

Cataloguing Archival Material at State Records: Hostel Stories from the 1940s to 1980s

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SRSA GRG35/342 GN14983: Immigration Hostel dormitory circa 1948

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Research Question

What resources exist in State Records to allow both scholarly research and explorations by the general public regarding migrants' experiences in the migrant hostels in South Australia (open approximately between 1949 and the late 1980s)?

The Project

This internship undertaken at State Records of South Australia is one component of a much larger project examining the experiences of migrants in South Australian migrant hostels. This project will be discussed in two parts. Firstly, a broad synopsis of the project as a whole will be given, followed by an in-depth discussion of the processes of the internship and the production of the final report.

In 2011 the Australian Research Council granted funding for a linkage project entitled 'Hostel Stories: Toward a Richer Narrative of the Lived Experiences of Migrants'. This is a joint-project with collaborations from The Migration Museum, State Records of South Australia, The Vietnamese Community in Australia (SA), The City of Port Adelaide Enfield, The City of Charles Sturt and The University of Adelaide with Associate Professor Rachel Ankeny overseeing the project. The outcome of this research is to 'compare the South Australian hostel experiences among hostels, across time, and between migrants/refugees from different cultural backgrounds, and to document the history of lived experiences in this critical period of Australian contemporary history through scholarly research and publication'.¹

This internship was established under the grant to take place in the first year of research with the aim of beginning the cataloguing process of relevant material within State Records. The development of the research question has guided the intern in the process of collating the information with a clear focus on producing a thematic report, which provides a narrative view of the material found. In addition to the final report a research advice sheet to be held by State Records will be created. This fact sheet will provide archivists with a reference from which to guide queries and allow patrons at State Records a basis from which to begin any personal research into migrant hostels.

¹Rachel Ankeny, *Australian Research Council Linkage-Project Application*, (not published, 2011) p.6

I. METHODOLOGY

The use of the online database at State Records was the central process utilized during research. As a registered user of the *ArchivesSearch* catalogue system it was possible to identify and access relevant material through both either Agency or Series as well as keyword or description searches. A qualitative methodology was applied to all findings analysis. However, by approaching the task of data collection with the intent of engaging in narrative analysis it became possible to rely upon the seven phases of narrative analysis. Particular focus was placed on the concept that narratives cannot be one-dimensional and must include 'interpersonal, cultural and structural elements of experiences'². The principles of narrative analysis were further embraced by the clear focus on embedding direct quotes from the records into the report, where possible.

II. LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

As with any research there are clear limitations evident in terms of the outcomes and processes. These are the limitations arising during the course of the internship.

- a) The report produced here will not be a comprehensive analysis of every file held by the State Records in regard to migrant hostels. As, inevitably, not all relevant files will have been found. That is not to say, however, the findings collated in this report are not useful.
- b) There is an unequal focus on the individual hostels in this report. The report can only include what has been found there is a clear concentration of information regarding the Woodville and Elder Park Hostels. This outcome is partially a result of the State Records clearly holding more material on the State, opposed to Commonwealth, run hostels. Additionally, there are periods where more information was available than others. Hence the result is a focus on migrant hostels in the 1950s to the 1970s, with little to nothing found from the 1980s.
- c) This report has also been limited by the fact many records, which may have proven useful, have not been cleared for public viewing. Files from the Education, Health and Welfare series, in particular, were generally restricted and had a 60 year limit before viewing or in some cases permanently closed.
- d) The final limitation is that the basis of most findings comes from correspondence files and newspaper articles. These sources, whilst important, may contain a high level of bias, representing the view desired (by the government or in the media) rather than an accurate depiction of the migrant hostel scheme.

² Maggie Walter (ed.) *Social Research Methods: an Australian Perspective*, (Victoria: Oxford University Press, 2006), p.273

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

Cataloguing archive material does not necessarily require the development of recommendations however the author wishes to point out several general suggestions.

- a) Any researchers, academic or otherwise, taking advantage of this report are encouraged to refer to the research advice sheet on migrant hostels which is attached as an appendix to this report but also available from State Records.
- b) Researchers should also look to the other partner organisations involved in the project, as well as to the National Archives, when expanding their research parameters.
- c) State Records has the capacity and intention of updating the research advice sheet as more records are found. Thus, should researchers come across relevant material at the State Records which have not been included in the research advice please let a Reference Officer know.
- d) The most personal accounts of life in migrant hostels will come from former residents themselves. Therefore it is recommended that any researcher looking to create a study in-depth should include interviews of former migrants (as the broader project has already begun to do).
- e) Often local museums, libraries or historical groups maintain information regarding the history of the local area, it would be recommended to contact such groups in close proximity to where the migrant hostels were run.

State Records of South Australia

It is the responsibility of State Records of South Australia to preserve and official government records of South Australia. State Records maintains local as well as State Government files, extending to the various Departments and administrative sectors. It is also the job of State Records to ensure the public can access these official records, in accordance with the *State Records Act 1997*.

The role of the State Records of South Australia in the Hostel Stories project is twofold. Not only will it host the intern student but also provide assistance for the PhD students. This, in turn, will help ensure records on migrant hostels in South Australia and held by the State Records become more easily accessible for scholars and the general public.³

³Rachel Ankeny, *Australian Research Council Linkage-Project Application*, (not published, 2011) p.13

Migrant Hostels: An Introduction

From the mid 1940s Australia turned to immigration as a means to quickly address the problem of a declining population. The aim being to increase the population by 1% each year through immigration.⁴ Policies such as Arthur Calwell's famous 'Populate or Perish' and the 'Displaced Persons Mass Migration Scheme' (which ended in 1952)⁵ contributed to an influx of migrants arriving from the late 1940s onwards. Most of these New Australians, as they were known, were not immediately self-sufficient and there was a great need for efficient on-arrival assistance, including services such as housing (in hostels), counselling, and the provision of information and English lessons.⁶ However the administration of these services was, in many cases, poorly managed leading to the argument that 'the origins of post-war immigration policy were characterised more by ad hoc decisions and uncertainty than by any clear vision of what was to come.'⁷ Irrespective of this the clearest and most pressing concern for most migrants, on arriving in Australia, was the need for housing. Thus began the emergence of migrant hostels in Australia's immigration history.

Migrant hostels were known by many names and may also be referred to as New Australian Centres, Migrant Camps, Migrant Accommodation Centre or Migrant Reception and Training Centres.

Very limited scholarly resources exist in terms of South Australian hostels (although general information is available in the form of memoirs and oral histories) however it is possible to gain a basic understanding of migrant hostels through more general publications. Migrant hostels 'were generally ex-army camps or warehouses converted to accommodate migrant families'⁸ usually in the form of communal housing. The capacity of these hostels differed, with larger hostels able to accommodate over 1000 migrants. The demographics of the hostels also varied with certain hostels catering only to British migrants, others set-up to house migrant workers and others developed exclusively for DPs. Generally, however, migrants were sent to hostels based on where

⁴ Secretariat to the Committee to advise on Australia's Immigration Policy 1987 *Understanding Immigration*, (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Services, 1987), p.4

⁵ Catherine Murphy, *Boat Load of Dreams: a project by the United Trades and Labour Council about the Woodside Immigration Centre*, (Adelaide: United Trades and Labour Council, 1994), p.4

⁶ Mark Wooden *et al.*, *Australian Immigration: A survey of the Issues*, (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Services, 1990), p.333

⁷ Jock Collins, *Migrant Hands in a Distant Land: Australia's post-war immigration*, (Sydney: Pluto Press, 1988), p.20

⁸ Reginald Appleyard, *The Ten Pound Immigrants*, (Suffolk: Boxtree Limited, 1988), p.69

accommodation and employment opportunities were available.⁹ A Report published by the *Australian Population and Immigration Council* in the 1970s found that 60% of assisted migrants and 11% of sponsored migrants chose to stay in migrant hostels.¹⁰ Yet the facilities in most hostels were meager, with migrants at the Woodside Camp in South Australia unimpressed to find the accommodation 'similar or worse than what they'd experienced living in Displaced Persons camps'.¹¹ Whilst another former migrant remembers arriving at a migrant hostel and seeing 'all these huts we felt we'd arrived at some sort of concentration camp'.¹²

The official expectation was that migrant hostels would provide only interim accommodation and as such, facilities needed only be adequate enough to house migrants for a 'short transitional period'.¹³ In reality many families stayed much longer in the hostels. Housing shortages played a role in this but in many cases the central issue was that the high tariffs imposed on residents prevented migrants from establishing sufficient savings to buy a house.¹⁴ There were also instances of families choosing to stay for an extended period because the free childcare provided at the hostel meant both parents could gain employment, therefore increasing their capacity to save.¹⁵ In other cases migrants found work within the hostels themselves.¹⁶

There was no well-ordered end to the migrant hostel scheme but by the 1970s many migrant hostels had closed as the number of migrants arriving declined and the need for migrant hostels diminished. However the 12 Commonwealth-run migrant hostels in Melbourne and Sydney provided housing for one final large-scale migrant group, Indo-Chinese refugees, in the late 1970s and 1980s.¹⁷

THE COLLECTION AT THE STATE RECORDS

⁹ Murphy, *Boat Load of Dreams*, p.4

¹⁰ Australian Population and Immigration Council, *A Decade of Migrant Settlement: Report on the 1973 Immigration Survey*, (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1976), p.94

¹¹ Murphy, *Boat Load of Dreams*, p.4

¹² Betka Zamoyak, *The Ten Pound Fare: Experiences of British People who emigrated to Australia in the 1950s*, (London: Penguin Group, 1988), p.64

¹³ Appleyard, *The Ten Pound Immigrants*, p.69

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.70

¹⁵ Zamoyak, *The Ten Pound Fare: Experiences of British People who emigrated to Australia in the 1950s*, p.67

¹⁶ Patricia Donnelly, *Migrant Journeys: 'what the hell have we done?'*, (Adelaide: Ariel Press, 1999), p.85

¹⁷ Collins, *Migrant Hands in a Distant Land: Australia's post-war immigration*, p.66

Migrant hostels played an important role in the initial settlement process for many migrants arriving in Australia. Often these hostels provided migrants with their first impression of not only Australia but also the attitudes they would face from the Government and the general public alike. As such migrant hostels provide a useful tool in guiding research on migrant experiences. The hostel scheme was multi-faceted and far-reaching and consequentially the divide between Commonwealth and State responsibilities was often blurred. This, in turn, has resulted in the collection held by State Records appearing disjointed with the relevant material, confusingly and sometimes seemingly arbitrarily, spread between the various Government Departments and associated services involved in the day-to-day running of the hostels.

This report will collate the information available in State Records in such a way as to provide part of the basis for a cohesive narrative on the experiences of migrants within these South Australian hostels. Newspaper articles, photographs, migrants' letters of complaint or thanks and public-works sketchbooks have been analysed alongside the more conventional correspondence files and government reports. The aim being, insofar as possible, to ensure the perspective given is not limited to that of government administrators. The report has also utilized a thematic format, with the findings grouped in a way that illustrates how various factors came together to influence migrants' views of their time in the hostels.

Demographics at the Hostels

To appreciate the diversity of experiences in migrant hostels it is imperative to understand that the hostels had distinct ethnic demographics with, in many cases, individual hostels catering to migrants of a single nationality. Examination of the records can provide a clearer understanding of many of the demographics evident.

Three migrant hostels, one in Smithfield, one in Woodside and the other in the old RAAF complex in Gawler, were established with the clear intention of catering to people displaced by the war (DPs). In the cases of Smithfield and Gawler there were plans to accommodate 400 people in each camp.¹⁸ Whilst at Woodside it was intended to 'accommodate up to 650 women and children while their breadwinners are working'.¹⁹

It also appears, from the records, that clear action was taken to ensure most British migrants arriving in South Australia were accommodated in hostels exclusively for British expatriates. Gepps Cross, Rosewater and Finsbury-Pennington were British hostels. This demographic was narrowed further at Semaphore hostel where only single, male, British migrants were hosted.²⁰

There is also mention, much later in the scheme, of Indo-Chinese refugees being placed in migrant hostels. However it is unknown whether any hostels maintained a concentration of refugees, with the policy being to place refugees wherever vacancies and employment opportunities existed.²¹

¹⁸ SRSA GRG 7/38/0/1 (1949)

¹⁹ SRSA GRG 7/38/0/1 (1948)

²⁰ SRSA GRG 7/38/0/1 (1949)

²¹ SRSA GRG 7/92 (1979)

Daily Lists of Migrants at the Hostels

For individuals researching family history, or scholars interested in the demographics evident within the migrant hostel population, daily lists of migrants staying at the hostels can provide invaluable insight. These records are disjointed and often lack detail but many of the lists provide the total number of migrants at the hostels, even if they make no record of names or nationality of the migrants.

Series GRG 7/37, for example, identifies the number of migrants in hostels between 1949 and the mid-1950s. One folder looks exclusively at Semaphore hostel, listing migrant returns between 1949 and 1952 with the names and next addresses of the migrants included. The remaining files include the total number of migrants but do not provide names and do not clearly identify or differentiate between the hostels to which they refer. These files cover the period between 8/8/1950 and 30/6/1955.²²

Series GRG 7/ 80 is more instructive; listing the migrants accommodated at Elder Park Hostel but is limited to the short periods between 4/4/1957 to 4/6/1958 and 9/6/1958 to December 1958.²³

This information is enhanced by series GRG7/24/1949/109, as well as files 109A and 109B, which include lists of migrants accommodated at Elder Park Hostel, giving the names and also, in some cases, the nationality of the migrants.²⁴

²² SRSA GRG 7/37/0/1,

²³ SRSA GRG 7/80/0/1

²⁴ SRSA GRG 7/24/1949/109

Government Involvement in the Hostel Scheme

As this report contains material found, almost exclusively, in government records this section will examine records which show the impact on migrant hostels of the policies, practical actions taken and political campaigning by both levels of government.

The migrant hostel scheme was an inter-governmental project meaning the responsibility of coordinating and running the hostels was divided between the states and the Commonwealth. This fact creates difficulties in terms of locating where records pertaining to migrant hostels have been archived. There is also a clear focus on state-run hostels as, naturally, State Records holds material which for the most part relates to the state government. Therefore reports from national immigration conferences and meetings are valuable inasmuch as they provide material on Commonwealth hostels as well as an overarching view of the hostel scheme.

Migrant hostels were one component of a much larger immigration portfolio and references to the relevant federal and state policy must be found within the broader dialogue available at State Records. In 1951, during question time, Premier T. Playford elucidated the State government's perception of Commonwealth responsibility:

‘It has been the practice of the Commonwealth to assume liability for the settlement of displaced persons after their entry into the country. It has not handed them over to the states immediately but has established camps to accommodate them and has attended to their after-care.’²⁵

²⁵ SRSA GRG 7/38/0/1 (1951)

Nearly twenty years later, and this time at a federal level, the role of migrant hostels was still very much entrenched in the Australian political landscape. In a 1972 Migrant Task Force Report, Al Grassby identified the following as central pillars of Australia's immigration policy, to:

'(a) Have proper reception arrangements either with sponsors, friends, or in the Government accommodation and are made to feel welcome. (b) Have suitable short term accommodation and [where migrants] are made to feel welcome'²⁶

In order to achieve these policy goals the federal government set up a corporation, the Commonwealth Hostels Ltd, to run and conduct any business in regard to the Commonwealth-run hostels.²⁷ This endeavour was not without criticism, however, with newspapers reporting: 'some federal public servants have nominally become guarantors [of the corporation] in some strange form of company control of Hostels.'²⁸

Political engagement in the hostel scheme is most noticeable in terms of debate in Parliament and MPs visiting migrant hostels. Yet interestingly political parties were not permitted to hold meetings in migrant hostels.²⁹ Prime Minister Harold Holt commented on the conditions at Rosewater³⁰, whilst local MP Harold Tapping demanded regular inspections from the health department were conducted at the hostels.³¹ Furthermore, some MPs were concerned that British migrants staying at the

²⁶ SRSA GRS 7349 (1974)

²⁷ SRSA GRG 7/38/0/1

²⁸ SRSA GRG 7/38/0/1 (1950)

²⁹ SRSA GRG 7/38/0/2 (1951)

³⁰ SRSA GRG 7/24/1950/302

³¹ SRSA GRG 7/38/0/1 (1952)

migrant hostels were being adversely influenced by Communists and sought permission to intervene.³²

Likely to be of local interest and one of the clearest examples of what migrants viewed as government interference is the dispute over an increase in tariffs to be paid at the hostels where the migrants argued they 'could not continue indefinitely under such circumstances'.³³ In fact the dispute escalated to such an extent that the Chairman of the British Communist Party weighed into the debate and legal proceedings were instigated. However what is of particular note is that the lawyer for the migrants was Don Dunstan (later the Premier of South Australia).³⁴

The division of funding responsibilities is the clearest example, apparent in the records, of both the Federal and State Government working together on a migrant hostels project. The Commonwealth provided funding for state-run migrant hostels. For 'capital improvements' made to migrant hostels the Commonwealth agreed to pay half the costs.³⁵ In reality dividing such costs was not always simple. In the case at Woodville Reception Centre a portion of the Immigration Department's offices were located alongside the state-run hostel thus making it difficult to separate the costs of renovations, with the outcome being to 'arrive at a reasonable arbitrary figure'.³⁶ However, in the case of Woodville, the Commonwealth was, in fact, quite willing to pay half the costs, the only criticism being that the hostel renovations could have been *more* elaborate.³⁷ The position in South Australia was also unusual in that in 1946 the Premier had not accepted Commonwealth contributions toward setting up the hostels,

³² SRSA GRG 7/38/0/2 (1951)

³³ SRSA GRG 7/38/0/1 (1952)

³⁴ SRSA GRG 7/38/0/1 (1952)

³⁵ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/2, (1971)

³⁶ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1 (1971)

³⁷ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1

aside from furnishing costs.³⁸ It was not always specified how costs were to be divided between Commonwealth and state. Such was the case in 1951 when the South Australian Director of Commonwealth Works and Housing, Mr Haslam, announced £300 3100 would be spent building and renovating migrant hostels in South Australia.³⁹

Conditions and Facilities at the Hostels

The collection at State Records also provides a rich account of the living conditions in many hostels. It is important to consider these living conditions as opinions of the scheme (and of particular hostels) were undoubtedly shaped, at least in part, by the conditions migrants endured within the hostels themselves. Whilst in some cases the conditions in migrant hostels were satisfactory, these instances are far outweighed, in the records held by State Records, by examples of sub-standard and inadequate facilities.

Photographs provide a useful means of gaining a better visual understanding of the facilities and conditions discussed throughout the records. State Records hold various files that include photographs of migrant hostels in South Australia. Series GRG7/70⁴⁰, in particular, has multiple photographs of the Gepps Cross and of other migrant hostels run earlier in the scheme. Similarly, series GRG7/96⁴¹ is a photograph album of the Woodville Reception Centre.

³⁸ SRSA GRG 7/92/0/1 (1976)

³⁹ SRSA GRG 7/38/0/2 (1951)

⁴⁰ SRSA GRG 7/70/0/8

⁴¹ SRSA GRG 7/96/01

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Gepps Cross Communal Laundry

43



Unidentified Immigration Hostel Dining Room, Circa 1948

⁴² SRSA GRG 7/70/0/8/482

⁴³ SRSA GRG 35/342 GN14993

44



Playground at Gepps Cross Hostel, Circa 1950

45



Unidentified Immigration Hostel bedroom, Circa 1948

Sketchbooks from the Department of Engineering and Water Supply and Public Building Books of migrant hostels also are useful for establishing, clearly, the dimensions (and sometimes facilities) of the hostels. A copy of the Woodville Reception Centre Public

⁴⁴ SRSA GRG 7/70/0/8/485

⁴⁵ SRSA GRG 35/342 GN14995

Buildings Book is held in GRG7/94.⁴⁶ State Records also holds a copy of a book of sketches containing the layout of Rosewater Migrant Camp.⁴⁷

The location and capacity of the hostels are factors which contributed to concerns of overcrowding or difficulties in commuting to and from employment. Little is known of the facilities at Semaphore beyond the fact that the hostel comprised of the converted Semaphore police barracks.⁴⁸ Similarly, the camp at Mallala had the capacity to accommodate 300 migrants on a ten acre block of land, which included a 'modern 12-bed hospital'.⁴⁹ Further research will be required to determine whether these camps were developed, however in 1951, in the initial design stages it was stated: 'two hostels to be built at a cost of £120 000 each to accommodate migrant workers and their families at Mannum and Mount Barker...each would accommodate around 200 in complete home units.'⁵⁰

The decision to build the Festival Centre on the site of Elder Park Hostel and subsequently the move of all fixtures (as well as staff) to Woodville Reception Centre generated a significant amount of correspondence (and other official documents) regarding the facilities available at both hostels. Indeed, File 1 of GRG7/94 is titled 'Removal from Elder Park to Woodville' and extensively covers both the move and the renovations undertaken at Woodville to ensure its capacity to function as a migrant hostel. In a letter dated 20/12/68 it was put forward that 'structurally the Woodville premises [are] considerably better than the present sub-standard building used at Elder Park'.⁵¹ Towards the end of 1968 the conditions at Elder Park Hostel were 'particularly shabby' and believed to be causing some migrants to hastily buy houses (in order to

⁴⁶ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1

⁴⁷ SRSA GRG 53/166/00000/052

⁴⁸ SRSA GRG 7/38/0/1 (1949)

⁴⁹ SRSA GRG 7/38/0/1

⁵⁰ SRSA GRG 7/38/0/2 (1951)

⁵¹ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1

leave the hostel) before properly considering their options.⁵² The premises at Woodville were larger than at Elder Park, which contained only 160 beds (although the hostel could accommodate 180 'in comfort'⁵³), a kitchen, dining room, small lounge, laundry and accommodation for staff.⁵⁴ To put this in perspective, 4067 migrants stayed at the Elder Park hostel between 1967 and 1969.⁵⁵ It is not clear the total number of beds at Woodville however there were 27 family suites where the main bedrooms connected with other rooms in the suite⁵⁶, 7 small toilet and shower blocks, a writing room⁵⁷ and seven lounges, at least one of which had a television.⁵⁸

Despite the marked improvements when compared to the facilities at Elder Park, Woodville Reception Centre itself was not without problems and had, in particular, a long-running problem with vermin. It was not unusual for inter-departmental correspondence to talk of the issue, with one memo reading; '[t]he Kitchen and Dining Room are infested with mice, rats have also been seen and it is suspected rats are nesting in the ceiling and moving about in the cavity walls.'⁵⁹ There were also complaints of poor lighting at Woodville.⁶⁰

Of all the hostels, the conditions appear to have been worst at Rosewater Migrant Camp. There is very little in State Records portraying Rosewater hostel in a positive light. In fact, File 302 of series GRG7/24/1950 deals exclusively with complaints regarding the conditions at Rosewater, containing for the most part copies of newspaper articles covering the issue.⁶¹ Complaints about the conditions at the camp

⁵² SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1

⁵³ SRSA GRG 7/38/0/1

⁵⁴ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1

⁵⁵ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1 (1970)

⁵⁶ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1 (1972)

⁵⁷ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1 (1971)

⁵⁸ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1

⁵⁹ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1 (1950)

⁶⁰ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1 (1972)

⁶¹ SRSA GRG 7/24/1950/302

ranged wildly, and included a lack of play equipment for children⁶², inadequate access to the hostel grounds⁶³ and poor facilities for nursing mothers.⁶⁴ Concerns also existed regarding safety, especially the risk of fire⁶⁵, and the fact migrants had 'been promised Nissen Huts with three families in each- not a woolshed in a swampy dock area next to a timber yard and chemical works'.⁶⁶

Health concerns were not unheard of with extensive media coverage of an instance at Finsbury hostel, with newspapers reporting on an outbreak of gastro-enteritis with estimates of between fourteen and sixty-two cases of migrants falling ill.⁶⁷

In the mid-1960s the Commonwealth Government recognised, during an inquiry into the departure of migrants from Australia, the need to improve conditions in the hostels;

'Commencing in 1967, a major program improvement in standards of hostels and other forms of transitory accommodation was implemented...The replacement of older hostel accommodation (mostly Nissan Huts) with modern masonry building... for individual families is in progress in hostels on sites owned by the Commonwealth'⁶⁸

The report, however, did not go further in specifying which hostels under Commonwealth control were subject to renovations. Other sources, however, reveal more. For instance, following a long campaign against the conditions at Rosewater a

⁶² SRSA GRG 7/24/1950/302

⁶³ SRSA GRG 7/24/1950/302

⁶⁴ SRSA GRG 7/24/1950/302

⁶⁵ SRSA GRG 7/24/1950/302

⁶⁶ SRSA GRG 7/24/1950/302

⁶⁷ SRSA GRG 7/38/0/1 (1952)

⁶⁸ SRSA GRS 7349/1/1 (1972)

number of the migrants were moved to Gepps Cross hostel and one newspaper article, quoting residents, wrote: 'from Rosewater they say the Gepps Cross conditions represent 100 percent improvement even with the mud after heavy rains'.⁶⁹

Daily Living at the Hostels

The nature of State Records, where those documents preserved are generally government files, provides some insight into personal experiences of migrants who stayed in the hostels. From memos, correspondence and other documents it is possible to draw tentative conclusions as to types of events experienced during daily life in South Australian migrant hostels. However these experiences were usually recorded by government officials or hostel staff for administrative purposes and they often lack the personalised view of someone affected by these events. Nevertheless, these daily experiences are critical in better understanding how migrants perceived the hostels and thus in developing a well-rounded narrative.

The rules and procedures that governed the hostels, and which undoubtedly shaped the experiences of migrants, provide a clear view of life in migrant hostels. The Conditions of Residence at Elder Park strictly regulated the migrants' activities with, among other rules, no visitors permitted to enter the bedrooms, food not to be taken out of the dining room, no pets allowed, nor 'drunken or objectionable' behaviour permitted on the premises.⁷⁰ Letters of Welcome, which were handed to migrants at

⁶⁹ SRSA GRG 7/38/0/1

⁷⁰ SRSA GRG 7/24/1950/306

Woodville Reception Centre and Elder Park Hostel upon arrival, also outline similar expectations.⁷¹

On a more personal level, the daily routines of migrants at Woodville Reception Centre are moderately well documented in GRG7/94, and particularly File 2 of this series. For example, correspondence sheds light on the fact that most residents, on Saturday mornings, spend their time going shopping.⁷² Additionally, in 1972 the hostel also put in place a system that allowed migrants who were employed (provided they gave 24 hours' notice) to receive a packed lunch to take to work, in place of the sit down lunch they would usually eat at the hostel.⁷³ Efforts were also made by staff to create an amiable atmosphere at the migrant hostels. In one such case a request was sent to purchase posters and photographs of iconic sites, such as Kangaroo Island and the Flinders Ranges, for the walls of the hostel with the goal of 'brightening the place up' as well as educating migrants.⁷⁴

Furthermore, a small amount regarding experiences particular to the children at Woodville Reception Centre can be found in series GRG7/94, File 2. Correspondence within this file makes passing mention to a three-year-old girl who was hospitalised after running into (and breaking) a glass door at the hostel while playing.⁷⁵ Similarly, correspondence makes reference to a police complaint, lodged by the headmaster of Woodville Primary School, in regard to children from the hostel throwing rocks into the adjacent schoolyard.⁷⁶ In a notice published around the hostel, it was also encouraged parents take their children into Adelaide city to watch the Christmas Pageant.⁷⁷

⁷¹ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1

⁷² SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1 (1971)

⁷³ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1

⁷⁴ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1 (1971)

⁷⁵ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1 (1971)

⁷⁶ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1

⁷⁷ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1 (1971)

Not unexpectedly, the experiences of migrants in hostels were not always positive. In July 1971 there was a small fire at the Woodville Reception Centre; no residents were injured but one of the communal living areas was damaged, causing substantial inconvenience.⁷⁸ There are also cases of migrants being harassed by salespeople at the hostels.⁷⁹ However, perhaps the most documented negative experience in a hostel was that of migrants at the Rosewater hostel which have already been discussed above.

For migrants the facilities available at hostels had enormous impact on their day-to-day life. The unsatisfactory conditions at many hostels affected migrants' ability to complete everyday activities. In some cases, such as those discussed below, the deficiencies evident were not insurmountable; however the culmination of the various problems may have played a significant role in forming a negative view of the hostel scheme (and of Australia) in the minds of some migrants:

'For several weeks the hot water system has been showing a brown colour discolouration, often the colour is a dark brown chocolate. I was informed by Mr C. Barron (contractor) that this would eventually clear, it has not cleared, complaints have been constant with regard to laundering',⁸⁰

In this particular case at the Woodville Reception Centre, the hostel staff were committed to quickly rectifying the issue and, indeed, it appears the tone evident in correspondence regarding this matter is indignant on the behalf of the hostel residents.⁸¹

⁷⁸ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1 (1971)

⁷⁹ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/2

⁸⁰ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1 (1970)

⁸¹ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1 (1970)

Continuing the exploration of the negative experiences of migrants in hostels, there are also instances of migrants facing the same prejudices from the staff at the hostel as they may have come up against from the general public. The superintendent of Semaphore Hostel in 1950, having it appears had a genuinely difficult time with a small group of Irish migrants, wrote the following in a letter to his local MP Harold Tapping:

‘I take this opportunity to state that the hard core of those migrants who are dirty and drunken in habits, and who attempt to cause trouble are the Irish migrants... Unfortunately I assume that I am not in the position of refusing to accept Irish migrants’⁸²

It should also be noted that some complaints made by migrant residents would not be considered acceptable today. For instance, in a newspaper article titled ‘Secret Talks by Official at Migrant Camp’, it was argued a second entrance to the Rosewater Migrant Camp was needed to prevent migrants being approached by ‘coloured seamen’ on the wharf in Port Adelaide.⁸³

Whilst not as common as letters or reports of complaint, it is possible to find within State Records copies of letters sent by migrants to the hostels praising and thanking the staff for their positive experiences whilst at the hostels. The hostel at Elder Park, in particular, was the focus of two such letters in 1950:

‘Sir, on behalf of Mr Boyden and myself may I express our appreciation for the services rendered to us by the staff of the Elder Park Hostel. At all times we found that the food was of

⁸² SRSA GRG 24/6/1950/190

⁸³ SRSA GRG 7/24/1950/302

excellent taste and that the staff treated us with every hospitality.’⁸⁴

‘This letter is to show my appreciation for the treatment I received at the [Elder Park] hostel from the 18th March to 8th April this year. I found civility, good clean food and dining room, hot water for a shower and comfortable sleeping accommodation.’⁸⁵

These are only a few examples of such letters and File 60 (1949) from Series GRG7/24 also includes similar letters from satisfied migrants.⁸⁶

Of further possible interest to researchers is series GRG7/24/1953/118, containing countless copies of the menus used in the Semaphore migrant hostel. These menus are meticulously planned and the file includes correspondence between the superintendent and Chief Migration Officer in respect to the provision of adequate variation in dietary options.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ SRSA GRG 7/24/1950/161

⁸⁵ SRSA GRG 7/24/1950/161

⁸⁶ SRSA GRG 7/24/1949/60

⁸⁷ SRSA GRG 7/24/1953/118

Migrant Education

The experiences of migrants in hostels were intrinsically linked with their daily activities both within and outside of the hostels. The manner in which migrants responded to hostel accommodation was influenced to a great extent by their ability to interact with the wider community. As such the education services provided to and utilized by migrants were central to their experiences. Furthermore, the government saw education as a crucial step in the settlement process, the idea being:

‘As an aid in the process of assimilation, every assistance is given to new settlers to learn the English language. Day and evening classes in English are established whenever twelve migrants in metropolitan or nine migrants in country areas can be encouraged to enrol.’⁸⁸

A 1961 report from the Education Department also considered this issue of migrant education; however the view taken is perhaps too unsympathetic to the difficulties migrants faced reconciling gaining an education with the very real need to gain employment quickly.

‘It is difficult to arrive at any satisfactory explanation of this reluctance to accept assistance but interviews with many of those without work revealed some apathy resulting from dissatisfaction with prevailing conditions in Australia, a feeling that the somewhat lengthy process involved in learning a language were not to be considered while the immediate need of employment existed’⁸⁹

⁸⁸ SRSA GRG 7/91 (1958)

⁸⁹ SRSA GRS 9659/0/1 (1969)

The Education Department's involvement with migrant hostels is clearest in terms of the Migrant Education Scheme. Under this scheme English classes were held in locations accessible to migrants and often in the hostels themselves, with 1961 seeing ten classes being held in migrant hostels and one in a workers camp.⁹⁰ Between 1968 and 1971 English classes were held in the Glenelg, Pennington and Smithfield hostels.

By 1968 the hostel at Glenelg was maintaining high levels of attendance, sometimes attracting in excess of 60 pupils to the evening classes. This made it possible to divide migrants into classes based on their level of language skill. Furthermore, by 1969 there was high enough demand (19 students) to warrant a class being run during the day for women. The hostel staff appeared receptive to the classes, increasing the size of the room to accommodate the increased number of pupils.⁹¹

The Pennington and Smithfield hostels, catering more toward British migrants, had less demand for English classes. According to the Annual Reports of the Technical Branch of the Education Department, both hostels ran classes during the scheme. In October 1968 Dutch families arriving at Pennington hostel created the need for English classes and consequently one class was run per week. Migrants were 'keen' for a second class each week and whilst this did not materialize over the next two years, attendance did increase from 19 students in 1968 to 25 students in 1969. Smithfield hostel ran one class in 1969 and 1970, which was a clear improvement on 1968 where the Education Department had the intention of opening a class but too few migrants were willing to enrol to justify running lessons.⁹²

⁹⁰ SRSA GRS 9659/0/1 (1961)

⁹¹ SRSA GRS 9659/0/1 (1969)

⁹² SRSA GRS 9659/0/1 (1968, 1969, 1970)

Another key component to migrant education, and consequently migrant hostels, was the schooling of the children living at the migrant hostels. Schools near to hostels, or where a high number of hostel children attended, can provide insight in the form of school journals or admission registers, which may include information such as the names and nationalities of the migrant children and aid particularly in research into family history.

The admission register from Saint Leonard's Primary School, which was situated close to the migrant hostel in Glenelg, contains information such as the name, age and address of pupils as well as information regarding the students' former school and their guardians' occupation.⁹³ This information is useful in gaining a better understanding of demographics in play and of settlement patterns. Furthermore the school journals from Saint Leonard's are relevant insofar as they discuss the interaction between the school and the hostel. This is evident in a journal entry dated 10/2/1969:

'Enrolments continued throughout the day mainly migrant children from the Glenelg hostel, new admissions and children who have attended schools in the UK or Europe, some for 2 months only – Nordic Countries – and many with no English'⁹⁴

According to the entry on 17/2/1969, twenty of the new reception students from that year were migrants. Whilst it is not specified if these students were all from the hostel the breakdown of nationalities is surprisingly diverse, with: 2 Czech, 4 British, 3 Swedish, 1 French, 1 Norwegian, 5 Dutch, 3 Belgian, 1 Portuguese and 1 Icelandic student.⁹⁵

⁹³ SRSA GRS 7329

⁹⁴ SRSA GRS 7330/1/1

⁹⁵ SRSA GRS 7330/1/1

In some cases, such as at Woodside, there were schools attached to the hostel. The Woodside Camp School could accommodate up to 200 students.⁹⁶ The school journal and punishment books for Woodside Camp School are both held at State Records; however access to these files is currently restricted.⁹⁷ Nonetheless, it is possible to view the admission book for the camp school between 1961 and 1962.⁹⁸ Additionally, a basic understanding of the set-up and function of the Woodside Camp School can be found in the published history of the Oakbank Area Schools. Opened in June 1949 and closed in May 1962, over the course of those thirteen years Woodside Camp School enrolled over 4000 students. The school catered both for long-term students and temporary students, providing transitory English classes for the latter. From 1960 onwards, once a student grasped a sufficient command of English, he or she was sent to the local public school to integrate into the wider community.⁹⁹

Alternative uses for the Hostels

Interestingly it appears that the State Government in South Australia was willing to adapt when it came to the function and uses of the migrant hostels. In the 1976 Report from the Conference of the State's Chief Migration Officers, South Australia was recognised for the initiative it took in occupying beds not needed for migrants; '[a]part from the approximate migrant occupancy rate of 80%, the hostel was used by country children on educational tours, by State Public Servants, teachers, [and] elderly persons from the country visiting relatives from the large nearby public hospital'.¹⁰⁰ The practice of accommodating public servants continued for at least the next two years. A 1978 Branch Circular from the Department of Community Welfare set out the cost for

⁹⁶ SRSA GRG 7/38/0/1 (1949)

⁹⁷ SRSA GRG 18/382

⁹⁸ SRSA GRS 13814 (1961-1962)

⁹⁹ SRSA GRS 10437/1/2

¹⁰⁰ SRSA GRG 7/92 (1976)

Officers and their families in Adelaide on business to stay at Woodville Hostel, for adults \$38.92 per week or \$5.56 per day.¹⁰¹ This same Branch Circular also indicated students were permitted to stay at the hostel under the scheme.¹⁰²

Migrant hostels also provided a convenient means of lodging large groups at short notice and one such group accommodated at the hostels were evacuees of the 1974 Christmas Day cyclone in Darwin. The hostels at Pennington, Woodside and Northfield¹⁰³ all provided accommodation to evacuees in any capacity available.¹⁰⁴ However it was Woodville Reception Centre and its staff and residents, whom bore the brunt of the increased workload, particularly in the initial days following the cyclone. By the night of 26/12/1974, Woodville had received and accommodated 69 evacuees, mainly mothers and children, all in a 'extreme state of shock, dazed and bewildered, and clothed only in what they wore at the time the cyclone struck.'¹⁰⁵ Superintendent of the Woodville Reception Centre Mr Standfield, along with his family and the Chief Migration Officer T.R Keig provided and organised services such as airport pickup, Red Cross assistance, medical attention where required, as well as the collection and organisation of clothes and children toys donated by the general public.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore the 'British migrants resident in the centre all volunteered to help and served tea and allocated people to the various rooms'.¹⁰⁷ The broader Federal government response included the treasury accepting to 'reimburse all extra reasonable costs incurred in providing assistance to evacuees' which extended to overtime paid, wages for

¹⁰¹ GRS10986/1/14 (1978)

¹⁰² GRS10986/1/14 (1978)

¹⁰³ There is no known hostel at Northfield, at least as identified by this project. However, TR Keig inferred the accommodation available was in a hostel and prior research (see Varcalli Report) has tentatively explored the possibility of a migrant hostel having operated in Northfield.

¹⁰⁴ SRSA GRG 7/98/0/1

¹⁰⁵ SRSA GRG 7/98/0/1

¹⁰⁶ SRSA GRG 7/98/0/1

¹⁰⁷ SRSA GRG 7/98/0/1

additional staff brought in and payment for the evacuees' first two weeks accommodation at the hostels.¹⁰⁸

There are also records of a Victorian swimming team 'being housed and fed at a migrant hostel behind the Olympic Pool.'¹⁰⁹ However, in this instance, the outcome could not be described as positive, with the team manager complaining that 'some [team-members] are bedded six to a room....Mr Bell said today that his team...were not too happy'.¹¹⁰

However, despite attempts to keep hostels open, the State Government was not opposed to permanently conveying land once the hostels definitively no longer required its use. In May 1975 a recreational hall on land used by the Woodville Reception Centre was conveyed to Woodville Primary School. This outcome was reached after it was decided that there was a greater need for the school than to use the hall as a warehouse for theatre groups.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ SRSA GRG 7/98/0/1 (1975)

¹⁰⁹ SRSA GRG 7/38/0/1 (1955)

¹¹⁰ SRSA GRG 7/38/0/1; Also, whilst not technically from the State Records collection, the National Archives hold files referring to an Indigenous football team staying at Pennington Hostel whilst in Adelaide NAA D2973, 1/1/17

¹¹¹ SRSA GRG 7/98/0/1

Hostel Employees

There are wide-ranging accounts in State Records in relation to the various people employed in South Australian migrant hostels and the positions they occupied. As these were government employees this is not surprising. Material relating to employees was generally only required for administrative purposes yet it is possible to infer from the records some more of the personal experiences of hostel staff and the impact they had on the migrants staying at the hostels.

Chief Migration Officer T.R Keig deserves particular commendation for his contribution not only to the running of migrant hostels but for the collection which is now available at State Records. A systematic and comprehensive record keeper, a large portion of all relevant material held at State Records originates from his offices. Furthermore, from the records, Mr Keig appears not only dedicated to actively trying to improve the hostel scheme but well acquainted with the staff under his direction. On several occasions referring to personal troubles of employees as reasons for lenient or compassionate treatment.¹¹² This personal acquaintance is highlighted in a letter dated 26/3/1970:

‘Attached is the resignation of Mr O. Petrusiw, the second cook at the Elder Park Hostel. I am sorry to lose Joe, he has been with the Department for many years but feels that Woodville is too far for him to travel.’ –TR Keig¹¹³

State Records series GRG7/98 holds multiple and comprehensive folders on the appointment of various employees at Woodville Reception Centre from July 1965.¹¹⁴ For example, an incident was discussed where an employee in the kitchen arrived to

¹¹² SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1

¹¹³ SRSA GRG 7/98/0/1 (1970)

¹¹⁴ SRSA GRG 7/98

work intoxicated and was subsequently 'severely reprimanded and warned if this should occur again stern action will be taken resulting in dismissal'.¹¹⁵

The names of employees at the hostels are of particular interest to former residents, and their families, who may remember encounters with the staff. In the published history of Oakbank Area Schools, series GRS/10437, Woodside Camp School's teachers are named as Milton Page and Joan Floyd and the headmasters as Koehne, Henley, Barnes, Nenke, Travers, Trainer and Parish respectively.¹¹⁶ Within File 8 of series GRG7/94 there is an outline of the general accounts for hostel staff.¹¹⁷ Similarly, File 2 of this same series contains considerable information pertinent to hostel employees, including a list of employees and their schedules, as well as documents outlining the pay rates for immigration staff at Woodville Reception Centre.¹¹⁸

Two superintendents who ran the individual hostel also warrant specific mention. Firstly, in 1952, the superintendent at Semaphore hostel was found to suffer from war neurosis, which impacted on his capacity to complete his job satisfactorily.¹¹⁹ The superintendent at Woodville Reception Centre came under review as well: 'both Mr Adams and Mr Cooper have complained at various times in connection with the superintendent, who would appear to have been under considerable mental strain'.¹²⁰

¹¹⁵ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1 (1969)

¹¹⁶ SRSA GRS 10437/0/1

¹¹⁷ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1

¹¹⁸ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1

¹¹⁹ SRSA GRG 7/24/1952/198

¹²⁰ SRSA GRG 7/94/0/1

Summary of Findings

The need for migrant hostels was borne out of an immigration policy which emerged in the 1940s and which saw migrants and DPs as a way to repopulate Australia. These hostels, which played an important role in the settlement of many New Australians, have largely been overlooked in Australia's wider immigration narrative and the opportunity to gather memories of life in these hostels is quickly shrinking as the number of former-residents still living declines. However the era of migrant hostels should not be forgotten, not only as they contributed to an important component of Australia's history but also because the outcomes of the migrant hostel scheme have potential implications for current immigration policy.

The wealth of information uncovered in this report will provide a solid base for further exploration and research. State Records holds an extensive collection on state-run migrant hostels which is particularly important as there is currently very little known regarding these hostels. The government files within the collection have a clear bureaucratic slant whilst the wide-ranging newspaper articles clearly favour the stance taken by migrants living in the hostels. However, despite possible bias (and the fact they illustrate the two extremes) the value of these files should not be underestimated.

It is also evident that members of the general public will find it difficult to use the collection at State Records as a way to gain specific information regarding their own (or that of their relatives) experiences within the migrant hostels. Nevertheless the collection at State Records provides invaluable insight into the general conditions and experiences within the migrant hostel scheme.

Records show that the facilities and conditions within the hostels greatly impacted on the experiences of migrants. Inadequate conditions in many of the hostels led to widespread discontent, legal action and, potentially, the decision of some migrants to return to their homelands. The hostels themselves seemed to be run on a strict routine. There were, however, occasions where unexpected events which caused a level of upheaval at the hostels, evacuees from the Darwin cyclone staying at Woodville Reception Centre being one such instance. Migrant education, political involvement in the scheme, the behavior of hostel employees and the cultural makeup of the residents all played a role in shaping the atmosphere at the individual hostels.

It would be an oversimplification to label the migrant hostel scheme as wholly positive or negative. From the records it appears that for some migrants their stay at a South Australian migrant hostel was a negative experience and for others the stay will have been remembered in a positive light. It would also be shortsighted to condemn all bureaucrats, officials and politicians as sacrificing the needs of the migrants in order to achieve policy goals. Throughout the records it is possible to see countless examples of employees who had the interests of the migrants in mind and who, to the best of their ability, undertook the tasks at hand with the intention of creating a functioning hostel where migrants could begin the settlement process.

The findings of this report provide an important source of information in regards to many of the little known migrant hostels. Records regarding the state-run hostels will be useful particularly for family research (as currently little is available in this area) and in gaining a better understanding of migrant hostels in South Australia. Records on the Commonwealth hostels help to create a richer narrative of the overall hostel scheme and consolidate information gathered from other sources.

Appendix

Migrant Hostels in South Australia: 1940s – 1980s

In this Research Advice:

- Background information on migrant hostels
- Individual migrant hostels in South Australia- series held
- Migrant experiences in the hostels- series held
- Migrant education - series held
- State and Federal Government interaction in the hostel scheme - series held
- Further sources

Migrant Hostels

The mid 1940s saw Australia embark on an ambitious immigration policy aimed at increasing the nation's stagnant population growth. This policy was implemented through various Federal and State Government schemes targeting specific migrant groups. However this influx of immigrants saw an increased need to find interim accommodation for these new arrivals. Migrant hostels provided short-term, communal housing for migrants following their arrival in Australia. Generally migrants were accommodated in hostels prior to finding employment and private housing. The living conditions within the hostels were diverse and the experiences of migrants varied significantly between hostels and migrant groups.

It should be noted that the terminology used to denote migrant hostels is not consistent and migrant hostels may also be referred to within the Records as; New Australian Centre, Migrant Camps, Migrant Accommodation Centre or Reception and Training Centre.

State Records of South Australia has an extensive collection regarding immigration and within this collection, and others, there are many records relating to migrant hostels in South Australia.

Please note series GRG7/24 contains many relevant files, some which have not been listed here. Further examination of GRG7/24 is recommended.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN MIGRANT HOSTELS: YEARS ACTIVE



**denotes state-run hostels*

NB: All dates are approximate

Individual Migrant Hostels: series held

Each migrant hostel had its own unique character and often hostels from a similar area or with a similar demographic of migrants were very different. For this reason it is important to consider each hostel as an independent entity. Family or personal inquiries will also be aided by approaching research into migrant hostels on a hostel by hostel basis.

Elder Park

| Series ID | Title / Description | Date Range |
|---|--|-------------------|
| GRG7/80 | Miscellaneous Papers (Includes Migrants listed for accommodation at Elder Park in 1958) | 1912 -1958 |
| GRG7/24/ <u>1949</u> /137 | Correspondence Files | 1949 - 1949 |
| GRG7/24/ <u>1950</u> /161 | Letters etc from Satisfied Migrants | 1950 - 1951 |
| GRG7/94/0/1 | Subject Files – Chief Migration Officer (Removal from Elder Park to Woodville) | 1963 - 1976 |
| GRG7/24/ <u>1950</u> /306 | Correspondence Files | 1950 - 1950 |
| GRG7/24/ <u>1949</u> /109 GRG7/24/ <u>1949</u> /109A GRG7/24/ <u>1949</u> /109B | Correspondence Files (Lists of Migrants Accommodated at Elder Park) | 1949 - 1949 |

Semaphore Hostel

| Series ID | Title / Description | Date Range |
|---------------------------|---|-------------|
| GRG7/24/ <u>1953</u> /118 | Superintendant of Semaphore Hostel, Menus | 1953 - 1953 |
| GRG24/6/ <u>1950</u> /190 | Ejection of migrants from Semaphore Hostel | 1950 - 1950 |
| GRG7/37 | Daily Returns of Migrants at Government Hostels | 1949 - 1952 |

Rosewater Hostel and Woodside Hostel

| Series ID | Title / Description | Date Range |
|---------------------------|---|-------------|
| GRG7/24/ <u>1950</u> /302 | Complaints re Comm British Migrants at Rosewater | 1950 - 1950 |
| GRG53/166/0/52 | Rosewater Gardens (Migrant Camp): Book 1279 | 1949 - 1949 |
| GRS10437/1/2 | Oakbank Area Schools: <i>Under the Gums 1938 -1988</i> | 1988 - 1988 |

Gepps Cross Hostel, Pennington Hostel and Glenelg Hostel

| Series ID | Title / Description | Date Range |
|----------------|--|-------------|
| GRG53/166/0/53 | Sketch books Gepps Cross Migrant Hostel: Book 1300 | 1950 - 1952 |
| GRS 9659/1 | Annual Reports, Technical Branch of Education Department | 1946 - 1971 |
| GRG7/70/0/8 | Publicity Photographs (includes Gepps Cross Hostel) | 1940 - 1960 |

Woodville Reception Centre

Woodville Reception Centre was opened in 1970 in response to the closing of the Elder Park Hostel. This hostel accommodated not only migrants but also public servants and students. The Immigration Department had offices and facilities attached to the hostel. Extensive records are available in regard to the Woodville Reception Centre.

| Series ID | Title / Description | Date Range |
|-------------|---|---------------|
| GRG7/96 | Photograph Album- Woodville Reception Centre | 1968 – 1970 |
| GRG75/83 | Correspondence files – State Immigration Office | no date range |
| GRG7/94/0/1 | Subject Files – Chief Migration Officer | 1964 – 1973 |
| GRG7/94/0/2 | Subject Files – Chief Migration Officer | 1964 – 1973 |
| GRG7/98 | Correspondence Files, Chief Migration Officer | 1965 – 1977 |

Migrant Experiences in Hostels: series held

Experiences varied between hostels and among migrants yet it is possible to extract from the records a general understanding of the diversity of life in the hostels. Newspaper articles and correspondence files illustrate both the noteworthy events and the everyday routines which shaped the daily lives of migrants in the hostels. Letters of complaint and of thanks provide a valuable look into migrants' personal perception of these hostels.

| Series ID | Title / Description | Date Range |
|---------------------------|--|-------------------|
| GRG7/24/ <u>1950</u> /302 | Complaints Re Comm British Migrants at Rosewater | 1950 – 1950 |
| GRG7/94 | Subject Files – Chief Migration Officer | 1964 -1973 |
| GRG7/98 | Correspondence Files, Chief Migration Officer | 1965 – 1977 |
| GRG7/24/ <u>1953</u> /118 | Superintendent of Semaphore Hostel, Menus | 1953 – 1953 |
| GRG7/24/ <u>1950</u> /161 | Letters etc from Satisfied Migrants | 1950 – 1951 |
| GRG7/38 | Miscellaneous papers, newspaper cuttings and other printed material relating to assisted immigration | 1946 - 1963 |

Migrant Education: series held

School records, particularly school journals, provide insight into the experiences of children who lived in the migrant hostels. In some cases schools interacted directly with the hostels however general school programs also illustrate broad attitudes towards migrants. Admission registers may provide names and nationalities of students, which can prove useful in family history research.

The following list is not exhaustive, children from migrant hostels attended many various schools, and in many cases the records have restricted access.

| Series ID | Title / Description | Date Range |
|------------------|---|-------------------|
| GRS 9659 | Annual Reports, Technical Branch of Education Department | 1946 - 1971 |
| GRG7/91 | Statistical Bulletins published by the Commonwealth Department of Immigration | 1950-1960 |
| GRS 7329/1 | Admissions register - Saint Leonard's Primary School | 1921 - 1999 |
| GRS 7330/1/1 | School Journal - Saint Leonard's Primary School | 1935 - 1985 |
| GRG18/219 | Gawler Primary School Records | 1905 - 1981 |
| GRS 13814 | Admission Register – Woodside Camp School | 1961 - 1962 |
| GRG18/382 | Woodside Camp School Records | 1949 - 1964 |
| GRS 10437/1/2 | Oakbank Area Schools: <i>Under the Gums 1938 -1988</i> | 1988 - 1988 |

Government Involvement in the Migrant Hostel Scheme: series held

By examining the role of government policy and the impact of political action, in regard to migrant hostels, a useful overview of the scheme as a whole is evident.

| Series ID | Title / Description | Date Range |
|----------------|---|-------------|
| GRG7/94/0/1 | Subject Files – Chief Migration Officer (Removal from Elder Park to Woodville) | 1964 -1973 |
| GRG7/98 | Correspondence Files, Chief Migration Officer | 1965 - 1977 |
| GRG7/92 | Printed Proceedings and Recommendations of Conference on Immigration | 1945 - 1976 |
| GRS 9659/1 | Annual Reports, Technical Branch of Education Department | 1946 - 1971 |
| GRS 7349/1 | Published Reference Works – Immigration Advisory Council committee on Social Patterns Inquiry into the Departure of Settlers from Australia, Oct 1972 | 1962 - 1975 |
| GRS 7349/1 | Published Reference Works – Conference of Migrant Task Force, Canberra, Feb 1974 | 1962 - 1975 |
| GRS 10986/1/14 | Department for Community Welfare: Branch Head Circular 1076 | 1/5/1978 |
| GRG7/38 | Miscellaneous papers, newspaper cuttings and other printed material relating to assisted immigration | 1946 - 1963 |

Other Sources:

National Archives: <http://www.naa.gov.au/collection/explore/migration/index.aspx>

Migration Museum: <http://www.history.sa.gov.au/migration/migration.htm>

State Library of South Australia: <http://www.slsa.sa.gov.au/site/page.cfm>

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State Records of South Australia GRG7/24 *Immigration, Publicity and Tourist Bureau Department*, Correspondence Files, file no. 118 of 1953

State Records of South Australia GRG7/37 *Immigration, Publicity and Tourist Bureau Department*, Daily Returns of Migrants at Government Hostels, Unit 1 (1950-1957)

State Records of South Australia GRG7/38 *Immigration, Publicity and Tourist Bureau Department*, Miscellaneous papers, newspaper cuttings and other printed material relating to assisted immigration, Unit 1 (1946-1963)

State Records of South Australia GRG7/38 *Immigration, Publicity and Tourist Bureau Department*, Miscellaneous papers, newspaper cuttings and other printed material relating to assisted immigration, Unit 2 (circa May 31 1950- circa Feb 7 1956)

State Records of South Australia GRG7/70 *Immigration, Publicity and Tourist Bureau Department*, Publicity Photographs, Unit 8 (1940-1960)

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State Records of South Australia GRG7/94 *Immigration, Publicity and Tourist Bureau Department*, Subject Files – Chief State Migration Officer, Unit 2 (1964-1973)

State Records of South Australia GRG7/96 *Immigration, Publicity and Tourist Bureau Department*, Photograph Album- Woodville Reception Centre, Unit 1 (circa 1971)

State Records of South Australia GRG7/98 *Immigration, Publicity and Tourist Bureau Department*, Correspondence Files concerning the affairs of the Chief State Migration Officer, Unit 1 (1965-1977)

State Records of South Australia GRG18/382 *Education Department*, Woodside Camp School Records (Restricted Access)

State Records of South Australia GRG24/6 *Colonial, later Chief Secretary's Office*, Correspondence Files, file no. 190 of 1950

State Records of South Australia GRG35/342 *Lands Department*, Glass Plate and other negatives, Glass Negatives: 14983, 14993 & 14995, Unit unknown (accessed online)

State Records of South Australia GRG53/166 *Engineering and Water Supply Department*, Sketch Books, Book 1279, Finsbury Park & Rosewater Gardens (Migrant Camp), Unit 52 (circa 1949)

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