

State Heritage Areas of South Australia



Memories of Mintaro 1964 – 1968

submitted by Rosemary Bailey

The people of Mintaro were friendly, making myself and my husband – a pair of city slickers – welcome to live in their community and encouraging us to join in any town functions.

Mintaro was small – a hall, Mintaro Hotel, post office, disused police station, churches and several houses.

Everyone relied on rainwater; TV was black and white; not all had a phone; electricity had not long been put there so most homes had and used both wood and electric stoves.

Employment was on farms or the local slate quarry.

In 1964 new mothers were concerned about babies dying in their sleep – cause unknown – now known as S.I.D.S.

Mintaro had a football, tennis and cricket team. Hare coursing with grey hounds was popular. Mintaro had its own S.P. Bookie taking bets on the quiet for Saturday horseracing – heard on the radio at the hotel.

The Mintaro Hotel was a popular meeting place particularly at Christmas when everyone met for a drink or two or three.

Life was slower then, everyone had time for others.

Field days were a big event for Mintaro, particularly the C.W.A. and the Mintaro Hotel.

Visitors from all over would go to Mintaro for a lovely home-made lunch, served in the Hall and provided by the local Mintaro C.W.A. ladies.

We are talking hundreds of meals. Field days were when sheep breeders would visit studs around Burra, Farrell Flat, etc, after eating at Mintaro.

Mintaro people made their own fun. I recall one day a novelty football match, played for charity on the Mintaro Oval. Male players dressed in large women's frocks, two balloons each, a set of bra, stockings, makeup. Women's teams dressed in men's football gear. Men were gentle with the women, but the women not so gentle with the men. No-one knew who won – we all had fun.

Sadly a bushfire starting 11 miles away at Clare burnt on a nine-mile front to the outskirts of Mintaro – taking with it several farms, homes, much stock, fencing, etc. Mintaro itself was not burnt.

As always the people of Mintaro pulled together to help those in need of help.

Mintaro – a small country town with a big heart – was a nice place to live.