Flat, Frances, Hamley Bridge, Kapunda, Keith, Karte, Karoonda, Lameroo, Mallala, Mt. Kat, Meribah, Maggea, Monarto, South, Mulpara, Marama, Nangari, Naracoorte, Owen, Pala, Peake, Parilla, Pinnaroo, Riverton, Strathalbyn, Taldra, Tallem Bend, Truro, Two Wells, Wilkawat, Wanbi, Wunkar, Wakerie, Wasleys, Yinkannie.

Government Charter Sought

Mr. Stott added:—"The required to extend some rail loops at country sidings in the eighth or ninth

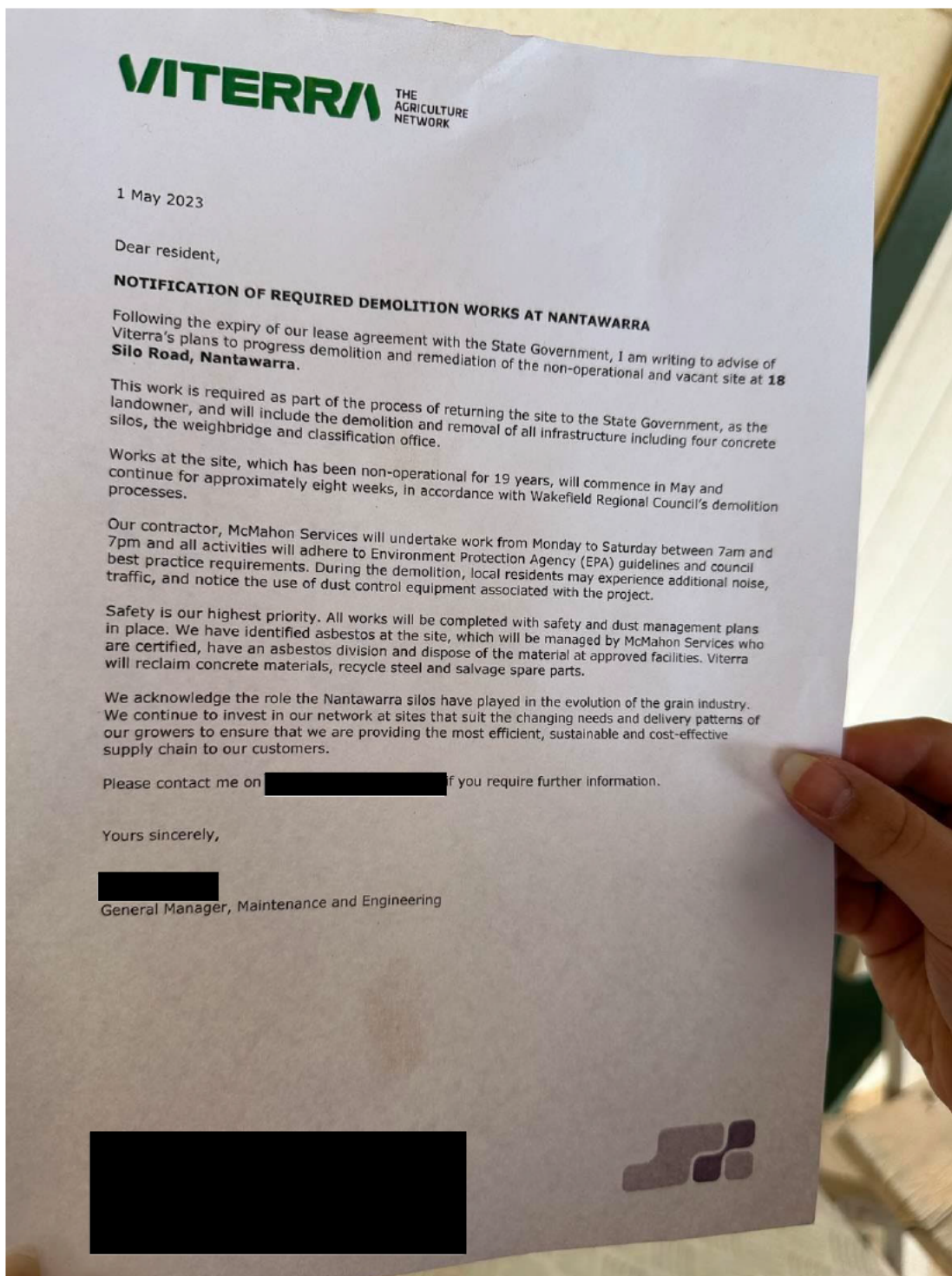


Newspaper clipping, The Chronicle, Sept 9 1954, detailing the plans for bulk grain handling in South Australia – a pivotal point in South Australia's agricultural history.

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Letter displayed at Nantawarra Post Office boxes, dated May 1, 2023, informing residents of demolition plans of Nantawarra Silo, believed to begin on Friday May 5, 2023. Photo taken [REDACTED], on May 4, 2023.

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A historical event - the first Adelaide to Darwin train passes through Nantawarra in 2004.
Photo taken [REDACTED].



Being on the national rail line, the Ghan & Indian Pacific trains pass through Nantawarra regularly, giving a wide range of people the opportunity to see this historic structure.
In 2021, the Ghan stopped at Nantawarra silo (rather than just passing by), for people to disembark. Front page of The Plains Producer newspaper, October 13, 2021.

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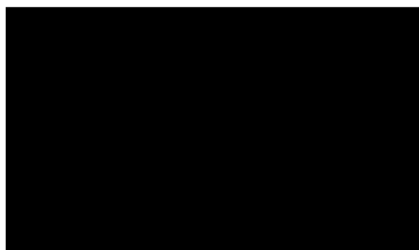
The South Australian Heritage Council is committed to transparency in relation to the listing process and wishes to enhance public confidence in the nomination, listing and decision-making process. The Council's policy is to make nominations for State heritage listing and submissions on provisional entries publicly available via webpage or to interested parties. The Council will adhere to the Privacy Principles and your name and personal details will not be released.

I/we, 
nominate **Nantawarra Silo, 18 Silo Road, Nantawarra, 5550**
to be heritage listed.

The information I/we have provided is correct to my/our knowledge.

Your Signature/s:

Date:



May 5th, 2023

Nomination Form Checklist

Please check that your nomination includes:

- ☐ A clear indication of the location of the place or object (including map/s). Where a number of features are nominated, show the location of each and/or a boundary surrounding the significant elements of the site.
- ☐ A history of the place or object explaining important aspects relevant to the nomination.
This should generally help support arguments of cultural significance.
- ☐ A clear description of the nominated place or object/s.
- ☐ A statement of significance and indication on how the place or object satisfies one or more of the significance criteria.
- ☐ Have you taken the opportunity to discuss the nomination with a heritage assessment officer? It is strongly advised you to do so prior to submitting this nomination.

Email: DEWHeritage@sa.gov.au

Post: Executive Officer, South Australian Heritage Council
Department for Environment and Water
GPO Box 1047, Adelaide SA 5001

RE: EVIDENCE TO PROOVE NANTAWARRA WAS THE FIRST VERTICAL CONCRETE SILO

Please find attached excerpts from, *"The Golden Era – Celebrating 50 years of Bulk Handling in South Australia"*, written by David Thomas, Published by ABB (Australian Barley Board), in 2006.

I am forwarding it as strong evidence that **Nantawarra was the FIRST VERTICAL CONCRETE SILO in SA.**

The book mentions that Paskeville was the first built country silo, opened in January 1956. Which I believe is correct. Construction on Nantawarra Silo began in June 1956.

However, this book shows that **Paskeville was not a vertical concrete silo it was a horizontal storage shed made of corrugated iron.**

A concrete silo was a later addition (Paskeville's original storage shed is still standing today, behind its newer concrete silos).

This book shows:

PAGE 27 – a photo of Nantawarra silo, stating it was built in 1956, and was the first vertical concrete silo built in SA.

PAGE 29 – An official photo of the opening of Paskeville silo from The Advertiser. The official party is sitting in front of the silo, which is clearly corrugated iron.

PAGE 134 – It clearly states that Paskeville was a shed, when detailing a story from the official opening. "The various interconnecting conveyors and augers from the receival hopper to the one **in the shed** were not interlinked electronically, and had to be started individually for the entire system to work."

I have attached other relevant information from this publication, that relates to Nantawarra silo and the introduction of bulk handling across the state.

I implore you to look at this new information as you assess the nomination.

Thank you for processing this nomination with urgency, due to the immediate threat the silo is under.

Work began at the silo on Friday (May 5, 2023) with fencing erected and machinery delivered, ready for **demolition to begin tomorrow morning (Monday May 8, 2023).**

SUMMARY OF WHY NANTAWARRA SILO SHOULD BE HERITAGE-LISTED

The iconic Nantawarra Silo is about to be demolished.

Viterra informed the community of its intentions to demolish the silo last Monday May 1, 2023.

Demolition work began just five days later, on Friday May 5, 2023.

The community strongly believes this silo SHOULD NOT BE DEMOLISHED and should be preserved for future generations. This silo holds significant historical value and is a prominent landmark in the district. It is a massive part of Nantawarra's identity.

It is located on the national rail link and very visible to the thousands of vehicles who use National Highway One every day. It was built in 1956, and was the FIRST CONCRETE VERTICAL SILO built in South Australia, when bulk handling was introduced. These silos have become iconic in farming communities across the state.

Bulk handling revolutionised the agricultural/grain industry in SA.

Previously grain was delivered in bags to railway sidings and loaded onto trains – an extremely labour-intensive exercise. Bulk handling eliminated the need for bags, and allowed farmers to deliver/unload their grain to a facility (silo) in bulk. This made grain handling much more efficient.

There is a strong, deep connection between the silo and its past and present residents.

Nantawarra Silo signifies a bygone era of a once thriving, tight-knit farming community, that our forebears worked so hard to establish.

Many vertical silos are being knocked down, so preserving the Nantawarra silo gives future generations the opportunity to see, understand & appreciate how grain was stored for many decades.

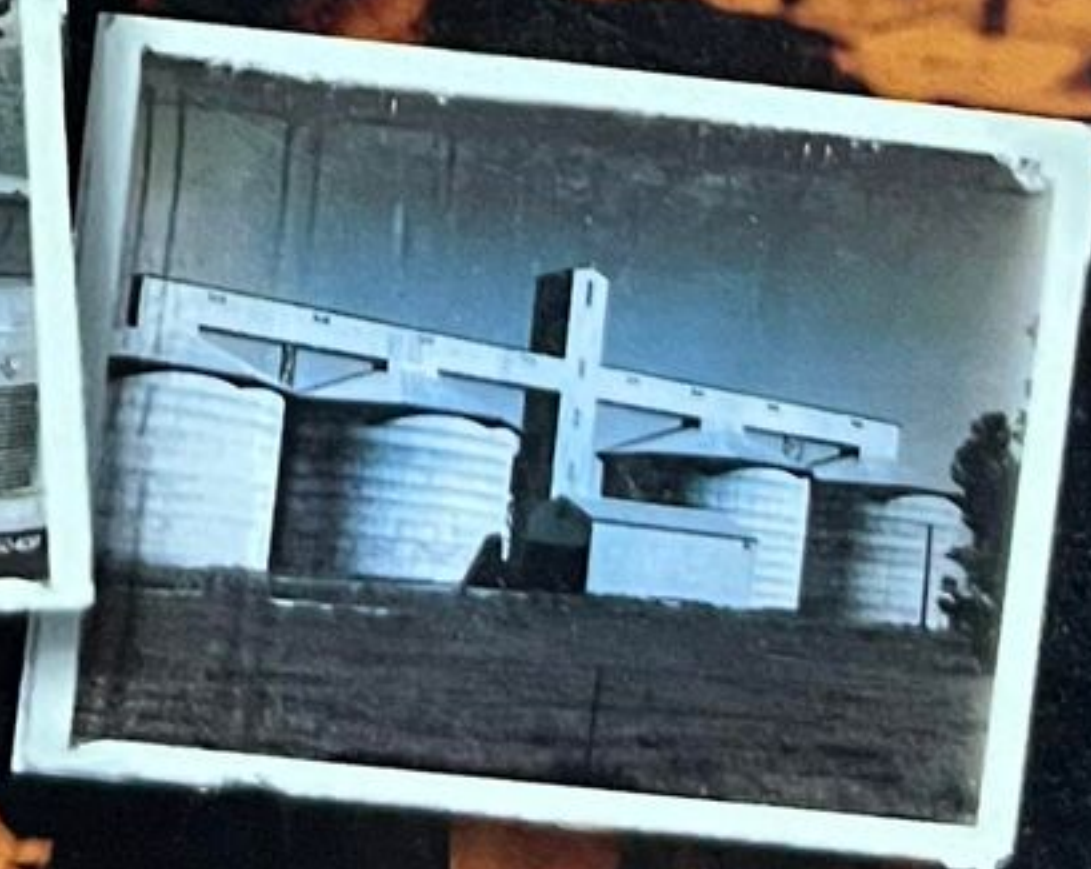
Nantawarra Silo played an extremely important part in, not only our local history, but the rich agricultural history of South Australia.

It should be saved from demolition and preserved.

Once buildings like these are gone, they are sadly lost forever.

A Golden Era

Celebrating 50 Years of Bulk
Grain Handling in South Australia



BY
DAVID THOMAS





DAVID THOMAS

David Thomas has worked a lifetime in the Australian grains industry in Queensland, Victoria and South Australia with several grain companies in a number of senior management, operational, communication and technical capacities.

He is currently part time chairman of Barley Australia and carries out freelance work within the industry. His previous career with SACBH/AusBulk and prior to that AWB Ltd, means that he has either been an active participant or observer of many of the events and personalities that have shaped the industry. His unique perspective on the development of bulk handling in South Australia is captured in this book.

Bibliography

Books

1. A Silver Milestone – The 25 Year History of South Australian Co-operative Bulk Handling by Richard Fewster. August 31 1980.
2. The Adventurous Journey - The 20 Year History of South Australian Co-operative Bulk Handling by Richard Fewster. October 1975.
3. Grain is better in bulk. The story of South Australian Co-Operative Bulk Handling by Max Lamshed.
4. A Record of the Constitutional Developments, Policies and Operations of the Australian Wheat Board 1939-1965 prepared by C. J. Perrett (Secretary 1939-1945, General Manager 1945-1963).
5. A Shared Harvest – the Australian Wheat Industry, 1939-1989. Greg Whitwell and Diane Sydenham 1991.
6. The Australian Barley Board – Making the Right Moves 1939-1999. Pauline Payne 1999.
7. Weevil in Wheat and Storage of Grain in Bags: A record of Australian Experience during the war period (1915 to 1919) by D. C. Winterbottom.

Reports, publications and archival material

1. SACBH/AusBulk annual reports 1955-2003.
2. SACBH/AusBulk board papers and minutes 1955- 2004.
3. Royal Commission into Grain Storage, Handling and Transport Report. February 1988.
4. South Australian Deep Sea Port Investigation Committee, Final Report, January 1999.

5. The ASW Grade – Payment for Quality. Australian Wheat Board Discussion Paper April 1987.
6. Report No 157. Navigation (Marine Casualty) Regulations. Report of the investigation into the contact between the Maltese flag bulk vessel Amarantos and the wharf at Wallaroo in South Australia on 10 April 2000. Issued by the Australian Transport Safety Bureau November 2000.
7. The storability of wheat received up to 13% moisture content. CSIRO Stored Grain Research Laboratory.
8. Optimising harvest operations against weather risk. G.Y. Abawi Agricultural Engineering Section, Queensland Department of Primary Industries.
9. Effect of weather-damaged wheat on moisture content measurement. T.F. Ghaly CSIRO Stored Grain Research Laboratory.
10. History of the Stored Grain Research Laboratory. Compiled by Christine Gainey, CSIRO Entomology, Stored Grain Research Laboratory.
11. A short history of grain protection in Australia. Jan van S. Graver and Bob Winks, CSIRO Stored Grain Research Laboratory.
12. Print Media
 - The South Australian Wheat Grower
 - West Coast Sentinel
 - Yorke Peninsula Country Times
 - The Advertiser
 - Port Lincoln Times
 - Stock Journal
 - The Chronicle
13. ID Black January, 1998 'A review of the impact of public sector applied research and development for the South Australian wheat industry' SARDI Research Report Series No 21.
14. Personal Communications with David Lewis (Principal Officer Grain Industries) and Jack Langberg (Principal Strategy Consultant, Corporate Strategy and Policy Branch).
15. A Journey Through Time: Significant events in the history of South Australian Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. Barry Kelly. February 1987.
16. Miscellaneous: AusBulk/SACBH central and departmental correspondence files.
17. Wallaroo Heritage & Nautical Museum (Wallaroo Branch National Trust SA).



CHAPTER THREE

Build, build, build

After the major efforts to get the company established and garner grower support, it was important then to deliver on expectations. Over the next 15 years, the new company made a Herculean effort to establish handling facilities across the state to satisfy the pent up demand from growers. However, there were still some battles left to fight before it could be claimed that the company had delivered on its original charter and finally come of age.

The first silo owned and operated by the company was the one million bushel bin at Ardrossan. On November 10th 1955, SACBH purchased this from the AWB for the depreciated price of £220,368 following completion of agreements with the SA Harbors Board for lease of land and with BHP for use of its shipping belt. As part of the sale, SACBH was appointed by the AWB as sole licensed receiver for all wheat at Ardrossan.

The first load received by the company occurred on that very day, and was delivered by Greenshield Bros of Nantawarra, 36 miles away from the terminal. The wheat was the Gabo variety and was of good F.A.Q. standard. Over that harvest period wheat literally flooded into the terminal, with intake exceeding 100,000 bushels on nine separate days. The terminal became a major focus for bulk wheat shipments, with more than 4,000,000 bushels being exported in 21 ships by August of the following year.

Not all of this grain was delivered by growers, however it represented a significant quantity of bagged wheat from the Yorke Peninsula hinterland, and from depots where bagged wheat was cut to bulk in order to load bulk carriers. The practices at these depots however, clearly represented major inefficiencies, and the pressure quickly mounted to build bulk country storage tributary to the Ardrossan terminal and to make bagged depots redundant in the future. These issues were quickly addressed, and the premier, Sir Thomas Playford, officially opened the first built country silo at Paskeville on January 6th 1956. While the timing was late for that season's harvest, a significant

Nantawarra, the first concrete vertical silo erected in SA in 1956. Capacity 12,000 tonnes.



S.A. CO-OPERATIVE BULK HANDLING LIMITED

Agreement signed for purchase of Ardrossan Wheat Silo



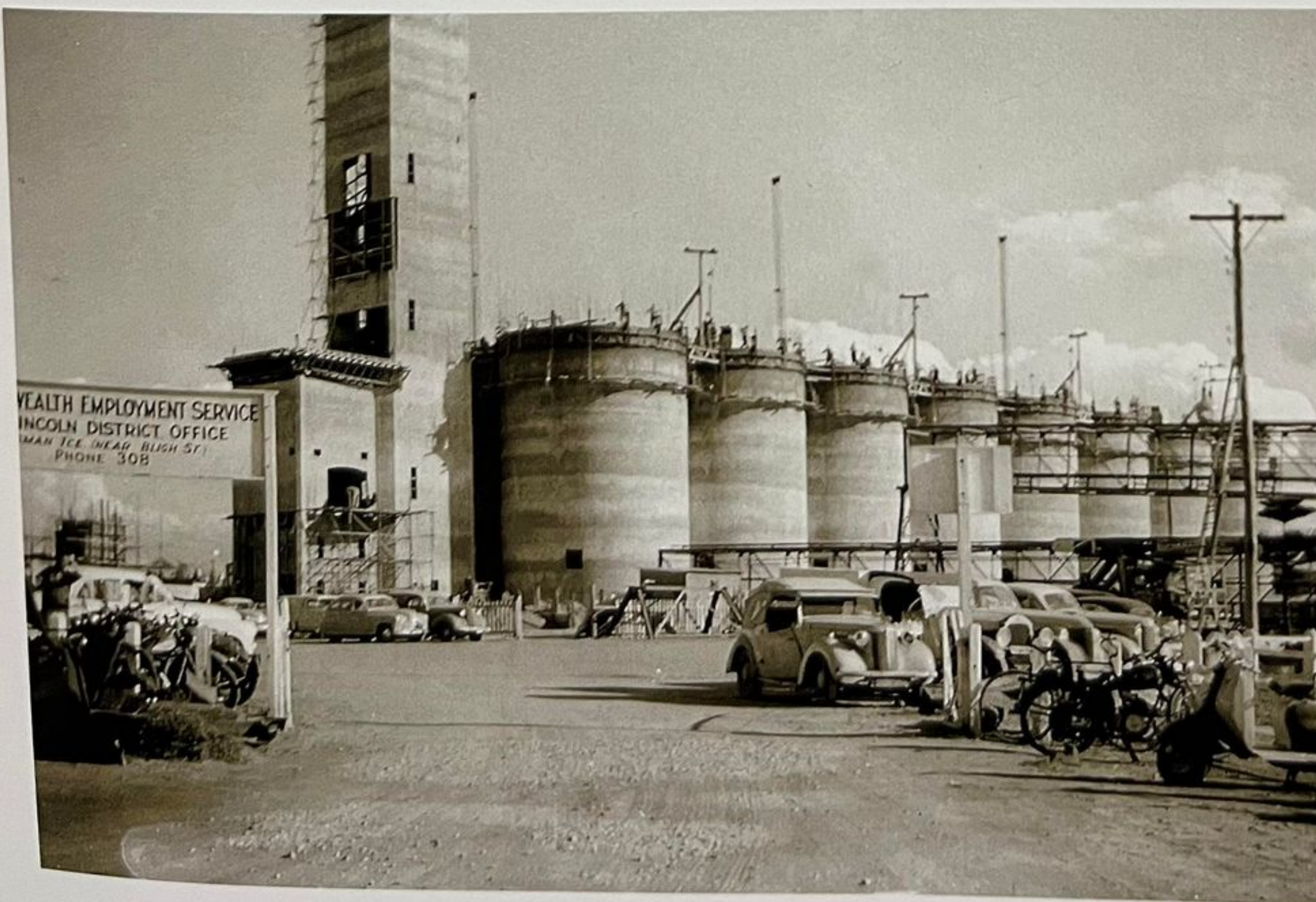
Left to Right: E.C. Atkinson (Director); who also signed the agreement. T.C. Stott (Secretary, signing the agreement), P.T. Sanders (General Manager), and B.C. Watson (Superintendent of Wheat Board).

amount of grain was received – 12,253 bushels on the first day. A similar storage facility was completed at Bute soon after. All storages were designed by the company's own consulting engineer, Mr Allan Stephenson, and they incorporated a number of unique design features. It is interesting to note that during its formative years, the company faced many difficult choices in relation to silo design. Many growers considered that the company should copy the low cost horizontal wood and iron storage used extensively in Western Australia to get a bulk handling system rapidly established. However, the maintenance and operation costs associated with these types of storage were high, and there were only rudimentary methods for filling and recovering grain. Instead, the company elected to use more a more permanent type of storage, one with good inloading and reclaim facilities, and sealed floors to minimise grain loss. The ability to segregate different grains and grade types was also important in SA, where larger volumes of grains other than wheat, in particular barley, were grown compared to WA.

As part of funding guarantees provided by the State Government, all silo designs had to be submitted to the State Government Public Works Committee for approval – a practice which continued up until 1990. It is testament to the quality of the company's new engineering department that this quickly became a rubber stamp process with no designs ever being rejected.



From The Advertiser, January 1956: The new bulk wheat receival bin at Paskeville was opened by the Premier, Mr Playford. The official party is shown on the dais with the secretary of SA Co-operative Bulk Handling Co. Ltd, Mr Stott MP.



Port Lincoln's first silos under construction, showing workers' vehicles parked at the shore end of Brennen's jetty in June 1958. Photo courtesy the Eric O'Connor Collection, Southern Eyre Peninsula Family and Local History Group.



Port Adelaide terminal under construction. Photo courtesy of Advertiser Newspapers.

Early in 1956, the company received approval to erect four 500,000-bushel storages at Balaklava, Snowtown, Blyth and Brinkworth, a 350,000-bushel storage at Hoyleton, and three 400,000-bushel storages at Nantawarra, Redhill and Gulnare. The latter were to utilise the company's standard concrete silo design. The state's silo network was now rapidly underway.

Wallaroo was selected as the site for the company's first self-commissioned terminal, but the project highlighted one of the oddities of the South Australian grain handling system which did not occur elsewhere in Australia. SACBH only had responsibility for receiving and storing grain up until the wharf. It was the State Government's responsibility via its Harbors Board to provide ship loading facilities and place the grain onboard vessel. The method of loading and the decision where facilities were placed came under the jurisdiction of this body, not SACBH.

While generally there were not many problems with the arrangement, major difficulties occurred at Wallaroo because of the Harbors Board proposal to load vessels with a rail truck jetty-tip method instead of with an endless belt conveyor. The former would have been highly inefficient, and would severely restrict loading operations. SACBH strongly opposed the plan, but it took a protracted public debate to convince the Public Works Committee and Harbors Board to back down from its impractical proposals. A seamless silo-to-ship operation under the control of one organisation was many years away; it was not until 1997 when the State Government privatised the shipping belts and sold them to SACBH that South Australia came into line with the standard practice and operations of grain handlers in other states and overseas. Once location and ship loading issues were resolved, work on the new terminal progressed quickly. On December 3rd, 1957 the Premier, Sir Thomas Playford, officiated at another silo opening when the 1,600,000-bushel vertical cell silo complex was completed. In two short years, a new terminal and 13 upcountry silos representing 10 million bushels of storage had been completed, but the demand for more was escalating.

With major demand for bulk handling facilities across the state, selection and prioritisation of sites for construction of storage was always contentious. Selection based on grain production was a key criterion, but given that all growers were paying tolls, those who missed out were impatient and vocal in expressing their frustration. On July 18th 1960, in one of the largest grower meetings ever known, 400 growers crammed into the Crystal Brook Institute in the mid-north to express their desire for a terminal to be constructed at Port Pirie. This would service the needs of growers in the region and avoid the higher freight costs to Wallaroo.

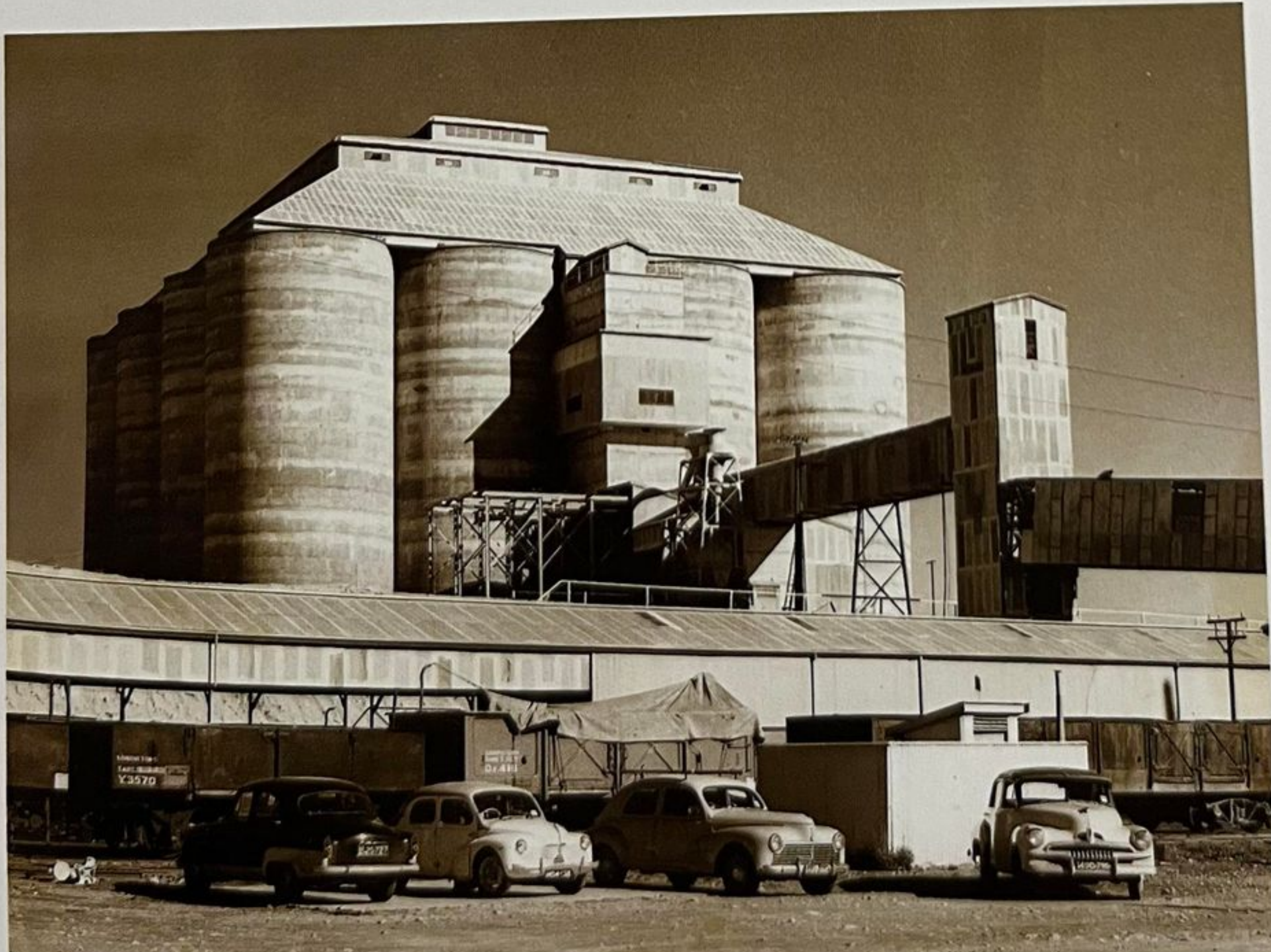
The Port Pirie shipping terminal was forthcoming in 1962, but not before storage plans for the Eyre Peninsula were put into place. In 1958, the company completed a 16 cell

1,250,000-bushel concrete vertical silo at Port Lincoln, as well as two of its standard 6 cell 400,000-bushel facilities at Kimba and Rudall. During the 1958/59 harvest the company was able to proudly report that these had all filled to capacity, with Kimba receiving more than 1 million bushels – more than two and half times its capacity. This was only possible thanks to the excellent performance of SA Railways, which moved more than one million bushels of grain from these country silos during the December and January harvest period. These overflow harvest trucking arrangements were to become a regular feature of grain handling in the state, helping to overcome situations where there were storage shortfalls, particularly in high production years.

Interestingly, growers on the Upper Eyre Peninsula had bulk-shipping facilities before growers in the Port Adelaide production zone. Fortuitously for growers in this area, the mining of gypsum deposits on Lake Macdonnell created the need for bulk-loading facilities at Thevenard. As early as 1955, the Public Works Committee recommended after an enquiry that facilities be installed by the Harbors Board “to handle gypsum, wheat and other suitable commodities” at an estimated cost of £160,000. It took yet another enquiry in 1960 before the plans became a reality. Work started that same year on concrete vertical cells sited on the high ground overlooking the harbour, and these were



*SACBH general manager
Perce Sanders studies a model of
the proposed new Port Adelaide
bulk handling terminal in 1962.
Photo courtesy of Advertiser
Newspapers.*



Wallaroo terminal in 1957.

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management systems forward.
In 1994, he had an opportunity to benchmark the company's operations against others
when he was sent to Canada on a work exchange programme. "In things like grain
storage hygiene and labour practices, I thought we were well ahead of most Canadian
companies. In addition, we had a far superior off-farm storage system," he says. "It was
also a wonderful opportunity to see some of the industry change processes that were
happening in Canada at the time. In this respect it was a bit like déjà vu given that the
major changes that have recently occurred within the Australian grain industry were
happening there much earlier."

Ted Ridley

Ted Ridley commenced work with SACBH in its Bentham Street Offices in November
1955, only a fortnight after inaugural General Manager Perce Sanders was appointed.
For most of his 30 years of employment, Ted was the company's Operations Manager,
although he notes wryly that at the beginning there were no managers, only officers of

various designations, given that Perce Sanders saw himself as the *only manager* in the company.

He remembers that at the beginning it was a very small operation, with *only* about 8 employees, including Senior Engineer Corbett, Jim Gowan (Mechanical Engineer), and accountant Arthur Raw. There was also SA Wheat and Woolgrower Association Secretary Tom Stott, who doubled as company secretary and, up until the appointment of Sanders, its de facto Chief Executive.

Ted believes that the company's greatest success was the establishment of an extensive silo network in a very short time frame. While he is somewhat disapproving of Perce Sander's autocratic management style, he gives the General Manager full credit for his achievements. "It would not have been possible without Perce," he says, concurring with the sentiments of many others who served in the grains industry at that time.

The overwhelming priority was to get storage established at almost any cost, and any possible shortcut was taken to achieve this goal. Occasionally the results were less than desirable. At Nantawarra, the silo was commissioned and used for grower receivals before the roof was completed. When rain occurred, staff had to scrounge rail truck tarpaulins to cover the top of the concrete cells and prevent grain from being damaged. This incident earned Perce Sanders a sharp rebuke from the Railways Commissioner, who was unimpressed about SA Railways property being shanghaied in this fashion. However, scrounging of materials and equipment were to be a regular feature of the company in those early years.

The official opening of Paskeville, the state's first country storage, also had an element of farce, Ted remembers. The various interconnecting conveyors and augers from the receival hopper to the one in the shed were not interlinked electrically, and had to be started individually for the entire system to work. When Premier Playford pressed the button to receive the first load, Ted and others had to work covertly out of sight behind the scenes to activate the start buttons of other augers and conveyors to give the illusion of a completely integrated system. Even then there was a problem, as one of the conveyors had been wired with the wrong polarity, so that it went into reverse and showered grain on invited guests.

After the first few silos were built, the Company decided that for economy and speed of construction, it wanted to have a standard type of silo based on the first silo to be built at Owen. This was being frustrated by what the Company considered was the ultra-conservative recommendations of the Mines Department, based on their analysis of some of the core samples taken at prospective silo sites.

For instance, at Mallala the Department considered the land was so poor that the four cells shouldn't be joined (and create a fifth small interstice cell), but should be independent of each other and not so high. Accordingly, Mallala finished up with cells that were not vertical silos, as the cell diameter was greater than its height. A similar situation arose at Redhill; the solution there was to once again put the four cells in line, but to make them bell-shaped at the base, to spread the load. Following Mallala and Redhill, a standard



RE: ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE NANTAWARRA WAS FIRST VERTICAL SILO IN SA

1. Please find attached, newspaper clippings from the local newspaper "The Producer" regarding Nantawarra Silo, around the time it was built.

The first article, (June 28, 1956) states that it's believed to be **the first vertical silo in South Australia.**

2. Please find below a link to a government report, "Heritage of the Upper North", 2000.

Page 42 – 43 discuss the introduction of bulk handling and the first silos erected in the state.

This report states **Nantawarra was among the first generation of silos. But most of the other silos were horizontal tin sheds. Only Nantawarra, Redhill & Gulnare were vertical concrete silos.**

[https://data.environment.sa.gov.au/content/heritage-surveys/upper-north-\(heritage-of-the\)-vol-1.-general-report-2000.pdf](https://data.environment.sa.gov.au/content/heritage-surveys/upper-north-(heritage-of-the)-vol-1.-general-report-2000.pdf)

There are now 3 sources that state Nantawarra was the first vertical silo:

1. "Fertile Valley to Open Plain – The Nantawarra and Beaufort Districts", by Rex Penna, Published by Peacock Publications, 1982
2. "The Golden Era – Celebrating 50 years of Bulk Handling in South Australia", by David Thomas, Published by ABB (Australian Barley Board), 2006
3. "A Wheat Silo for Nantawarra", The Producer newspaper, June 28, 1956.

And in support, the Government report, "Heritage of the Upper North" states it was a vertical silo, rather than a horizontal tin shed like its predecessors.

I ask you to please consider these additional pieces of evidence with urgency, due to the immediate threat the silo is under.

its association with the fruit fly Box-
uld soon be declared a noxious weed in
ers would be required to have all bushes
stroyed, said the Weeds Adviser (Mr. H.
address to the Mallala branch of the
au on June 19.

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Wheat Silo For Nantawarra

Drillings have been made
to obtain test samples of
soil before further plans are
made for the construction of
a wheat silo at Nantawarra.

Rumour has it that the silo
may be of the vertical type
as used in Victoria and that
the total capacity will be
400,000 bushels. It is be-
lieved that the silo would be
ready for the coming harvest
if work could be commenced
within the next month or so.

Planning for Next Table Tennis

JOURNAL OF THE PROSPEROUS CENTRAL

Circulating extensively throughout Balaklava, Bowmans, Hoyleton, Pt. Wakefield, Inkerman Long Plains, Alma, Mt Templeton, Avon, Bowli

Subscription: 17/6 per annum including postage; 9/-

VOL. 49, NO. 27.

Registered at the G.P.O. A

New Nantawarra Wheat Silos Will Be 100ft. High

PRELIMINARY WORK TO COMMENCE ON MONDAY

PRELIMINARY work on the construction of four vertical concrete wheat silos with a total capacity of 420,000 bushels will commence at Nantawarra on Monday next.

The silos will be 100 feet high and 40 feet in diameter, and in addition there will be fumigation and outloading bins.

Contractors for the work are Messrs. S. Haunstrup & Co. (S.A.) Pty. Ltd., and foreman for the first few weeks will be Mr. C. Buckley. To enable the contract to be completed as quickly as possible skilled carpenters are being sought, together with laborers. Applicants may interview Mr. Buck-

ley on the site at Nantawarra on Monday or at the Royal Hotel, Balaklava, that evening.

Target date for the completion of the silo is December 15 next.

The firm is well-known for its silo construction work in NSW and Queensland and in the latter State it is now completing a wheat terminal at Pinkenba, Brisbane.

The firm also constructed the big silo at Ardrossan.

New Master Installed for Owen Masonic Lodge

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To Test Assessments —

Owners of three properties in the District Council of Balaklava have given notice that they intend to appeal to a Court of Summary Jurisdiction regarding their assessment appeals which were rejected when the Council sat as a Court of Appeal earlier this month.

Adelaide solicitors to deal with the proceedings have been engaged by all parties.

Pouring Foundations —

Contractors for the new 400,000-bushel grain silo at Nantawarra began pouring the cement foundations this week. Material is being carted from Rodda's quarry south of Bute for the job.

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Wow! look what

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10in. and 12in.

BALAKLAVA 232

O'BRIEN

and Silo at 60ft. Mark —

T. Walls of the new 400,000-
L. bushel wheat silo at Nanta-
warra touched the 60ft. mark
early this week. When com-
pleted the silo will be 120 feet
high to the roof.

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DAY, and the mosquito nuis-
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diately.

On Holidays —

Mr. Bob. Seaford is reliev-
ing at the Balaklava Post Of-
fice while Mr. Bruce Welling-
ton is on annual holidays.

Accident at Nantawarra —

Mr. Darryl Milton, of Port
Wakefield, sustained a frac-
tured ankle when he fell
from a ladder while he was
working at the Nantawarra
wheat silo last week. He
was admitted to the Balak-
lava SM Hospital.

Broke Wrist —

Mrs. Schneider Senr. of
Hoyleton suffered a broken
wrist when she slipped at the
home of her son and daughter-
in-law, Mr. and Mrs. H. E.
Schneider, last week. After

...were given by Mrs. R. T. Day (recitation), and Miss Y. Dunstan (piano-accordion). A competition was won by Mrs. C. F. Neumann. Mrs. D. A. Simon was welcomed as a new member.

Halbury ladies brought gifts to send to an orphanage for Christmas.

Silo Machinery Being Installed —

With construction of the concrete tubes complete, work at the Nantawarra wheat silo is now going ahead on the installation of the necessary machinery. It is understood that the plant will work electrically from an engine-driven generator. Silo walls were completed at the 100-foot mark, but with the roof the structure will be 127 feet above ground level.

Printed by H. D. Henstridge
at the Registered Office, Howe
Street, Balaklava, S.A., Phone

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son of Mr. G. Somers, to Diana, J. S. Pitta-Mrs. Pitta-

ter of Mr. of Undalya, and Mrs. Balaklava.

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led, cut the de by his y Mrs. L.

The family are staying for some weeks with Mrs. Coad's parents, Mr and Mrs H. P. McArdle, of Wild Horse Plains.

Other North Queenslanders in the district are Mr. and Mrs. Ron Abrahams from Gordonvale, near Cairns, who will return home at the end of next month. They are with Mrs. Abraham's parents, Mr. and Mrs. B. B. McArdle, of Long Plains.

Nantawarra Silo Operating Again

After having taken an initial intake of 25,000 bushels of grain in the centre bin, the new Nantawarra silo was closed, but opened again on Monday for general receivals.

The first load of wheat, delivered some weeks ago, was brought in by Mr. E. G. Herbert.

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affected by the dust and ash
es, and an Owen firefighter,
Mr. Max Pratt, had later to
seek medical assistance for
his eyes.

Silo Damaged

During a heavy wind-
storm about 2 p.m. 50
sheets of iron were ripped
from the roof of the new
400,000-bushel wheat silo
at Nantawarra.

No major damage was re-
ported in the Balaklava
township, but early yester-
day morning the crossarm on
an electric light pole near Mr
L. W. Nancarrow's home was
burning after a shower of
rain had broken down the in-
sulation.

A short circuit caused by
this mishap blacked out Bal-
aklava for about 30 minutes
yesterday afternoon.

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Polio Unit Will Visit Loca

Early May

RE: EVIDENCE TO PROOVE NANTAWARRA WAS THE FIRST VERTICAL CONCRETE SILO

Please find attached further evidence that Paskeville was a horizontal tin shed. These are screenshots from Viterra's website. This photo shows very clearly that Paskeville wasn't a vertical silo.

This is the link: <https://www.viterra.com.au/Who-we-are/Our-history>

2:29

4G



[← Back to Who we are](#)

1956

1998

1999

2000

2003

2004





[← Back to Who we are](#)

1956

1998

1999

2000

2003

2004



1956

SACBH built its first country silo at Paskeville, Yorke Peninsula