

## Offices - former Dwelling

Place no.: 10522

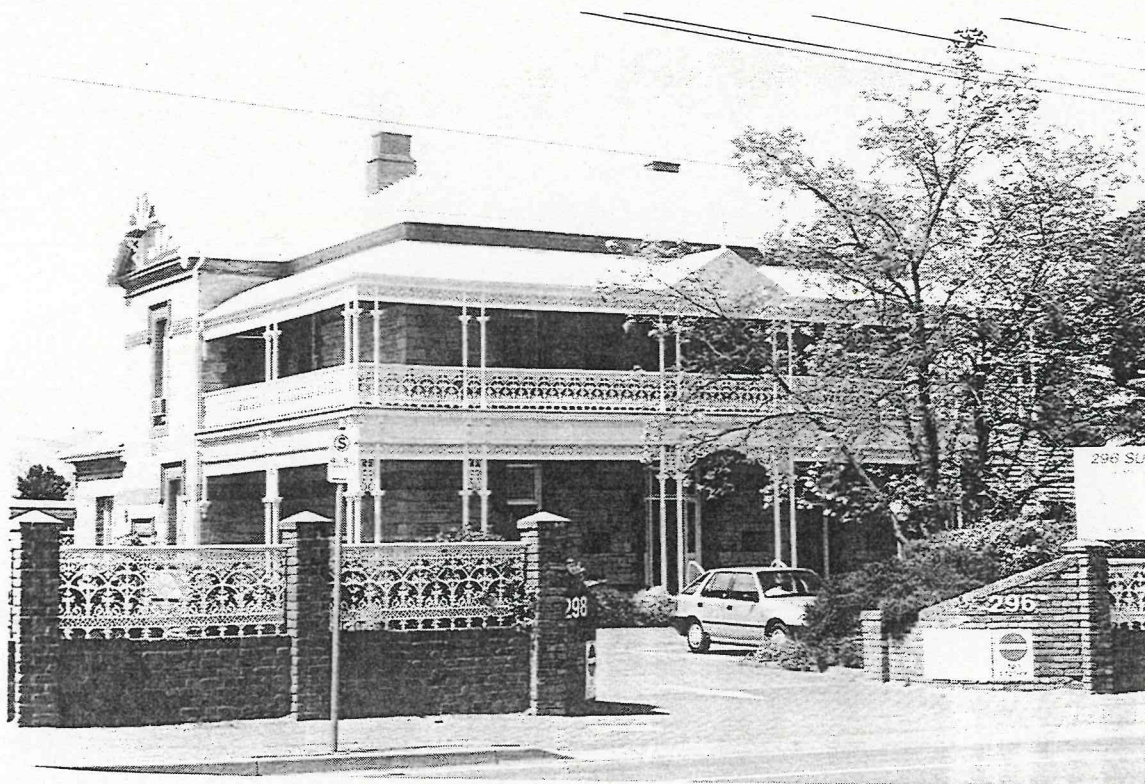
## LOCATION

**Address** 296 Payneham Road, Payneham  
**Land Description** Lots 1 & 2, Section 279, Hundred of Adelaide  
**Certificate of Title** CTs 5409/760; 5409/967

**OWNER** Mario Minuzzo Builders Pty Ltd  
296 Payneham Road  
Payneham SA 5070

**State Heritage Status** Registered. 20 November 1986 (HSA File No. 10522)  
**Other Assessments** Nil

Film No 1

*View from Payneham Road looking east*



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### HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

This grand circa 1890s mansion was constructed for Henry Sewell who commenced a nursery at Payneham in 1871. The nursery itself extended to eight acres by the turn of the Century and was notable nationally. Sewell had previously worked at the Botanic Gardens under the directorship of Dr Schomburg and applied his knowledge in the establishment of his own business.

This 'stately residence' was in the centre of storehouses, conservatories, shade houses, propagating frames, potting sheds, workshops and acres of well laid out beds as noted in *Garden and Field* of August 1905. After Sewell's death in the late 1920s the building was sold and was used as Wanslea Children's Home for a time. The current owners have carefully reinstated external elements and the interior of the house has been adapted for office use.

### STATEMENT OF HERITAGE VALUE

The house is significant for its connection with Henry Sewell and his Payneham nursery which represents the incidence and success of metropolitan horticultural nurseries quite close to the city in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. It also represents an interest the popularity of horticulture in South Australia in the late Victorian and early Edwardian period.

### REFERENCES

- Heritage South Australia File No 10522

OFFICES296 PAYNEHAM ROADPAYNEHAM. S.A.

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HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Historically, the building is significant because it was built around 1890 for Henry Sewell, nurseryman, who commenced a nursery at Payneham in 1871, increasing it from  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre to 8 acres by the turn of the century. A prominent nurseryman, Sewell owned 3 nurseries and a major sales outlet and is notable in his advocacy of palm tree growing in the State.

Architecturally, the building is a typical example of a 2-storey Victorian Italianate home popular at the time of its construction around the 1890's.

Environmentally, the building contributes to a predominantly commercial section of the Payneham Road streetscape. While not a landmark because of setback and screening by trees, it nevertheless is visually striking in scale and treatment in comparison to surrounding development.

The Integrity of the building externally is intact except for the rear and interior, where numerous alterations have occurred.

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NOMINATION SOURCE/THREAT/OWNER

This report has been prepared following a nomination by the owner, M.G. & P.A. Minuzza Pty. Ltd. Extensively remodelled internally, the building is currently leased by the owners and is not under any immediate threat.

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HERITAGE CONSERVATION BRANCH RECOMMENDATION:

..... *Brian C. Raymond* .....  
Manager

It is recommended that this item be included on the Register of State Heritage Items, and that it be categorised H2, H3, A3.

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SOUTH AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

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Chairman



South Australian Heritage Act 1978-82	Register of State Heritage Items ITEM EVALUATION SHEET Buildings and Structures	Ref. No. 6628-10522
	Item OFFICES FORMER HOME OF HENRY SEWELL PAYNEHAM NURSERY	Status -
Age c.1890	Subject Original Use: 0302 Single Dwelling Present Use: 0901 Commercial Office	Style Italianate

History	Context Associated with a prosperous nursery established in 1871, its growth and success until after the turn of the century representative of the interest and popularity of horticulture in S.A. It also reflects an earlier land use pattern since supplanted by inner suburbia.	E	VG	AG	FP	NA
	Person/Group Henry Sewell, proprietor of Payneham Nursery		X			
	Event No known event					X
	Architect/Builder Walter Roach and Brook			X		
Architecture	Design Two storey, single fronted Victorian Italianate building with two projecting gable ended side wings, return verandah, and first floor balcony, ornate carved timber barge boards and finials to gable ends.			X		
	Construction Random coursed, dressed stone with red brick surrounds and quoins. Corrugated iron roof, terra cotta frieze and wall decorations.			X		
	Interior Drastically altered - central passage removed to provide two large open space office areas. Upstairs - large open area flanked by individual offices on eastern side.				X	
	Representation A relatively rare example of the era and style on Payneham Road.		X			
Environment	Continuity Sited within a predominantly commercial/business area and flanked by a modern office single storey building. Establishes a scale not maintained by surrounding buildings.					X
	Local Character A survivor in a locality not remarkable for its historic or architectural character.		X			
	Landmark Screened by trees, the building is set back from Payneham Road and is not strikingly visible.					X
	Alterations Internal - walls removed, windows remodelled, ceilings replaced. External rear sections extensively remodelled a number of times with window infill, and new openings.				X	
Integrity	Condition Well maintained, renovations faithful to original fabric.			X		
	Compatibility					



South Australian Heritage Act 1978-82	Register of State Heritage Items ITEM EVALUATION SHEET Buildings and Structures	Ref. No. 6628-10522
	Item OFFICES 298 PAYNEHAM ROAD, PAYNEHAM	Prepared By: Robyn Taylor Iris Iwanicki

### Supplementary Information

**Adaptation:** Its current use as an office is appropriate, and any similar commercial use, such as professional rooms, restaurant, or consulting rooms would also be compatible. Any future adaptation should respect the existing external fabric and interior arches. No restriction should be placed upon internal modification except for the retention of arches.

**Interpretation:** Has limited potential for interpretation in its location and nature as far as a study of horticulture is concerned.

### History and Sources

The building at 296 Payneham Road, Payneham, is a tangible link with one of Adelaide's prominent nurserymen, Henry Sewell and his Payneham nursery located on portion of allotments 122 and 124 of Section 279; it was probably built around 1890.

Its owner, Henry Sewell, had first started his nursery at Payneham in 1871 after coming to South Australia from Oxfordshire, England, in 1865. He worked for Mr. Driffield and under the directorship of Dr. Schomburg at the Botanic Gardens before purchasing an initial half an acre of land at Payneham in order to establish his nursery. Interest in horticulture was intense from the outset of the colony's foundation - a well kept garden, a visible sign of the European imprint on an alien landscape which yielded familiar flowers and fruits for the settler and provided evidence of successful free settlement. Gardens and conservatories of prominent people during the 1860's and 1870's, such as those found in the ownership of the Hon. Geo. C. Hawker, John Hodgkiss, G.S. Fowler, Sir William Milne, R. Barr-Smith and Sir Thomas Elder were meticulously kept by teams of gardeners, many of whom went on to establish commercial nurseries. These nurseries supplied households with extensive varieties of plants - initially at fairly high prices. Burgess cites the reduction in price of various plants between 1870 and 1910 as they became more readily available through widespread propagation (p.274). According to Loyan (1885, p.213-215)

'The necessity of a public nursery garden was almost unknown a few years ago, but gardening has taken wonderful strides, and great convenience and direct benefit which these nurseries have been to the colony are freely recognised. The very high compliment Mr. G.A. Sala, the eminent journalist pays to South Australian gardens and to the extraordinary variety and beauty of their contents is to a great extent due to the spirited enterprise of nurserymen who have spared neither expense nor ingenuity in adding anything likely to be in the most remote degree horticulturally valuable or botanically interesting. When Mr. Sewell started nursery work nearly every pound spent in this way went to Melbourne or Sydney and Adelaide could only boast of such new plants as came through the Botanic Gardens. Now we introduce more than our share, and not only supply our own wants but those of our neighbours'.



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### History and Sources

By the 1880's, Payneham nursery was well known for the large variety of plants offered, including varieties developed by Henry Sewell such as 'Peach Blossom', 'Exquisite' and 'Lavender Queen' varieties of petunias. In 1881, 250,000 different pot plants were offered, giving an indication of the extensiveness of the stock for sale. Sewell's business had expanded by the turn of the century to four establishments, namely a shop at the Beehive Corner (later 33 Rundle Street), his large plant nurseries at Payneham, a rose and fruit tree nursery at Marden and a 'mountain nursery' at Aldgate, in which Azaleas, Heaths, Ericas, Boronias, Rhododendrons, Oaks, Planes, Elms, Cedars and Pines were raised. The nursery at Payneham included a 'stately residence', over 50,000 square feet of store houses, conservatories, shade houses, propagating frames, potting sheds, workshops and acres of well laid out beds. (Garden and Field, Aug. 1905, p.129-136). Sewell was actively involved in promoting his craft, serving as Vice-President of the Australian International Nurseryman's Association, as a promotor of the Jubilee Exhibition in 1887, a member of the Acclimatization and Zoological Society and a member of the South Australian Horticultural Society for over thirty years. He was also active in the community as a member of the Payneham District Council and the Freemasons. Between 1875 and 1892 he contributed regularly to the pages of Garden and Field, and promoted the growing of palms in particular in South Australia.

After his death in the late 1920's, his partner Frederick W. Bowels took over the business at Payneham and other nurseries were dispensed with. The business is still continued today as Payneham Plant Wholesalers over 5 blocks of land at the rear of the property, which is now under separate ownership. The building, after sale, became Wanslea Children's Home for a time. At a State and Regional level, the building is of historic interest because of its connection with Henry Sewell and the Payneham Nursery, representing the incidence and success of metropolitan nurseries in the latter part of the Nineteenth century quite close to the city.

### Sources:

- L.T.O. and G.R.O. Searches.
- Garden and Field, August 1905, p.129-136
- S.A. Post Office Directory 1895-1896, p.475.
- Loyan, G.E. Notable South Australians, Adel., 1885.
- Payneham Council Rate Assessment Books.
- Burgess, H.T. Cyclopaedia of South Australia, Adel. 1909.
- Swinbourne, Robert F.G.: Years of Endeavour, Adel., 1982.





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296 PAYNEHAM RD. PAYNEHAM. FACADE.

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6628-10522.

296 PAYNEHAM RD. PAYNEHAM.  
REAR DETAIL.

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FACADE - DETAIL. FEB '85.

