

# The Heritage Walkway

Dedicated to the Early Pioneers Who Settled Hahndorf



***Hahndorf Pioneers Left to Right:** Johann Wilhelm THIELE, Christoph LIEBELT [Friedrichstadt], Christian JAENSCH, Reinder van der MOLEN, Traugott JAENSCH, Johann Carl ALTMANN'  
Photo courtesy of LIEBELT Family Reunion Committee via Localwiki.*

The Heritage Walkway features seven free-standing interpretive signs along its length, each "Dedicated to the Early Pioneers Who Settled Hahndorf".

Its entrance is located between 20 Main St and Hahn Court. It was officially opened by Mark Goldsworthy MP on 17 October 2010 and is accessible to the public.

St Paul's Lutheran Homes wish to acknowledge the tireless effort made by Reg Butler (local historian) for preparing the written information on signs 1-5, Anni Luur Fox for her assistance and sketches that have been provided, and the inclusion of how Hahndorf was settled from prepared information by the late E. A. Wittwer.

The Heritage Walkway was initiated, designed and coordinated by John and Stephanie Wittwer on behalf of St Paul's Lutheran Homes and the township of Hahndorf. The project was sponsored by the Beerenberg Foundation.

**Please note:** All illustrations on the seven signs were drawn by Anni Luur Fox, however, not all of the sketches are included in this article.

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## Sign 1

### THEIR PREDECESSORS – THE PERAMANGK PEOPLE

Those remarkable fifty-four Prussian Lutheran refugee families who established the village of Hahndorf early in 1839 were not the first people to think of this area as home. Not by any means! For something over two millennia, an Aboriginal tribe named the Peramangk had roamed through the Adelaide Hills, roughly from modern-day Truro in the north to Myponga in the south.

According to legend, Aboriginal people of the Adelaide Plains believed that the Peramangk were the descendants of a part-human part-kangaroo husband, Pootpobberrie, and his wife, who decided to make the Adelaide Hills their permanent living quarters. Constantly on the move, this couple and their descendants learnt to survive in a climate often freezing in winter and rather warm in summer.

Short, though violent, spring and summer thunderstorms followed sustained winter deluges of rain. From time to time, lightning strikes burnt out huge tree trunks and swept through rank, tinder-dry vegetation. The Peramangk used the hollow gums for shelter and hunted down wild creatures fleeing into the open to escape advancing flames. All living things alike recognised the danger of remaining anywhere near watercourses about to burst into wild, uncontrolled flooding, which subsided as fast as it had begun.

On his inland journey during January 1839 to settle on the site of Hahndorf, Captain Hahn witnessed another kind of fire, whereby the Peramangk rubbed two long thin sticks together *so skilfully between their hands that the stick is burning briskly within two minutes at the most*. The men of the tribe formed a huge circle many kilometres in diameter, and after lighting many small fires in the straw dry grass around the circumference, directed the resulting flames in towards the centre of the circle.

Hahn continued: *The long dry grass, bushes and young trees burn fiercely; all the animals living in this area flee toward the centre, where the savages then catch them ... I had never before seen such a fire, and the fire burnt for some days.*

These dramatic conflagrations began at night during new moon, raced from hill to hill at amazing speed, and filled the surrounding countryside with thick billowing smoke, which newly arriving white settlers could see from far out to sea. William Finlayson, a young Church of Christ pastor landing in February 1837, remarked: *In the morning, a great change had taken place; the whole range was as black as midnight, except where the trees were burning.*

Filled with curiosity, the good minister joined a small exploration party through the hills during the 1837 Christmas holiday season. Sure enough, one of these dramatic burnings was under way at the same time: *Some in Adelaide thought we would never return, but be murdered by the natives, but, strange to say ... we never saw one ... Smoke in the distance we frequently saw, and came upon their recently occupied camping places, but themselves we saw not, but I have no doubt they saw and avoided us.*

Yes, the Peramangk people would have certainly been on watch! Today, rock lookout shelters still stand sentinel over the Adelaide Plains and the Murray Flats. The feared Peramangk were always on alert for Kurna and Murray River Aborigines about to enter the ranges, via one of the numerous river valleys. These lookouts also served as bases from which to send smoke signals to other tribal groups and to spot game which hunters could later seek out to vary the diet of hills dwellers.

Visiting Aboriginal people settled down in well-defined transit campsites from where they hoped to bargain for canoe bark, possum skins and quartz. In return, the visitors brought up various coloured ochres from localised deposits in the foothills, as well as flint from Murray-side cliffs, and deft, light spears made of mallee wood, in hopes of sealing numerous deals.

The site of present-day Hahndorf was unsuited for the Peramangk people to use year-round. During winter, chill winds often howled relentlessly through this open, park-like countryside. Such exposed territory was also regularly prone to sudden uncontrolled floods from a series of water-courses which eventually joined in several places near what is now the main street and then emptied out as a single volume of water into the Onkaparinga River several kilometres further west.

Wisely, the Peramangk made winter camp near the headwaters of the many streams and rivers higher up in the ranges. These people lived snugly in homes constructed of branches and bark, grass and leaves deftly intertwined around hollow-sided red gums. Such huge trees and thick stands of smaller wattles provided a bounteous natural habitat for a native moth grub, whose balls of cream flesh caterpillars tightly hidden among piles of damp, decayed wood was an especially delicious edible delicacy for the Peramangk.

Massing over the ranges, huge balls of wattle blooms heralded the coming of milder weather. In anticipation, Aboriginal gatherers were watchful for insect larvae, birds' eggs, young birds, and lizards which emerged as a result. As spring advanced, the Peramangk were coaxed into enjoying an outdoor existence in wurlies constructed of huge sheets of bark. For members of the Mount Barker Springs group, the pre-European site of Hahndorf was perfect. Those huge gums dotted irregularly over the valley provided limitless sources of building materials for summer residences.

While women and children generally stayed near the wurlies, to act as gatherers for berries, grubs and small game, the men formed hunting parties. Small sticks burnt holes in the bark of bare lower tree trunks to allow hunters working in pairs to climb up to raid the upper branches for possums, valuable for both skin and meat. Using only a slender spear and short club, Peramangk hunters in groups pitted their wits against kangaroos, wallabies, possums, and emus – either driving them into huge nets made from woven bulrushes, or spearing and clubbing unsuspecting creatures intent upon an evening drink at one of the area's convenient waterholes. The water itself also yielded yabbies, perch, mud fish and water rats.

Hahndorf's two large permanent waterholes, which the Peramangk called *Bukartillas* or *swimming places*, likewise proved ideal for collecting the above live food sources lurking in the cold, inky depths. Besides being places to swim, the Bukartillas also served as convenient venues for whole tribal daily ablutions and occasional initiation rites as children moved towards adulthood. Regular flooding kept these pools clean and clear for most of the year.

Following the excitement of a gathering and hunt, with the aid of the inevitable campfire, Peramangk women cooked welcome food, while their menfolk used the heat to fashion certain weapons. At night, the low fire embers provided light and warmth. On still, moonlit evenings, the Aboriginal people loved to relax nearby while skilled dancers

performed traditional corroborees to keep alive in dramatic fashion the folk memory of their culture for younger generations to absorb.

Captain Hahn also observed how the Peramangk instructed their children in the use of weapons: *They had set up a round wooden disc as big as a plate, at which they then took aim. Each child was lined up with his spear, then one of the old men placed himself at a distance of about twenty paces from them and rolled the disc along diagonally in front of the children. I saw them hit the disc several times when it was moving at its fastest.*

Hahn believed that the Peramangk women appeared more advanced than the men in using a great variety of life skills: *I saw a jacket there, made entirely of small opossum skins ... beautifully sewn ... A thread had been made from the gut of a kangaroo. A small bone, pointed at one end, served as the needle ...*

*Their children are soon able to fend for themselves. I was amazed at the little black people, who could scarcely have been a year old to judge by their size, already running about among the old ones and playing games as children do ... I ascribe it to their natural hardiness, as their body build is only slight.*

*A man whose word can be trusted told me that he had found a woman lying in childbirth under a tree in the morning ... and that in the afternoon he had seen the same woman walking around five miles away with her child on her back.*

However, Dirk Hahn was not overly impressed with the physical appearance of the Peramangk: *Their hair is stiff and so long that it hangs down to their shoulders. They have a liking for smearing fat into their hair and dyeing it red ... Their facial features are without exception very ugly. The upper part of the body is thick and clumsy, but they have quite thin loins and legs.*

For reasons not yet fully understood, by the time the Old Lutherans arrived to establish Hahndorf in early 1839, the Peramangk people had already begun to vacate much of their original territory. Prosaically, they were probably suffering from the ravages of smallpox transmitted from European adventurers moving down the Murray River a decade or more earlier.

After encountering the more recent arrivals, the Peramangk people near Hahndorf learnt some words of broken English and no doubt German, and more and more relied upon the incoming Europeans for food and other handouts. Hovering in an increasingly half-real world, the Peramangk simply melted away in the wake of the newcomers, whom they often regarded as ghostly re-incarnations of their own ancestors.

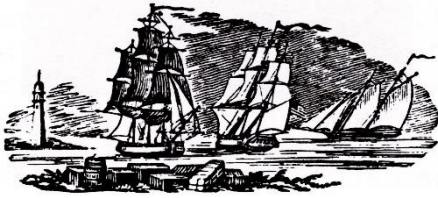
## Sign 2

### **WHY DID THEY EMIGRATE?**

For centuries, a vast stretch of land now forming the northern portion of modern neighbouring nations Germany and Poland was known as the Kingdom of Prussia. In 1830, its very religious king, Friedrich Wilhelm III, arbitrarily united the numerically small Reformed Church (to which he belonged) with the Lutheran Church of the majority of his

subjects. A small, scattered, but determined group of Lutherans refused to obey, and became known as Old Lutherans.

Hahndorf's founding pioneers belonged to one of the most stubborn cores of resistance to church union. These people were mostly of mixed German-Slavic ancestry, warm-hearted and tolerant, and greatly devoted to their homes and family and living a devout



Christian faith. Their homeland was a clutch of small villages covering the junction of the three Prussian provinces of Brandenburg, Silesia and Posen, some 200 kilometres south-east of Berlin, at the point where the usually slow moving Oder River swings sharply west to avoid steep granite cliffs on its way north to the Baltic Sea.

Continuous general encouragement for these protesters came from Dr JG Scheibel, both a University professor and the extremely able and inspiring Pastor of St Elisabeth's Lutheran Church in Breslau, the capital of Silesia. Locally, these particular Old Lutherans looked to Pastor August Kavel, pastor of the village of Klemzig, in Brandenburg, later to be joined by other Pastors, including GD Fritzsche and LFE Krause from parishes in Province Posen.

King Friedrich Wilhelm III expected trouble from this quarter of his domains. His great-grandfather, Friedrich Wilhelm I, had written way back in 1722: *The vassels [here] are always complaining ... but you must not take any notice of the complaints ... for they are mostly groundless, but that is their national habit.*

How badly the king misjudged the situation this time! Dramatically, influential Dr Scheibel was driven into exile to the neighbouring Kingdom of Saxony during 1832, after his congregation became one of the first in the nation to protest openly against the Union Church. As civil disobedience spread, two years later, in 1834, Friedrich Wilhelm III began active persecution of Old Lutherans.

Undeterred, Kavel resigned his Klemzig Union parish on Easter Monday 1835 and began a clandestine local ministry to keep loyal Old Lutheran followers now without a church strong in their faith. In July 1835, Krause was arrested at the end of an Old Lutheran service for the general public he held in the private chapel of a young nobleman Baron von Koszutski and his family at Gross Tschunkawe near Militsch in Posen; nearly two years' state imprisonment in various parts of Prussia followed for the pastor. Shortly before ordination as a minister in the Union Church, schoolteacher Fritzsche left that body in August 1835 to become a Lutheran pastor instead, and then, in constant fear for his freedom, established an underground travelling ministry to scattered groups of Old Lutherans in western Posen and northern Silesia.

Old Lutherans had to worship secretly inside private homes and barns and outdoors in deep forests. Bands of foot troops and hussars constantly combed the most restless areas of the Prussian countryside, and as detailed searches moved on, local civilians chosen at random had make their own homes available to quarter these forces. Wherever caught, worshipping Old Lutherans were surrounded and summarily dealt with. Records show

that some persons, including women, were severely beaten at whim on the spot before being released.

As a result, single adults and heads of families, together with their pastors, faced heavy fines at first and then imprisonment and/or confiscation of private property for repeated failure to join the Union Church. Occasionally, it was not unknown for some imprisoned Old Lutherans to be starved within an inch of their lives. Despite strenuous protests, the Prussian Government refused to relent, and for some six years daily existence continued to be unbearably hard for these people.

At least two future Hahndorf founding families were amongst those who suffered significantly during these tumultuous times. Johann George Kuchel was fined fifty Thaler for deciding to have his children prepared for confirmation by a Lutheran pastor instead of a Union pastor. Samuel Thiele ended up in court over a similar situation and eventually had his household goods seized and his cottage sold to pay the fifty Thaler fine and the court costs.

Most unwillingly, for they dearly loved their native land, significant numbers of Prussian Old Lutherans eventually set their hearts on emigration. North America and Russia were considered at first. However, on an investigative visit to Hamburg in 1836, Pastor August Kavel heard from the city's helpful chief of police about the British colony of South Australia, in the process of being founded, where all settlers would enjoy freedom of religious belief. Because South Australia guaranteed the one thing which the persecuted Old Lutherans so ardently desired, Kavel inspired his large congregation to go there, despite knowing very little else about the place.

Kavel departed for London to persuade GF Angas, the astute but compassionate Baptist Christian businessman and Chairman of the South Australia Company, which had charge of the arrangements for the new settlement, to induce the promoters to lend his flock the money to make the journey. No doubt thrilled at the prospect of gaining immediate valuable skilled labour for their massive project, Angas and his backers agreed, and Kavel remained in England until the emigration, ministering to Germans living near the London docks and perfecting his command of English. Little did the faithful pastor imagine what a time would pass until he was re-united permanently with his congregation.

Numbers of families in August Kavel's congregation split permanently over who would emigrate and who would remain. In a horrific mix of excitement and frustrations, those people departing quickly had to dispose of their real estate and most of their belongings, and procure passports from a most reluctant Prussian Government which placed daunting obstacles in their path. The ships which Angas and his company despatched to Hamburg to pick up their passengers on the arranged date in 1836 had to return empty to England and the South Australia Company lost a great deal of money as a result. Most of the would-be emigrants were forced to live off precious meagre capital, which dwindled quickly, and endure cruel taunts from their neighbours who were staying put.

Two more years passed! At last, King Friedrich Wilhelm III and his government could wrangle no longer. The Prussian bureaucrats were becoming more and more a national and international laughing-stock. Passports were issued and the emigrants given a mere two months to get out of Prussia. Somehow, Kavel and his flock persuaded GF Angas to

lend them their passage money out of his own resources, a mighty gesture which immediately strained his finances severely. The last minute flurry of preparations for departure must have tested already exhausted stout hearts to the limit yet again.

Pastor Kavel's congregation were trailblazers. Krause's flock bound in several groups for North America were able to leave during 1839. Pastor Fritzsche's followers departed for South Australia in 1841, after Friedrich Wilhelm III died in 1840 and his much more understanding son, Friedrich Wilhelm IV, came to the throne. Persecution of Old Lutherans ceased, but the Prussian burning interest to emigrate to South Australia and neighbouring colonies, for reasons other than religious, continued to swell for some forty years, before dropping away suddenly.

### **AUGUST LUDWIG CHRISTIAN KAVEL**

Lutheran Pastor at Hahndorf 1839-1858

August Ludwig Christian Kavel was born on 3 September 1798 at Berlin, the eldest son of a poor tailor, Albrecht Kavel and his wife, Charlotte nee Fillgrat. Proud of their son's intellectual abilities, the Kavels ensured that their talented child was at length able to enrol as a theological student at Berlin University, supporting himself as a part-time private tutor to largely finance his studies. Upon graduation, Kavel then tutored full-time for a number of years until he was all ordained as a pastor of the Prussian Union State Church and appointed full-time minister of the parish of Klemzig (with Harthe and Goltzen) in south-eastern Brandenburg during 1826.

Pastor Kavel possessed a magnetic personality, and successfully encouraged many people in the community to become fervent Christians. These believers eventually followed Kavel into taking up membership of the Lutheran Church during 1835 and then joining him in the great migration to South Australia three years later to escape the resulting severe persecution for their faith.

Both personally and professionally, Kavel's subsequent career in South Australia turned out less than idyllic. Shortly before leaving England, he had become engaged to an English woman, Anne Catherine Pennyfeather, and they married in 1840 at Klemzig, shortly after she arrived in South Australia to join him. Mrs Kavel died at Klemzig in childbirth on Christmas Day 1841. A decade later, in 1851, after managing with the services of housekeepers both at Hahndorf and Langmeil, Kavel married his Langmeil housekeeper, the widowed Johanne Beate Irrgang, who had immigrated as a young single woman amongst his followers abroad the Prince George during 1838.

The problems of properly settling the Old Lutheran pioneers into their new homes during these same years must have proved challenging indeed. Unfortunately, Kavel quarrelled irreconcilably with significant members of his flock, but particularly at Hahndorf during this process. Worn out physically and emotionally from his unsettled life, Pastor Kavel died in his residence at Langmeil as a result of a stroke on 12 February 1860, during a typical South Australian summer heatwave.

Huge crowds attended Kavel's funeral in the adjoining cemetery several days later. Even though not always able to agree to live happily together, almost universally, the members of the infant South Australian Lutheran Church generously acknowledged the debt they

owed to their uniquely gifted leader for paving the way for them all to enjoy a better life in a foreign land.

## Sign 3

### **FROM WHERE, AND WHEN DID THEY LEAVE?**

Unprecedented mild spring weather greeted some 500 members of Pastor Kavel's Old Lutheran congregation who began to assemble beside the Oder River downstream from the river crossing bridge at Tschicherzig in early May 1838. The vast majority of them had never undertaken a lengthy river journey before, let alone a long voyage across oceans which they had never seen and could scarcely imagine. Who amongst the company suddenly remembered the Prussian king's recent forceful warning that the whole emigration idea was indeed a very ill-conceived scheme involving great risks? Certainly there would have been no idea of founding new villages to inspire and comfort these risk-takers. But there was no turning back now.

Forming a first group, some 200 travellers went aboard two long, flat-bottomed river barges on Friday 8 June 1838. Next day, thousands of onlookers gathered on the river banks and the wooden bridge crossing the Oder to watch the leave-taking. Similar scenes accompanied several later departures soon afterwards. Never before had such a huge contingent of people left this part of the world at one time. Not surprisingly, the 1838 emigration to South Australia would be remembered in the area for years to come.

Once several formal and countless informal expressions of farewell shouted across the water had concluded, the epic journey commenced. Further curious crowds blocked bridge crossings all the way the barges took by river and canal to Berlin, with very mixed exchanges from well-wishers and detractors at each point. Led by their elders, the emigrants kept up a continuous succession of prayers and hymns to remain cheerful and firm of purpose.

Progress was slow, as water in the Oder was unusually low, because catchment rains had been poor for some time in the Upper Silesian mountains to the south. Occasionally, the barges moored near the many river-side towns, and passengers had the opportunity to go ashore for a period to stretch their legs. The fit and able-bodied had further chance for exercise when hand-tugging and heaving along thick ropes while helping guide the barges through the Friedrich Wilhelm Canal. It took a fortnight to reach the Prussian border and then another week of travel along the Elbe River to Hamburg where the sea journey would begin.

In the bustling harbour, the huge vessel *Prince George* and the much smaller *Bengalee* lay at anchor, ready for the long voyage to South Australia. Fourteen of Hahndorf's founding families made their way there in one or other of these two ships, the *Prince George* also stopping at Plymouth in England in order to take Pastor Kavel aboard. Because the majority of the passengers hailed from the village of Klemzig, the *Prince George* later was often referred to as the *Klemziger Schiff*.

Even before this initial group of people had sailed from Hamburg on Sunday 8 July 1838, another two barges bearing further Old Lutherans reached the harbour. These folk



numbering some 200 had to board their vessel, the Danish ship *Zebra*, on 29 July 1838, at Altona, a Danish river port downstream from Hamburg. Media and general public interest in the emigration was absolutely intense and many visitors arrived to talk to the passengers and inspect the ship. Most of these emigrants would eventually form the bulk of Hahndorf's founding families.

After more than a month of final preparations, including the pauper burial of several children who died suddenly, the *Zebra* left Altona harbour on Sunday morning 12 August 1838, watched from both river banks by a crowd of people *too many to be counted*. The *Zebra* would later be referred to as the *Kayer Schiff*, because most of its passengers originated from Kay, a sizable village a few kilometres to the west of Klemzig.

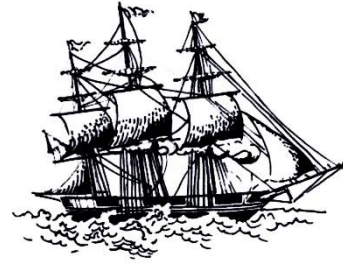
Soon after, back at Hamburg's main harbour, some forty more Old Lutheran families who also had August Kavel as their pastor had just arrived after that same Oder river journey, but originating from the western border areas of Province Posen with Brandenburg. Scenes similar to those which had accompanied the loading and departure of the three earlier vessels were played out for the *Catharina*, which left Hamburg for South Australia on Friday 21 September 1838. A handful of future Hahndorf founding families was aboard. Not surprisingly, the *Catharina* would become identified for future generations as the *Posener Schiff*.

None of the four captains and their crews had ever been to Australia before, let alone to South Australia, and the ships' owners had to stand the cost of purchasing accurate chronometers, as well as expensive maps which might never be used again. The ships' hulls had to be specially caulked and sheathed to withstand the strain of sailing through oceans containing widely differing navigational conditions. To increase the likelihood of a more profitable undertaking, as much general cargo as could safely be brought aboard for South Australia was loaded, with detailed instructions for obtaining possible return goods from the East Indies and elsewhere to help fill the empty ships. All these matters were included in detailed charter contracts which all parties concerned gathered to sign. From then on, the captain and crew on the *Prince George*, the *Bengalee* and the *Catharina* could concentrate solely on the practical tasks for undertaking their voyage safely.

Pastor Kavel and GF Angus's attorney, Charles Flaxman, had the support of the congregation's elders to maintain sound order amongst the passengers aboard the *Prince George*, which completed its journey to South Australia in good time and without undue incident. The eight families of Pastor Kavel's congregation and several independent ones sailing in the tiny *Bengalee* managed their own affairs at sea, although the consumptive ship's doctor, Dr Satterup, understandably caused quite a stir by dying suddenly while enjoying his early morning cup of coffee and a cigar. Similarly, the *Catharina* passengers settled down contentedly under the guidance of several congregational elders and a teacher of severely disciplinarian qualities, Friedrich Krumnow.

For everyone aboard the *Zebra*, events proved not so fortunate. The idea was for the ship's doctor, a young Danish physician named Dr Mathiesen, to be generally responsible for good order amongst the passengers and report any problems to Captain Hahn for his final judgement. Not long out of medical school, Mathiesen lacked life experience. He made poor decisions under pressure when trying to cope with multiple medical

emergencies arising from the extreme tropical heat, occasional severe ocean storms and unfamiliar diet experienced during the voyage. Recorded Hahn in his journal: *Scurvy had also affected many of [the passengers] and increased their suffering, for they had very swollen feet and legs, and their teeth became loose in their mouths.* Eventually, frazzled Mathieson quarrelled irreconcilably with his patients and their families.



Unrest spread. Sickly passengers showing little improvement, and with idle time on their hands, began fighting with each other over the most trivial matters. Church elders even held rival worship services at opposite ends of the *Zebra*, both groups endeavouring to out-sing and out-preach each other.

Fortunately, Dirk Hahn understood the situation perfectly. Indeed a most humane person, from the time of leaving Altona, he had made it a habit to talk to individual passengers whenever possible and was soon left in no doubt of their fine character under normal conditions. Captain Hahn had to work hard personally, and inspire his crew to join him as well, to restore and then maintain sound order for the greater part of the *Zebra's* voyage. The captain wrote copious notes outlining many of the troubles in case evidence was needed for what he felt would end up in numerous court cases in South Australia.

Shortly before Christmas Day, an elderly woman died at sea, her last illness caused by dissension in her family, so she announced on her deathbed. Suddenly, on 27 December 1838, land loomed ahead at midday. Voyage tribulations slipped away from mind. Passengers shouted for joy to glimpse Kangaroo Island. A day later, the second anniversary of South Australia's proclamation, the *Zebra* anchored off Holdfast Bay, the first non-British vessel to arrive in the colony since European settlement.

Rather more modestly than at Altona, the *Zebra* and its passengers nevertheless quickly became the centre of attention. Groups of prominent colonists clambered aboard and inspected conditions minutely, proclaiming themselves highly satisfied with the blooming health and dignified behaviour of the Old Lutherans decked out in their neatest Sunday best. Into the bargain, the ship itself had been especially cleaned and spruced up. Detailed congratulatory news items duly appeared in the newspapers to inform the wider community.

Amid much joy at being re-united, Pastor Kavel also arrived to live on board the *Zebra* with his flock, while Captain Hahn went ashore to begin talking with further government officials and influential private citizens. Some of the adult passengers risked wading ashore as well, accompanied by a number of the children carried on the backs of kindly sailors, all intent on having a closer glimpse at their new homeland.

Unfortunately, conditions were unsatisfactory for South Australia's newest colonists and cargo to be unloaded at Holdfast Bay. Further delay followed while the *Zebra* waited for favourable winds to move slowly northward along the coast towards Port Adelaide. Under the guidance of the harbour pilot, the *Zebra* cautiously manoeuvred safely across the entrance bar and anchored in the harbour basin, ready for a convoy of lighter boats in

relays to commence the slow business of transferring passengers and cargo to dry land. The date was 2 January 1839.

More than six weeks earlier, the *Prince George* and the *Bengalee* had arrived at Port Adelaide on 18 November 1838, while the *Catharina* anchored some three weeks after the *Zebra*, on 20 January 1839. Some five hundred German-speaking Prussians were at last free to roam, suddenly faced with the huge challenge of adapting to life in a British colony, where just about everything was completely out of their experience.

## Sign 4

### WHERE SHOULD THEY LIVE?

Regularly, history repeats itself! As Pastor Kavel had persisted until he had found a way to take his congregation out of Prussia, so Captain Hahn busied himself at Holdfast Bay, Port Adelaide and Adelaide to find the best place for his passengers to settle permanently. Meanwhile, many of those recovered enough from their trials in Prussia and the long sea voyage began finding short-term employment in and around the port, both to help ease the tedium of yet more waiting and to amass precious capital towards meeting the heavy expenses which lay ahead in daily life.

Fluent in English, Hahn managed to speak with the Colonial Treasurer, Osmond Gilles, and a number of other influential colonists. However, they lacked the imagination to see the wider benefit for South Australia of providing enough fertile land for hard-working but penniless Prussian newcomers to be able to establish a settlement of their own design.

Desperate as they were, the *Zebra* passengers roundly rejected a plan for settling down next to that portion of Pastor Kavel's congregation already living on land rented from GF Angus, upstream on the Torrens River a short distance from Adelaide. The new South Australian village of Klemzig lacked room for expansion and the soil was too rocky for intensive agriculture. *Fit for only miserable heads of cabbages*, agreed Captain Hahn.

However, one of the English colonists who had initially refused to treat with Dirk Hahn, eventually appeared again, prepared this time to do business. William Hampden Dutton was the eldest of an entrepreneurial band of brothers who had spent their childhood in Cuxhaven (another port across the Albe River downstream from Hamburg), where their father was British Vice-Consul and packet steamer agent.

While talking with Dutton earlier, Hahn happily realised that he had made friends in Europe with another of these brothers some years previously. This link would prove pivotal half a world away. The Duttons had immigrated to New South Wales, and WH Dutton was briefly in South Australia to offload a profitable cargo of live sheep and cattle brought by sea from Portland, and also to deal in land. Groomed in diplomatic circles from his earliest youth, Dutton thus possessed charming manners, and always greeted Hahn politely whenever they met after that revelatory first conversation.

Shortly after Hahn and Dutton had met for the first time, WH Dutton fell in with two other entrepreneurial gentlemen both recently arrived in South Australia with overlanded herds of cattle. They were none other than his step-father-in-law John Finnis, a

commercially minded sea captain from Dover in Kent, England, and a by now elderly Scottish adventurer, Duncan MacFarlane. Through family ties or commercial concerns, all three already knew each other well and had cooperated with highly profitable livestock trading in New South Wales.

Prior to that crucial Hahn-Dutton encounter in SA, a far distant British government worried that land surveys in the new colony were not proceeding quickly enough because there was not enough money to hire surveyors. Something innovative and practical had to be done – without delay. Official news reached South Australia in late 1838 that in return for cash, therefore, substantial investors might care to finance the survey of 15,000 acres of land in return for outright ownership of 4,000 acres of their own choice from that land.

Messrs Dutton, Finnis and MacFarlane acted fast. In January 1839, they raised the finance to purchase the First or Mount Barker Special Survey, to the east of Adelaide, in the well-watered valleys of the Adelaide hills. Here, John Finnis had already established a rudimentary cattle station to rest and fatten his overloaded life stock before offering for sale on the Adelaide market.

Leaving his passengers to talk further with Charles Flaxman over possibility of settlement on any other portion of GF Angas's land, Dirk Hahn accepted an invitation to join WH Dutton and some friends setting out early on 24 January 1839 on a several day pleasure excursion to the Mount Barker Special Survey. These two gentlemen travelled comfortably together in one carriage, followed by a second conveyance containing group of ladies, the party escorted by twelve men on horseback and followed by a number of servants on foot presumably to cook and serve the well-catered meals provided.

It must have been late in the afternoon when Messrs Hahn and Dutton eventually stood on the prominent hill on the northern edge of the well grassed and sparsely timbered valley where Hahndorf now stands. Quietly, the captain tested the soil to gain an idea of its fertility and noted the wonderful quantity of fresh water available, even at the height of a dry, hot summer. Immediately, he knew that this was the spot where his passengers should settle; however, he carefully kept his thoughts to himself. Waiting nearby at John Finnis's cattle station where the tents, plus a pigsty built out of sods hastily adapted for overnight accommodation for Messrs Hahn and Dutton, where the adventurers would spend the night. *The best tent of course was for the ladies* noted Hahn in courtly fashion in his comprehensive diary.

Next day featured an early morning noisy kangaroo hunt and a scrambled climb to the summit of Mount Barker. Here, Dirk Hahn proudly carved *DMH von der Zebra Altona 1839* in the trunk of the tallest and biggest tree. Later, after a satisfying lunch, the company rested under the welcome shade of several prominent gum trees nearby their tents. Cautiously, Hahn and the three landowners gradually revealed how pleased they would indeed all be for the Prussian religious refugees to settle here.

Calmly, Captain Hahn drove a comprehensive bargain. 150 acres of land would be made available on fair credit finance for a village and accompanying farm land, rent-free for the first year, with the settlers receiving free food until they could produce enough of their own to support themselves. Moreover, the landowners would also fund on credit the

costs of transferring the pioneers and their possessions from Port Adelaide to the new settlement.

Without prompting, Messrs Dutton, Finnis and MacFarlane were prepared to be even more generous. They would pay for a church and school to be erected in the new village, provided the settlers acted as labourers during the building. Moreover, the trio would contribute handsomely towards the annual salary of the pastor and teacher, and also share in the cost of employing Hermann Kook, a capable cabin passenger aboard the *Zebra*, as general supervisor of the new settlement. All these terms would be valid for a year at a time, with opportunity for extension if matters turned out well.

The deal was sealed immediately between the two parties, with a view to a formal contract if the *Zebra* passengers also agreed to the arrangement. Bargaining had lasted some two hours. Just after 1:00pm, Captain Hahn returned alone to Adelaide, in the company of one of the servants to prevent him from becoming lost on the way. Next day, the good captain was early bound for Port Adelaide.

Fortunately, the *Zebra* passengers had refused to come to any agreement with Charles Flaxman until they had consulted with the captain. Shouting for joy, accompanied by tears streaming down their faces, the stateless Prussians could hardly believe their good fortune when Hahn explained what he had been able to achieve for them. *If God were to grant me only a part of all the blessings that the good people called upon him to give me, then it is certain that nothing unpleasant would ever happen to me*, confided Dirk Hahn to his already momentous diary.

Captain Hahn would shortly be showered with further honour. On 28 January 1839, his thirty-fifth birthday, the three landowners read out the settlement terms outlined in the formal contract to the assembled *Zebra* passengers. Furthermore, Messrs Dutton and his two partners declared the new village would be named Hahndorf in remembrance of the worthy captain who had shown such dedicated care for his people.

South Australia's infant media duly filed glowing reports of proceedings in the next day's press, managing to refer to WH Dutton as *Mr Dotton* in the process. Only the cynical would remark that the three speculators could afford to be generous, considering that they had made 700% profit on unimproved land they had purchased only a fortnight previously.

Suddenly, all was a stir in the by now vermin-filled sheds and rough huts with the *Zebra* passengers had languished at Port Adelaide for the better part of an extremely hot January, living partly off the surplus stores from the voyage. The time had come for Hahn and his passengers to take what would be a final emotional farewell of each other before the *Zebra* left port Adelaide on 12 February 1839 on its return voyage to Europe. No doubt, Hahn had his hands more than full, what with offering encouragement to Hahndorf's founders about to leave for the Adelaide Hills, amid finalising arrangements for his own imminent departure from South Australia.

Hermann Kook and his assistants had already journeyed to Hahndorf's site, engaged then for something like a month in laying out the allotments for the first permanent white settlement in the Adelaide Hills, and on the first land ever bought by Germans in South Australia into the bargain.

Fourteen families from the *Prince George*, in addition to a handful of families from both the *Bengalee* and the *Catharina*, decided to join the *Zebra* passengers in the great adventure of town building. What a sight must have unfolded for the British population to witness some of Hahndorf's foundation settlers lumping their earthly possessions on their backs, others pushing and pulling rough, awkwardly loaded hand carts they had built at port Adelaide, while the few prosperous souls bumped and lumbered along in hired bullock wagons.

Slowly and painfully the straggly cavalcade crossed the dusty Adelaide Plains and began the steep ascent into the Hills. Most of the walkers moved forward a short distance with portion of their worldly goods, which they then left temporarily while retracing their steps for another load to bring along to that point.

Sheltered from summer heat by ferns, trailing creepers and tall trees, the village builders made their difficult way across the rocky Adelaide Hills. Long grass was moulded into comfortable beds for the night while convenient pools provided excellent drinking water when needed. Above and ahead flew multi-coloured cockatoos, parrots and parakeets, singing out and fluttering from branch to branch in the magnificent big gum trees.

To the rear, the Adelaide Plains stretched out in the hazy summer heat. Much activity could be observed on huts and houses rising to form the infant city of Adelaide, while to the right of this, the hand of pioneers' fellow Prussians could be viewed busily engaged in *building their huts in peasant fashion from foliage and branches to create the village of Klemzig*.

Following a fiery sundown across a glittering gulf, a flood of bright stars twinkled overhead, as the motley cavalcade enjoyed well-deserved overnight rest in the virgin bushland. Never had the fatherland provided such a glorious sight. Apparently, the words of Paul Gerhard's well-loved evening hymn rang out in perfect unaccompanied harmony as the overlanders relaxed:

Now all the heavenly splendour  
Breaks forth in Starlight tender  
From myriad worlds unknown;  
And man, the marvel seeing,  
Forgets his selfish being,  
For joy of beauty not his own.

In early March 1839, the first groups of toiling Prussians reached the deep Onkaparinga River, full of fish swimming unafraid in the clear water. Dense scrub suddenly gave way to a narrow grassed plain dotted with huge trees. Only a short distance further, this flat land led into a wide valley of similar vegetation forming a natural pound. Mission accomplished!

The elders led Hahndorf's founders in a service of thanksgiving in the shade of a magnificent red gum tree growing with the main street now runs just before reaching the town's former flour mill. Some ten months of relentless travel kept strengthened by faith in God, halfway across the world, to a secure destination required proper time for an outpouring of sincere community gratitude before further development commenced.

What became of the three speculators who had made this great dream possible? WH Dutton returned to Australia's eastern colonies to pursue other money-making schemes which happened to cross his path. He died in Melbourne during 1849, in the wake of a debilitating bankruptcy. Bachelor Duncan Macfarlane beset by severe old age infirmity's, retired to an estate in the foothills at Glen Osmond, when he died quietly in 1859. Only John Finnis appears to have taken any obvious long term interest in the Hahndorf pioneers, as well as the settlers in the rest of the Mount Barker Special Survey. He visited Hahndorf regularly to keep in touch with the townsfolk 's welfare and is reputed to have donated the bell for the new St Michael's Lutheran Church opened in 1859. Captain Finnis died quietly at his Franklin Street Adelaide residence during 1872.

## Sign 5

### **THE FIRST PLANNED SETTLEMENT EAST OF MOUNT LOFTY**

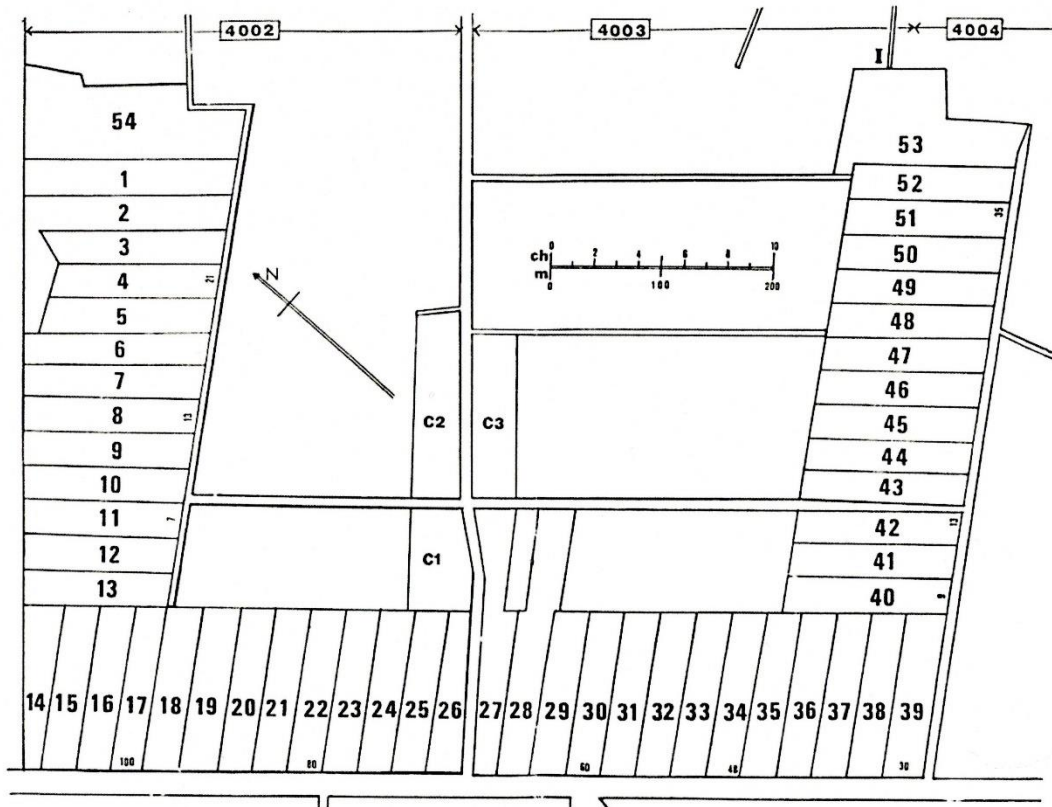
Hahndorf's founding families were singularly fortunate to have the services of a certain Hermann Kook, a native of the Hanse City of Lubeck, a wealthy mercantile centre bordering on the North Sea. Knowledgeable in both agriculture and surveying, he was just the right person for the responsibility to lay out Hahndorf's allotment and field boundaries and roads, and afterwards encourage self-sufficiency in food production.

Something of an adventurer in his early 30s Kook came out as a cabin passenger in the *Zebra*. He was therefore well acquainted with most of Hahndorf's foundation citizens long before they all arrived in South Australia, very handy knowledge, as for two years, he also acted as Mayor, *a paid official, but his wages were not high, to help settle minor disputes amongst the settlers.*

Hermann Kook and a small group of assistants set out for the site of Hahndorf probably in early February 1839, and thus could work undisturbed for about a month before the first settlers began to arrive.

In high summer heat, Kook laid out the town on the land where his fellow passengers abroad the *Zebra* had agreed to live. He chose the time-honoured Hufendorf plan of mediaeval Germanic origin. The 54 foundation families lived in a U arrangement of their house allotments while their often odd-shaped farm blocks filled up the centre and ranged around the outside of the U. What is now Hahndorf's main street ran along the base of the U.

Kook possibly chose this design simply because he was familiar with it. Originally, in Europe, the Hufendorf had been created for people to protect themselves and their property as quickly and securely as possible against enemies. Such considerations were irrelevant here in South Australia, but Hermann Kook no doubt soon realised that this design also allowed a majority of the house allotments direct access to one of the several streams and a better chance for the settlers to share equably the patchy good soil. Captain Hahn had happened to examine excellent ground on his one visit to the area, but it was subsequently found that it was not like that throughout the valley where Hahndorf was situated.



*The Hufendorf Plan*

**LOT No. and Probable Settler**

**North Lane (now Victoria Street)**

- |     |  |               |
|-----|--|---------------|
| 54. | Wundke J G   | ?             |
| 1.  | No original occupier, maybe the surveyor Hermann Kook – Zebra              |               |
|     | <i>Author's Note: E A Wittwer records Hoffmann J M (Widow) as occupier</i> |               |
| 2.  | Behrend G  | Zebra         |
| 3.  | Nitschke F W   | Zebra         |
| 4.  | Pfeiffer J G   | Zebra         |
| 5.  | Schirmer F G   | Zebra         |
| 6.  | Dohnt J G  | Zebra         |
| 7.  | Hoffmann J G   | Prince George |
| 8.  | Schulz D E (Widow)   | Zebra         |
| 9.  | Thomas E A   | Bengalee      |
| 10. | Liebelt J G  | Prince George |
| 11. | Paech J F  | Zebra         |
| 12. | Hartmann J G   | Prince George |
| 13. | Suess J F  | Zebra         |

**Main Street**

- |     |              |       |
|-----|--------------|-------|
| 14. | Schubert J C | Zebra |
|-----|--------------|-------|



|                   |               |
|-------------------|---------------|
| 15. Liebelt J C   | Zebra         |
| 16. Thiele J F    | Prince George |
| 17. Thiele S      | Prince George |
| 18. Wittwer J F W | Zebra         |
| 19. Jaensch J C E | Prince George |
| 20. Rillricht G   | Zebra         |
| 21. Zilm G        | Prince George |
| 22. Jaensch C     | Zebra         |
| 23. Lubasch G     | Zebra         |
| 24. Neumann G     | Zebra         |
| 25. Schultz J C   | Zebra         |
| 26. Steike S      | Zebra         |
| 27. Boehm J G     | Zebra         |
| 28. Kuchel J S    | Prince George |
| 29. Liebelt J C   | Zebra         |
| 30. Janetzki J G  | Zebra         |
| 31. Nitschke J G  | Zebra         |
| 32. Linke J G     | Catharina     |
| 33. Jaeschke J G  | Catharina     |
| 34. Thiele J C    | Prince George |
| 35. Bartsch J S   | Zebra         |
| 36. Zilm J C      | Prince George |
| 37. Paech J G     | Zebra         |
| 38. Bartel J C    | Zebra         |
| 39. Schirmer J C  | Zebra         |

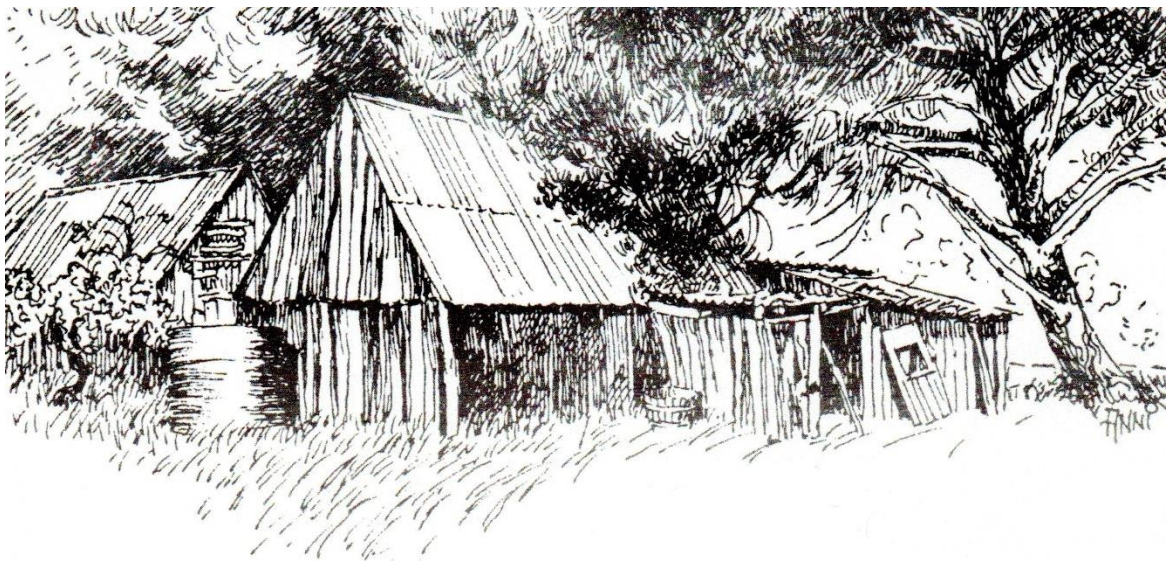
**South Lane (now English Street)**

|                       |               |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| 40. Lange J G         | Catharina     |
| 41. Kuchel J G        | Prince George |
| 42. Nitschke J G      | Zebra         |
| 43. Schmidt G         | Zebra         |
| 44. Brettig S         | Zebra         |
| 45. Fliegert J G      | Catharina     |
| 46. Pfeiffer J G      | Zebra         |
| 47. Kluge J E (Widow) | Zebra         |
| 48. Paech J F         | Zebra         |
| 49. Bartel G          | Zebra         |
| 50. Zimmermann J F    | Zebra         |
| 51. Philipp A         | Prince George |
| 52. Helbig E (Widow)  | Zebra         |
| 53. Kalleske J G      | Prince George |

Hahndorf 's original survey plan also allowed for a large number of permanent narrow parallel seed beds to be established in several places where the soil happened to be constantly damp for raising new plants prior to planting out in the farmland. Details of the lottery system used to allocate the house blocks and the farm lands as fairly as possible unfortunately have not survived.

Hahndorf is widely recognised as possessing the original town plan posing the most problems for adapting to modern living conditions in South Australia. Here and there, minor fundamental adjustments are still going on.

During the 1839 autumn, Hahndorf's fifty-four founding families gradually assembled for the first time. At first, home consisted of huge sheets of gum tree bark arranged around the trunk of convenient gum trees, after the style of the Peramangk Aborigines. Working as fast as was practicable in the face of the approaching winter the settlers fashioned long poles to form the basic framework for their first permanent dwellings. Over this, generous swathes of thick native kangaroo grass some two metres long, were laid to create houses which were warm in winter and cool in summer. Huge squares of bleached calico stretched over movable frames served as windows. Hard beaten down earth covered by mats woven from imported and local materials became a floor.



Initially, the pioneers had to rely on the judicious use of the poultry, pigs and milch cows, together with other basic food items (e.g. rice flour, maize flour and potatoes) which Messrs Dutton, Finnis and MacFarlane supplied as part of the initial agreement with Captain Hahn. A supplement to this daily diet consisted of ingeniously cooked native herbs, served with the meat of whatever suitable native animals, birds and fish could be caught in the area, apparently under the guidance of the local Peramangk Aborigines, who began to get on well with Prussian housewives. Comparison of methods of care regarding the two groups' respective children quickly helped form further friendly bonds.

Steadily, the rudiments of a sustainable economy began to emerge. Together, Hahndorf's founders could muster a remarkable complement of skills to bring prosperous order to daily life. Simple light ploughs fashioned from local wood were pulled by bullock's and sometimes even the farmers' wives, while their menfolk laid out the furrows ready for

seed planting in virgin soil on the many narrow farm blocks. Within weeks, able bodied women in single file on foot set out several times a week shortly after midnight, bearing the first harvests of fast growing vegetables together with home-made butter to satisfy eager customers at the early morning Adelaide market.

All able bodied men we kept constantly busy erecting the necessary structures needed to conduct mixed farming at Hahndorf. As they could, the settlers hired themselves out as labourers for building projects, as well as seasonal work in shearing and harvest on the estates of the neighbouring British landowners.



Precious funds became available to better secure Hahndorf's prosperity, as well as to begin repaying the ship debt for the 1838 emigration from Prussia. By 1841, the town's original fifty acres of land had expanded to a little over 200. Settlers began to purchase further milch cows, pigs, horses and bullocks. These were marked with a different government registered brand for each of the 54 families. Daily herdsmen watched over livestock on the common grazing ground established on the outskirts of Hahndorf and brought the animals home at sundown.

School-going children received their first lessons in John Finnis's former shepherd's hut somewhere near the main street. This building possibly also served as a church during inclement weather, whenever possible, services were held outside on the neighbouring flat land. In 1840 a whitewashed Fachwerk combined church-school with a shingle roof was erected on the site of the present St Michael's Lutheran Church. The pastor and teacher lived in separate houses built on the crossroads on the other side of Church Street from the church.

## Sign 6

### **THE SCHMIDT – RODERT FARM**

SA Heritage Council confirmed the entry of this site as a State Heritage Place in the State Heritage Register on 7 September 2006.

## **The Widow Schmidt and Her Farm**

At the time that the Schmidt family left Skampe in Brandenburg to board the *Zebra* in 1838 with their fellow Lutherans, the Prussian economy could still be termed feudal. The powerful nobility or the church owned most of the land which was worked by peasants who paid rent for their cottage and garden plots by working between 3 to 6 days a week for the owner. In South Australia the family had a chance to own their own land if they worked hard enough.

When the *Zebra* arrived in the new British colony on 28 December 1838, Anna Dorothea Schmidt and her husband Gottlob were both aged 50 years. On board were their daughters Anna Dorothea (20), Dorothea Elisabeth (17) and sons Gottfried (16) and Johann Gottlob (13). Listed as a day-labourer Gottlob died soon after arrival, leaving his widow as head of the family in charge of repaying the ship debt and clearing about 4 acres of land: homestead lot 43, cultivation lots 120, 117, 174a, 1, 2. Her eldest daughter soon married Gottlieb Dohnt (18) a fellow *Zebra* passenger who took over the widow's lands and came to live on the widow's wheatfield where he and his wife built a red gum barn.

### **Buildings on the Widow Schmidt's Wheatfield**

Structures 1-5 were constructed between 1839-1852 when the family moved to the Barossa Valley to found Nain.

#### **1. The Red Gum Slab Barn**

This was built in the northern corner of lot 120. Divided internally into three sections, this structure may have been used initially as a dwelling for the family as well as shelter for the milch cow. Most settlers built similar dwellings in the early years of settlement because wood was plentiful. Roughly split sawn red gum slabs were fixed squared top and bottom rails supported by earth held posts. The roof covered with bark, kangaroo grass or reeds was secured with wire to the roofing frame made of tree branches. The enclosed eastern section may have initially been a porch. The diagram below shows a house excavated and reconstructed in East Prussia by archaeologists in 1923-36 and dated 2000 BC. It bears a remarkable resemblance to early huts in Hahndorf.

#### **2. The Red Gum Pigsty and Toilet**



These slab structures were erected at right angles to the barn. The Country Directory of 1844 listed Gottlieb Dohnt as the owner of one pig, 5 cattle, half an acre of potatoes on three acres of wheat. The pig and potato fields provided food for the family, while the cows and grain fields provided products for sale.

### **3. The Red Gum Slab Kitchen**

A red brick stove of ancient design was built next to the small smokehouse inside this structure erected at a distance from the barn in case of fire. A corbelled brick and stone bake oven with chimney was attached to the western wall.

### **4. The Stone Cottage with Two Rooms and Central Hearth**

This was constructed by the “random stone and rubble” method. Each wall consisted of two rows of stones interspersed with mud and lime mortar and animal bones. The centre cavity was filled with rubble as in the diagram of a Bronze Age house of circa 1400 BC. Marks on the rafters indicate that thatch was the original covering. Using the same random rubble technique a wing was later added at right angles to the main cottage and the smaller stone and wattle and daub room attached to it. A poultry shed and run were adjacent, under the pair, plum and prune trees which supplied fruit for drying and jam making.

### **5. The Well**

Lined with stones, the well was sunk near the bottom of the slope and a pear tree planted nearby, to keep the water sweet, as was the ancient custom.

### **6. The Roadside Cottage**

Believed to have been constructed as one large room and lean-to by Wheelwright Ludwig Joachim Heinrich Stark who bought all of Widow Schmidt’s allotments in 1853. By 1858 he had acquired Habich’s Lot 121 adjoining the widow’s Lot 120 which he subdivided into two blocks. A wall of the original 1840s stone cottage was used to determine the eastern boundary line. The new building was modified, probably by a mason, Friedrich Franz who became the owner in 1858. At right angles, to the front doors he erected a Stone wall with a cooking hearth and opposite, a brick wall with an opening to a bake-oven. This formed of flur kuche (passage kitchen) commonly found in Germanic houses built in new colonial settlements created by Frederick the Great in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

In 1874 the new owner, gardener Gottlieb Fischer added a parapet and removed all evidence of the flur kuche. He also built up the walls of the lean-to and added a bedroom and a kitchen at the rear.

Anna Amelie Nathalie Rodert inherited the site in 1901 which passed on to her husband on her death in 1922. Their eldest son Alson Victor Carl Rodert was the owner from 1924-1990 when Eric and Betty Nitschke purchased the site and sold a section to the Fox family

in 1991. This family began a program of conservation works in the hope of preserving the only intact Germanic farmyard in Australia's first settlement planned for non-British immigrants.

## **The Schmidt-Rodert Farm**

By Anni Luur Fox, June 2010

Professor of geography at Adelaide University, Fay Gale observed in the Hahndorf Survey report of 1979-81 that: *"Australia offers many examples of the strong impact of culture upon landscape development but none more vividly than Hahndorf."*

In 1979 Hahndorf had become the subject of study for the Australian Heritage Commission by Gordon Young with a team of architects, historians, sociologists, geologists and tertiary students. Their works substantiated the Hahndorf National Trust Branch claims, for the town's national heritage significance, which led to listing by the National Estate in 1983 and being declared a South Australian Heritage Area in 1988. Of all the original sites studied in the Main Street, only one early German farmyard was still intact. Gordon young wrote of the Rodert Farm in the survey report 1981, page 95: *"Behind the new house which was built closer to the street pavement lies the original two roomed cottage of stone with central chimney and loft. There are also an outside bake-oven, a slab sided barn pigsty. They form a complete example of what must have been a standard farm complex built by early settlers down the main street. Incomplete remnants of similar buildings set quite well back from the street exist but are now incorporated in more modern structures.....this is a neat example of a complete holding (hufe) which was worked until the 1920s....."*

## **Sign 7**

### **THE TREK TO ADELAIDE**

#### **First People To Use The Trek**

The Peramangk people had developed communication routes that they followed over thousands of years for the purposes of trade and join ceremonies shared with other Aboriginal tribes.

The Trail through the Old Stringy Bark Forest first walked by Hahndorf's fifty-four founding families in 1839 was similar to what the Peramangk people had developed.

Johann Christoph Liebelt has provided us with an insight to cordial relations in the Observer, 29 May 1908 when he spoke of the Aboriginal people having taught the early settlers how to find native food which he called "buttercup roots".

Since the Peramangk women were traditionally the gatherers of yam daisies, orchid and lily tubers and a number of other edible plants we may assume that they Hahndorf's pioneer women what to do.

Pastor A. E. Brauer in the Australian Lutheran Almanac of 1928, page 54 mentioned that the relative lack of violence was due to friendships developed between the Lutheran and

Peramangk women who were anxious to discover if the white of their arms and legs would wash off.

### **Hahndorf Women and Some Men Trade Produce in Adelaide**

Farm fresh produce was one of the main items that were carried by the Pioneer women to Adelaide during 1838 to 1850s. Some of the men assisted but they usually toiled the land to maintain a ready supply of produce. One of the men was a craftsman who made clogs from the trees that were in abundance along the Hahndorf creek and he carried these to Adelaide for trade.

The men were also drafted to work in clearing the bushland for the British landholders. This left the women and teenage girls to be the people to carry the goods to Adelaide. They would leave at night to early morning to set off for Adelaide's market with baskets of farm produce on their backs or suspended from yokes across their shoulders. Some of the women could carry up to 22kg of produce.

When they returned they would quite frequently purchase bricks (from the sale of their produce) for the church building. The trek would have taken possibly two to three days for them to travel. They would stay on some occasions with friends that had resided at Klemzig, sharing with them the latest news of how they were managing and the enjoyment that they were experiencing as they could own their own land in another country.

We cannot understand fully the hardships that they faced with the threat of outlaws in the bushland around Crafers, the snakes, the native animals, flies, and the heat, plus the unevenness of the trek would have made this journey a real trial of endurance. Many of the women carried large sticks to defend themselves and to help them overcome some of the obstacles that they encountered. The track followed went via the Beaumont spur to be the major route to and from Adelaide.

### **Colony of South Australia**

During 1839 the colony was almost bankrupt because money was flowing out to other colonies to import food and other necessities.

John W Bull's memoirs are just one source of information that explains the circumstances that had befallen the fledgling colony.

"Up to the time of their arrival the inhabitants of Adelaide had been insufficiently supplied with vegetables and dairy products and these at exorbitant price..... The Germans very soon began to carry into the city for sale small supplies of butter, and within a few months vegetables, generally on the back of females and in the same manner, taking back their supplies of rations..... Before the end of their first year of residence amongst us they furnished us with a good supply of vegetables etc realising to themselves a good profit." (Bull p90)

### **The Route To Hahndorf**

This began at Beaumont with I travelled up Gleeson's hill to Crafers, then followed the existing Bush track to the Deanery (near Bridgewater), up Mount Stanley and down a



steep incline to the Onkaparinga River which was crossed via a ford and later a wooden bridge.

### **The Women's Attire**

The Hon John Lewis MLC described the Hahndorf's women walkers as wearing "print dressers, sun bonnets, cotton stockings and strong boots (there many of them were shoeless). They would carry as much as 150 lbs of produce (butter, cheese, eggs and bacon) to Adelaide.



### **Women's Work**

The Hon John Lewis MLC wrote that Hahndorf 's women could use an axe better than he could to cut saplings to skid his wagon wheels. JW Bull referred to women being hitched to a plough, with some women being the best shearers. He saw a young girl driving bullocks for her father at the plough, and with a sister using a cross-cutting saw to cut logs for fencing. (Bull p149)

Thekla Stanetzki's (later Staude) job as the eldest child was to drive the cows home for milking, pull the crescent saw, and to carry the bag of wedges and sledgehammers for her father, plus sell or barter produce in Adelaide. Cornelia Deimel was left to run the farm while pregnant and later became a midwife.

The women were employed as washerwomen and maids for the British Neighbours, and they managed to work in the fields, gardening, cooking meals, manage their own household, mend and make clothing. Life was always busy with work to be done.

### **The Trek**

After 1854 with increasing prosperity and need to carry Hills produce to Adelaide on foot was declining. The main road via Glen Osmond has been established and has reached Hahndorf. Farmers still take produce to Adelaide in their distinctive German wagons, a means of transport. Only a few women continue to walk the trek with their produce during this time.