‘Remembering Roberts’

A brief look into the life and times of the early settlers of Kensington, through the memory of those buried at the Village Cemetery.

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Executive Summary

‘Remembering Roberts’ is an investigation into the life and times of those buried at the Village Cemetery on Maesbury Street, Kensington, SA. It seeks to understand the climate within which this 19th century cemetery operated, and identify the individuals buried there, so that future archaeological work may be carried out on the site. In consultation with the Norwood, Payneham and St Peters Council, ‘Remembering Roberts’ utilises statistical, biographical and historical information, gathered primarily from the NPSP Council historical archives, to determine patterns within the burials, identify family connections, and to create a picture of what was happening within the community during the period that the cemetery was in use.

This report has found that the inhabitants of the Village were typical of the type of assisted migrants being selected for emigration to Australia. It can also be said that they had strong community values and close ties to the church. Although middle class, the Village inhabitants were still subject to the same insanitary conditions one might expect to see within the lower classes. As a result, illness, disease and death was commonplace in the Village as evidenced by the high burial records. Those most at risk were the young children, more susceptible to disease, and least fit to fight illness, a re-occurring issue seen throughout 19th century cemeteries.

However, by the end of the 19th century, ideas about sanitation and health were advancing, and conditions started to improve. A focus on better living conditions, safe food practice and disease prevention saw a decrease in illness related deaths. A shift within the church and the abandonment of church yard burials saw the previously
high number of burials at the Village Cemetery plummet after the 1860s. Improved health contributed to the near non-existent use of the church in the 20th century.

Produced as a preliminary analysis, this report only investigates three of the families buried at the Village Cemetery (Roberts, Hughes and Blackeby), however it is hoped that one day all 551 people buried at the cemetery will have the chance to have their story told, using the framework laid out here.
Figure 1 Village Church, date unknown
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Introduction

The aim of this report is to initiate an ongoing project which will investigate the people buried at the Maesbury Street Cemetery, so that future research and archaeological work may be successfully carried out on the site. Research questions addressed by this investigation include: What patterns can be identified from the register of burials? Who were the people buried at the Village Cemetery? What did they do, where did they live and how did they die? How do these people fit into the broader context of what was happening in South Australia at the time? What gaps exist in our knowledge of the past?

This report is being prepared in consultation with the Norwood, Payneham and St Peters Council (NPSPC), the local governing body under which the Maesbury Cemetery falls. The NPSPC is committed to success of heritage projects, and as such retains a large collection of historical records within their History Centre on The Parade, Norwood.

The study area to be investigated is the old Village Cemetery, now know as Pioneer Park, on Maesbury Street in Kensington. This site lies within Section 289, east of Adelaide, on part of the original Lots 40 and 41. See Figures 2 and 3.

The Maesbury Street Cemetery is significant to the local community due to its association with the nearby Village Chapel, and prominent pioneering community members. The Village Chapel, situated on the corner of High St and what was then known as Chapel St (now Maesbury), was built in 1847 to service the religious needs of the growing local community. It replaced the existing Village Church, on an adjoining piece of land, which had been outgrown by the expanding congregation in
only a couple of years (Blackburn 1970). The new non-denominational church, attached school and associated church burial ground quickly became a centre point in the community. Many of the area’s pioneering families were members of the early church, and influential in its day-to-day running.

In the 1860s a split within the church community resulted in the exodus of many members, including one of its founders, Mr John Roberts, who went on to create the nearby Clayton church in Norwood (Blackburn 1970). The remaining members, led by Reverend Cheetham, stayed and later voted to join the Methodist Church, which was growing in popularity in Adelaide at the time. The 1860s also saw great change in government legislation, which dictated that burials within church grounds would now cease, in favour of localised council cemeteries. From now on only those who had existing family plots in churchyards were able to be buried in places like the Village Cemetery.

The next 100 years saw the Methodists move out, and the Seventh Day Adventists move in. They utilised the premises until 1958, when it was sold, from which time the building has ceased to function as a Church. The Church burial ground continued to be used sporadically over the years by those with family plots dating to the Congregationalist days; however, by the 1960s the site had become so overrun with weeds and rubbish, and so decrepit from a lack of use and maintenance, that it was decided to close it down indefinitely and turn the land into a community park. The local APEX club took photos of the remaining headstones, and made a list of all those buried in the grounds, before levelling the area. A simple bronze plaque was erected to honour those buried there, listing only the names and year of interment (as shown in Figure 4). Later, a single surviving headstone was found, with the names of
five people buried in the cemetery, and this too was erected as a remembrance plaque.

I would like to acknowledge Denise Schumann from the NPSPC, and Alice Gorman and Lynley Wallis from Flinders University for all their assistance and advice in the preparation of this report.

Figure 4 Plaque at Village Cemetery
Methodology

This report is based primarily on archival and historical research. In order to answer the research questions, a statistical analysis of the data relating to those buried at the cemetery is paramount. Additionally, collection of biographical information regarding those buried was required, as well as historical research into the events and issues shaping South Australia during the time the cemetery was in use. The bulk of the research for this report has come from the Norwood Payneham and St Peters Council historical archives. These archives contain original Church records, maps of the study area, a list compiled by the APEX club of those buried at the cemetery, census records, black and white photographs and family biographies. The SA Births Index of registration, Biographical Index of South Australians, and the directory of newspaper announcements can also be utilised at the Council archives.

Making use of the APEX (APEX n.d.) burial list, cross-referenced with a similar list found on the Australian Cemeteries website (McRae 2005) the statistical analysis is aimed at identifying the number of people buried in the cemetery, the proportion of male and females, and their range of ages at death. Once this has been ascertained, the data can be compared against statistical information from other cemeteries in South Australia from the same period, to determine if any patterns are evident. This analysis also helps identify possible family groups used in the biographical research sample – the ACW list contains some further research which identifies parents’ names, maiden names and place of residence.

From the initial phase of investigation it was apparent that due to the large number of subjects within the study area and the short timeframe in which to complete this report, it was only possible to research a sample group from the Cemetery.
Additionally, due the high proportion of children and infants within the study group, and the difficulty associated with finding records on these, it was decided that selecting large family groups with both adults and children represented in the data would be the best approach as this would provide more detailed and balanced results. Therefore three families, selected from those which were listed as having more than five burials (according the APEX list), were chosen for the study. These are the Roberts, Hughes and Blackeby.

To gain biographical data on each of these families, the NPSPC archives were invaluable. It must be noted that a great deal of the information presented in the biographical section of this report has come from the Biographical Index of South Australians (Statton 1986 and Thomas 1988), available through NPSPC and at Flinders University. This information has included arrival date, occupation, place of residence, and verifying spouse and children's names and dates. Additionally, the Births, Deaths and Marriages indexes (available through the SA Genealogical Society) and any available family histories, such as the one written on the Roberts family (NPSPC) are useful sources.

During the course of this archival research, it became apparent that a system to keep information contextual and easy to understand was required, therefore, with the assistance of Denise Schumann, a worksheet was created for simple data entry during biographical study (see Appendix 1). In addition, the creation of 'family tree worksheets' for each of the sample families was necessary to help visualise and understand the sometimes complicated connection between various members.
With statistical and biographical information at hand, it was necessary to be able to place it all into the wider context of what was happening in Kensington, and even the colony as a whole, in order to make sense of events and trends. Various history texts such as 'The Hundred Years History of Kensington and Norwood' (Blackburn 1970), and 'Paradise of Dissent' (Pike 1957) contained detailed research about life in the colony, including statistics on various matters such as population, and both have been utilised in this report.
Results

Statistical Information

A statistical analysis of the APEX (n.d.) and ACW (McRae 2005) burial lists highlighted several trends, essential to our understanding of the Village Cemetery, and what was happening in Kensington during its operation. It was found that there are 551 recorded burials for the Village Cemetery, spanning the years 1849 – 1962.

Figure 4 plots these known burials across the entire one hundred and thirteen year period of that the cemetery was in use. From this it is evident that the peak burial years were 1854 and 1855, which recorded 41 and 40 burials respectively. From 1865 the volume of burials dropped significantly, with only 1-3 burials recorded for most years. Into the twentieth century burials became even more sporadic, with gaps of sometimes several years between burials. The last recorded burial at the Village Cemetery was of Emily Anna Hughes, in 1962.

Of the 551 burials, 266 were found to be male, 253 female and 32 of an unknown sex. Figure 5 highlights sex distribution over the years of the cemetery's operation, and it is evident that the male and female statistics remain relatively comparable throughout the whole period. Male deaths exceeded female deaths in most years by approximately 1-4 people, except in 1850 and 1860 when these numbers rose to eight. There is only one year where female numbers peak well above male and that is 1853 which recorded 24 female deaths to 12 male.
Burial Trends at the Village Cemetery

Figure 5 Burial Trends at the Village Cemetery
Figure 6 represents a breakdown of the 551 burials by age group. By far the majority of those buried at the cemetery are children under the age of one, who account for nearly 45% (n=246). The next highest group are again children, ranging in age from one to five years of age. They account for over 15% (n=85). Interestingly, only a small number of the deceased are aged between five and 20 years. The 20 – 50 year age bracket accounted for approximately 14% (n=76), while those who were aged 50 and over make up 13% (n=72) of the list. A small portion of people whose date of birth was unknown make up the remaining 7% (n=41).
Figure 7 compares the age at death data across the whole period of the cemetery's use. The results show that the mortality rate of children under one year remained very high in the first 10 years of the cemetery; however, from 1869 it decreases significantly and is non-existent by the turn of the century. From 1889 an increase in burials of people over the age of 50 and people with an unknown age is evident.

Research conducted by Degner (2007) on childhood mortality in 19th century South Australia provides a comparable dataset to the Village Cemetery. In her work, Degner found that children aged zero to two years provided the highest proportion of deaths amongst all childhood groups, accounting for 38% (2007:40). Additionally, she showed that 1875 was the peak year for childhood deaths in the study area, followed by 1860-65, while 1849 and 1901 were the lowest. Finally, Degner's report highlights the fact that male deaths (in childhood) outnumbered female deaths on eight out of twelve occasions throughout the 50 year period of the study, peaking in 1875 when male deaths more than doubled that of females.
Biographical Research

Roberts

According to the APEX list there are 11 people with surname 'Roberts' buried in the Village Cemetery – seven adults and four children. Biographical research links seven of these to the same family, while the ACW links a further two. The remaining two Roberts have an unknown connection (if one at all) to the main Roberts family. Figure 9 is a family tree showing the relationship of the known Roberts family. From Council archives and a family biography prepared by a descendant of the family, much is known about the Roberts (Roberts 1987).

John and Leonora migrated to South Australia in 1843 with their youngest children, on recommendation by their eldest son William, who had arrived earlier in 1839. John Roberts was influential in the early settlement of Kensington. He owned a substantial amount of land in the area, and the street 'Maesbury' was named after his home of the same title, which was situated on that street (formerly Chapel St) (Roberts 1987). Roberts was one of the co-founders of the Village Church; however, a rift in the 1860s saw him leave and start another Church on the Parade, where he and his wife are buried. Interestingly, several known members of John’s family are buried at the Village Cemetery on Maesbury Street, including a son, daughter-in-law, three grandchildren and two grand-daughter-in-laws (Figure 8 is of the only documented Roberts headstone). The Roberts’ association with the Village Cemetery stems from 1849, with the first family burial of infant Leonora Roberts, grand-daughter of John. The last recorded family burial was nearly 100 years later, in 1947 for Annie Roberts (nee Hibben), wife of John’s grand-son John Soame Roberts, a coach trimmer (Thomas
Eight of John Roberts' children left Adelaide for family and work, and subsequently are buried elsewhere, but one son, Josiah Wilshere Roberts remained, his wife and daughter continuing to maintain ties with the Village Church after John had separated (Roberts 1987). It is unclear for certain whether Josiah is buried at the Village Cemetery, as the family biography suggests; however it is known that his wife Elizabeth, and two of their 10 children are. Jabez Wilshere Roberts and Alfred Tilley Roberts, sons of Josiah, are both buried at the Village cemetery, and had both been butchers (Roberts 1987). Jabez died in 1918, aged 60 years, while Alfred died in Renmark in 1946, aged 84.

Figure 8 Ethel May Roberts' headstone
Roberts Family Tree showing members who are buried at the Village Cemetery. Other possible family members = Eliza Sophia and Samuel (daughter & son of Josiah & Elizabeth according to ACW), Edward, and unknown.
Hughes

The APEX list identifies 12 Hughes buried in the Village Cemetery – nine adults and three children. As shown in Figure 12 all of these people can be linked to the same family tree through biographical research. A life in the public arena for one of the Hughes means that a fair amount of information is available on this family through the Council archives.

Jabez and Betsy Hughes migrated to South Australia with their four children in 1850 onboard the Lord Stanley. Listed as being a fellmonger and landowner, Jabez lived in North Adelaide, but owned property in Kensington (Statton 1986). He was buried at the Village Cemetery in 1861, aged 56 years. It is unclear what became of his wife or where she is buried. All four of Jabez's children are buried with him at the cemetery, as well as two daughter-in-laws and five grandchildren (Figure 11 documents the Hughes headstones). Like the Roberts family, the Hughes have a long tradition of burials at the Village Cemetery – the first being Mary Hughes, daughter of Jabez, in 1859, aged 22 years (McRae 2005). Mary's entry in the Church register details her as having been "only ill about ten days", with no further details given (Original Church Register 1847-). The last of the family members was also the very last burial to take place at the cemetery in 1962, which was of Emily Anna Hughes, grand-daughter of Jabez, who according to the Biographical Index of SA was 100 years old when she died (Statton 1986).

Jabez's three sons, William, Alfred and Henry all became butchers, operating several shops between them, the first being in Bridge Street, Kensington, which was later moved around the corner to High Street (Council Correspondence n.d.) In the 1860s and 70s Henry was also active within the local council, serving as councillor and then
Mayor in 1873 and 1874 (Blackburn 1970). In addition to this, Henry is listed as having been a farmer, while his brother William was also a salesman and landowner, and Alfred a baker, grocer and storeman (Statton 1986).

Three of Alfred's four children died under the age of three, and they are buried in the cemetery. The rest of the Hughes' collective children lived into old age, and only two of these are buried at Kensington.

Hughes Street in Kensington was named after the family, and Hughes' butcher shop on the corner of High and Bridge Streets, which remained in operation run by a Hughes descendant until 1951, still stands today (see Figure 10).

![Figure 10 Hughes Butcher shop, 63 High Street, Kensington, 2008](image)

![Figure 11 Hughes family headstones from the Village Cemetery, c.1960s](image)
Hughes Family Tree showing members who are buried at the Village Cemetery.
**Blackeby**

There are seven Blackeby's on the APEX list – one adult and six children. As shown in Figure 13, all but one Blackeby can be positively attributed to the same extended family. Little is known about the family, except that they had the great misfortune of losing five of their ten children, all at very young ages.

Josiah and Esther (known as 'Hester' in the SA Biographical Index) migrated to South Australia in 1849. The records show that Josiah owned a property on Bridge St, and is listed in the 1865 directory as having been shoemaker (SA Directory 1865). He also contributed to the Village Church by taking on the roles of treasurer and Deacon in 1864/5. After Josiah's death in 1865 at aged 78 years, his widow returned home to England.

Philip Blackeby, father of the five young children buried in the cemetery, is listed as having been a drapery hawker and a car driver (SA Directory 1865). He came to South Australia in 1849 aboard the *Eliza*. His children Alice, Florence, Harriet and Jessie all died at one year of age or under, while son Philip was five years at the time of his death. Neither Philip, his wife or surviving children are buried at the cemetery.

Sarah Amelia Blackeby, like the other Blackeby children, was almost one year of age when she died. Her parents, George and Amelia, are recorded as having a further three children, all of whom presumably survived to adulthood. According the SA Biographical Index, George was a 'carpenter, groom and gardener' (Statton 1986). His relationship to the other Blackebys is unknown – Philip and George came out to Australia from England in the same year, but on different ships.
Blackeby Family Tree showing members who are buried at the Maesbury Cemetery.

Other possible family members = Sarah Amelia Blackeby (parents George & Amelia according to ACW)
**Historical Background**

The colony of South Australia was settled in 1836 with a plan for a utopian-like society. It was to be self-funding and self-governing, there was religious freedom, the principle of systematic colonisation, and of course no convicts. Despite a shaky start, which included a boom followed closely by depression in the 1840s and a seemingly endless change of Governors in the first 15 years, South Australia took off (Bull 1884:311).

Section 289, east of Adelaide - which would later become Kensington - was surveyed and sold only two years after the birth of the colony. It was quickly divided into 114 one acre allotments in 1839, which were then auctioned off at £12 each (Blackburn 1970:1). Two of the earliest known residents were Mr Marshall and John Roberts, Figures 14 and 15 show Roberts' house on Maesbury St, in the past and present.

![Figure 14 House built by John Roberts, 41 Maesbury Street, Kensington, date of photo unknown](image1)

![Figure 15 House built by John Roberts, 41 Maesbury Street, Kensington, 2008](image2)
Population

The population of South Australia (SA) quickly rose in the years following the first landing in 1836 due to a number of reasons. The first, and perhaps most significant, was the principle of systematic colonisation, which allowed for the assisted immigration of eligible persons from the United Kingdom (UK) using funds from the sale of land in the colony. This process, overseen by commissioners in London, helped populate SA with young and healthy men and women who were deemed to be of use to the colony, i.e. tradespeople and professionals.

The second reason for population growth in SA was the emerging mining industry. In 1843 the Australian Mining Company was formed, and a mining boom in SA soon followed (Pike 1957:302). Concentrated around the copper fields in Burra, but also active in the Adelaide Hills seeking gold and silver, the boom lasted through the gold rush period, helping to keep many men employed at home rather than leaving for the Victorian gold fields.

The five year period between 1847 and 1851 saw a massive shift in the population of SA, thanks partly to the Commissioners in London. Over 20,000 assisted migrants were sent through the immigration scheme, while a further 13,000 from the UK came unassisted. Additionally during this period, 4,000 migrants arrived from Germany and another 12,000 from other Australian colonies, combined totalling over 50,000 men, women and children, helping to triple the population to over 66,000 in just five short years (Pike 1857:311).

Whilst the gold rushes in Victoria and California during the early 1850s took many able bodied colonists out of SA in search of their fortune - Pike suggests that at least 27,000 people made return trips to the gold fields, while a further 10,000 left
permanently for Victoria (pg 455) – it is clear that this had little long term impact on
the overall growth of the colony, as can be seen from Figure 16. Pike suggests that
this exodus to the goldfields, which peaked in December 1850, was mainly seasonal,
with many returning home to SA for work (1957:445).

![Population of South Australia](image)

**Figure 16 Population of South Australia**

Figure 16 shows the dramatic increase in population during the first 40 years in the
colony, from only 546 people in 1836, to over 215,000 in 1876 (Bull 1884:413). The
decade with the biggest increase was 1846-1856, with over 70,000 extra people.

It is important to note for later discussion that during the period 1841-1851, which
loosely correlates with the highest period of immigration, the balance of men and
women within the colony remained relatively even – 1.2 males to every female in
1841, and 1.3 males to every female in 1851 (Jones 1991:25). It is also noted that by
1857 an overwhelming 52% of the population was 21 years of age and under, while
only 1% were over the age of 45 (Pike 1857: 457), but it is unclear what the cause of
this was.

On a local level, the population of Kensington reached over 10,000 in the 1880s, just
a fraction of the total population in SA at the time (Manning 2001:298).
Health

Poor health was an issue in South Australia until around the turn of the century, due to a general lack of medical knowledge and understanding of issues such as sanitation. Access to fresh, clean water became a major issue for health in the 1850s (Smith 1973), as did hygiene, with the lack of deep drainage for sewage and waste, only recognised in the 1890s. Until then, and particularly in Kensington, backyard cesspits and creek dumping of waste products were common and contributed to the problem of toxic soil saturation (Blackburn 1970:76). Manning describes the situation in Adelaide c.1870s, at a time when the Government was just starting to take notice of the rising sanitation and health issues:

Adelaide and its environs were the scene of fetid gutters, putrefying rubbish heaps, stagnant pools, stinking cellars, noxious trades and disease producing food. Further, many of our schoolrooms were ill-ventilated and many dwellings unsuitable for the climate, for they protected their inmates from neither winter cold nor summer heat (Manning 2001:292).

During this period infant mortality was high, with rates for the 1870s of ca 13-15%. Childhood diseases such as diphtheria, measles and whooping cough were common (Jones 1991:26). Manning (2001:146) identifies 1875 as having the highest death rate in SA in any 10 year period, with 30% of those deaths being of infants suffering from diseases such as scarlet fever and the measles To help combat childhood illness, The Adelaide Children's Hospital was opened in Adelaide in 1876; however long distances made it inaccessible for a majority of the population (Jones 1991:26).

In 1896 an eastern suburbs branch of the District Trained Nursing Society was established, with the appointment of a trained nurse to visit patients at home within the Kensington, Norwood and Payneham areas (Blackburn 1970:83). Offering
advice and treatment, the district nurse helped to prevent the spread of infection and
disease by seeing those who would otherwise be unable to get to a doctor or hospital.

The colony's health on the whole began to improve with the passing of the *Health Act* in 1898. This brought about stricter sanitary conditions, inspections of livestock and butchering premises, and rigid measures when dealing with infectious diseases (Blackburn 1970:77). The *Food and Drugs Act of 1908* was also influential in creating better conditions within shops and factories which produced food. As some indication of the effects of these Acts on public health, infant mortality in South Australia by 1901 had fallen slightly to 10%, and by 1936 it was down to just 3% (Jones 1991:26).

Another factor no doubt contributing to the decreasing infant mortality rate in Kensington and Norwood in particular was the establishment of a Norwood branch of the School of Mothers in 1914. Meeting once a week, the school weighed babies and gave advice to mothers about feeding, etc. and in later years even conducted home visits (Blackburn 1970:82).

Immunization programs were another way that health improved in SA after 1900. Although compulsory smallpox vaccination was legislated for in 1853, vaccinations for other diseases were not available until much later (Manning 2001). In 1941 diphtheria was targeted, when over 34% of children in the Kensington and Norwood area were vaccinated and whooping cough vaccinations began from 1949 (Blackburn 1970:80-81).
Discussion

With an understanding of what was happening around the Village Cemetery historically, some assumptions can now be made to understand the cemetery statistically.

Figure 5 shows that the number of burials at the Village Cemetery decreased significantly after 1864. This can be attributed to two factors; firstly, the split within the associated church in the early 1860s, which saw many members leave to join other congregations; and secondly, government legislation introduced in the 1860s which banned church ground burials in favour of centralised cemeteries, except where family plots existed. Theoretically this means that all those who were buried after the legislation was put into place should be able to be traced genealogically back to someone who was buried before. The change in denominations of the church next to the cemetery should have had little, if any, impact on the number of burials, as this occurred after the burial law came into being and therefore the various religious groups would not have utilised the cemetery.

Figure 4 also displays the relationship between male and female burials, showing that they remain virtually equal throughout the period of the cemetery's use, with males only slightly outnumbering female. Degner (2007:42) found that within children this equality was also apparent, except on only a few occasions This pattern is supported by Jones' (1991) analysis of male and female numbers within the colony, showing that males only slightly outnumbered females. The reason for this is unknown.
In Figure 6 we saw that infant mortality within the cemetery was very high, accounting for 45% of all burials. Degner's survey provided similar results, showing that 38% of all childhood deaths within her study were of infants (2007:40). These results correspond precisely with information gathered that showed that infant mortality in SA on the whole was very high in the 19th century, due mainly to poor sanitary conditions, the spread of disease and a lack of medical knowledge.

Figure 7 showed that infant mortality declined from 1869, virtually disappearing around the turn of the century, and was replaced by an increase in deaths of people over the age of 50 years. Degner's results again provided a similar outcome, with the number of childhood deaths decreasing from 1880 and into the 20th century (2007:42). Historically this can be accounted for by an increase in health provisions, medical knowledge and sanitation. It can be argued that due to this fewer children were dying, and people were beginning to live longer into old age.

Biographically, the results of this study have helped to paint a picture of who was living in the village and the kinds of information that is available on them. As a generalisation, it is possible to say that the village contained large family groups of predominately English origin. Most of the men in the sample groups had trades such as butchers and shoe makers, while none of the women were identified as having any occupation other than home duties. All of the sample families migrated early in South Australia's history, but it is unclear whether they were assisted. All of the families owned their own property, some even multiple properties, indicating that they were probably of the middle class. All of the families experienced the loss of an infant/s. These families all fit the profile for the types of people that were being selected for migration to South Australia – young, equal sexes, have trades and capital.
A strange pattern which appeared in the results was the seemingly random burial of family members. Seen more prominently within the Roberts family tree, wives but not husbands and some children but not siblings are buried at the cemetery. It is unclear why this had occurred, but in some cases, such as that of infant Leonora Roberts, it can be assumed that timing played a part. She died before the family split from the church, and during the peak period of the cemetery's use. This could therefore explain why she is there but not other members of her immediate family. Similarly, five of Josiah Blackeby's children died young, when the cemetery was still being used frequently, but the other five lived until old age, well after the cemetery's use had slowed; they may have also moved out of the area for work or family.

It is immediately apparent from the data that gaps exist in our knowledge of the past. Regulated information such as DOB, marriage, children is relatively easy to ascertain from government records; however, less important details such as memberships, occupation, religious views, and place of residence are harder to find. Details about personal reasoning, and decision making (choice of burial place for wife but not husband; one child but not others) etc., are virtually impossible to find because recording this sort of information is not required, as it is not pertinent to the running and maintaining of the council, state or country. It became evident during this investigation that women and children as individuals rate very low in the records. In fact, the only information gained on individual women for this report was from the Church register.

During the course of this research several issues and questions have arisen concerning the data. The first relates to the ACW burial list which has been used here to gather biographical data on the families (McRae 2005). This list, which is
based on the master APEX list, has been updated and modified by a member of the ACW; however the additional sources that author used for updating the list have not been supplied. Most significantly, it was found that many of the names had been changed from how they appear on the original APEX list, with no explanation as to why. Other information that has been added includes place of residence and parents names (See Appendix 2 for updated ACW list, as added to and altered by myself through the course of this research, using information previously cited in this report).

Another issue to come out of this research is the possibility of other burials, not listed on the APEX list. As mentioned previously, there was a smaller, earlier Chapel on High street, next to the Village Church, possibly built around 1844. As Church (and burial) records did not begin until 1847, the question arrises – were there earlier burials associated with the first Church? How do we find out? Similarly, after the Church changed hands and was no longer associated with the burial ground, who was looking after the records and overseeing burials? Are there family burials from after the 1860s not recorded? How do we find out?
Conclusions

This report has investigated the lives of those buried at the Village Cemetery and explored the climate within which their burials took place in order to provide a sound grounding from which further historical and archaeological research can take place in the future. The research questions addressed include:

1. What patterns can be identified from the register of burials?

2. Who were the people buried at the Village Cemetery? What did they do, where did they live and how did they die?

3. How do these people fit into the broader context of what was happening in South Australia at the time?

4. What gaps exist in our knowledge of the past?

Three lines of investigation were utilised in order to answer these questions. The statistical analysis, based on the burial lists from APEX and ACW, produced several graphs which helped highlight some of the facts regarding the cemetery data. In total there was found to be 551 recorded burials during the 113 years that the cemetery was in operation - 48% of these were male, 46% female, and 6% of an unknown sex. Of these, the overwhelming majority were children aged between zero and one (45%), indicating a high infant mortality rate within the Village. The years with the most burials were found to be 1854 and 1855, with 41 and 40 burials respectively. The rate of burials decreased significantly after 1864, with no more than 10 burials in any one year until the cemetery’s closure in 1962. Further analysis using sample
years showed that childhood deaths continued to dominate burials until around 1889, from which time the death rate of people over 50 years increased.

A comparison of the statistical data against research conducted in other 19th century South Australian cemeteries provided for some compelling similarities. A trend of high infant mortality in the mid-late 19th century, as well as equal male and female burials was evident across both studies. Additionally, both sets of analysis detect a decrease in childhood mortality in the later years of the 19th century.

Biographical research on three large family groups representing both child and adult burials provided some generalised results. All of the sample families migrated from England early in the colonisation process. All of the families owned land in Kensington and all of the adult men within the sample families had trades. At least one person in each family was active in the community either politically or through the church. None of the adult women were recorded as having occupations other than home duties, and all of the families experienced the loss of young children.

The historical background helped contextualise information gathered in the previous two investigations. It identified large population increases within the first four decades of the colony, particularly from 1846-1856 which saw numbers increase by 300%. Assisted migrants from England, selected for qualities such as youthfulness and for having trades and capital, were among the majority of immigrants. Poor health was established as major factor concerning colonists in the 19th century, due largely to unsanitary conditions and a lack of medical knowledge. However, changes to health regulations at the end of the 19th century, such as inspections, and the installation of deep drainage helped to improve the overall health of the colony, including infant mortality.
These three investigations have helped to construct a broader picture detailing what was happening at the Village Cemetery and within Kensington during the cemetery’s operation. We now know that the inhabitants of the Village were typical of the type of assisted migrants being selected for emigration to Australia. It can also be said that they had strong community values and close ties to the church. Although middle class, the Village inhabitants were still subject to the same insanitary conditions one might expect to see within the lower classes. As a result, illness, disease and death was commonplace in the Village as evidenced by the high burial records. Those most at risk were the young children, more susceptible to disease, and least fit to fight illness, a re-occurring issue seen throughout 19th century cemeteries. However, by the end of the 19th century, ideas about sanitation and health were advancing, and conditions started to improve. A focus on better living conditions, safe food practice and disease prevention saw a decrease in illness related deaths. A shift within the church and the abandonment of church yard burials saw the previously high number of burials at the Village Cemetery plummet after the 1860s. Improved health contributed to the near non-existent use of the church in the 20th century.

This report has succeeded in meeting the aims outlined in the introduction, by answering the research questions and providing a framework for future research. Further work to be carried out on this project will include a continuation of biographical research conducted in this study. A comparison of other families to those sampled in this investigation will provide a more balanced view of the lives of those buried at the Village Cemetery.
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Smith, R., 1973, 1850 - A very good year in the colony of SA, Shakespeare Head Press, Sydney

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Appendix 1

Biographical Worksheet

Name: ________________________________

______________________________

DOB: __________________________ Where born: __________________________

Parents' names: ________________________________

______________________________

Married: __________________________ Where married: __________________________

Spouse name: ________________________________

______________________________

Religion: ________________________________

Children: ________________________________

______________________________

Died: __________________________ Where died: __________________________

Where buried: __________________________ Cause of death: __________________________

______________________________

Residence: ________________________________

______________________________

Occupation: ________________________________

______________________________

Memberships and affiliations: ________________________________

______________________________

Land holdings: ________________________________

______________________________

Other information: ________________________________

______________________________

______________________________
Appendix 2