

## House, 'Sturtbrae'

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### DESCRIPTION

Random stone construction with brickwork to corners and opening surrounds. Each construction stage is distinguished by individual roof shapes. Little attention is given to detail except in the 1880s section.

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### HISTORY

'Sturtbrae' was built on part of Section 34 which was granted to Thomas Maslin in 1839. Maslin then settled at Aldinga and in 1848 William Shephard, a farmer, bought the Section from Maslin. The earliest part of the house was built by Shephard for his wife Anne and son William Thomas. This was a one roomed stone structure with an underground dairy, semi-excavated into the side of the slope which rises away from the creek, a small tributary of the Sturt River. This original room was added to and grew to be a house of five rooms by 1864.

William Shephard died sometime during the 1850s and his wife and son continued to expand the property. In 1860 they acquired the adjacent Section 33. William Thomas Shepard became an established figure in Mitcham and was councillor on the Mitcham District Council in 1877. In 1878 he purchased Section 35 which extended the farm area northward.

In 1886 the house was bought by George Perrin who extended it even further and then presented it to his daughter Mary Ann Walker as a wedding present in 1887. The Walkers lived in the house until it was bought by William G J Mills in January 1923. Mills had just left his family property Millbrae near Nairne in the control of his son and moved to Adelaide. He was elected member of the Legislative Council in 1918 and found he needed to be closer to the city. Mills was also the Chairman of the Country Party in 1921. 'Sturtbrae' was developed as a fine woolled Merino stud and a large orchard and vineyard were cultivated on the slopes of the hill above the house.

W G J Mills died in 1933 but the house and property remained in the Mills family and in 1954 was purchased by two of his daughters, May and Margaret, in partnership. The farmlands were subdivided in 1965 and 1966 and the suburb of Bellevue Heights created. The house and a large garden remain and are carefully maintained by the Mills sisters and relatives.

### STATEMENT OF HERITAGE VALUE

'Sturtbrae' is significant for being a reminder of early architectural development in Mitcham and for its association with historically significant families at both local and state levels. The building is a reminder of the once predominant rural landscape of the area and typifies the houses of early settlers in the area. Extensions and alterations to the building reflect increases in wealth or changes of ownership over a period of 40 years.

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### References

State Heritage Branch Files, File No. 10997

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**House, 'Sturtbrae'**

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**BVH:001****LOCATION**

**Address** 7 Bellevue Drive  
**Suburb** BELLEVUE HEIGHTS 5050  
**Owners** Mr S A & Mrs N R Apponyi, 7 Bellevue Drive, Bellvue Heights SA 5050  
**Allotment No** 40  
**Section** 34  
**CT** 3866/67  
**Hundred** Adelaide

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**State Heritage Status** Registered, 14 February 1985  
**Other Assessments**

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**SHR No 6628-10997****Film/Neg No**

To: The South Australian Heritage Committee

From: Head, European Section, Heritage Conservation Branch

Subject: REGISTER NOMINATION:  
DWELLING "STURTBRAE", 7 BELLEVUE ROAD, BELLEVUE HEIGHTS

Date: 13 October, 1982

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SUMMARY

This report has been prepared as part of a programme to process selected items identified in the Mitcham Heritage Survey.

Historically, "Sturtbrae" is significant for being a reminder of early agricultural development in Mitcham and for its association with historically significant families at both local and state levels.

Architecturally, the building is of little significance and aspects of early design and construction techniques are better represented elsewhere. It is however an interesting example of how a simple dwelling was progressively increased in size and improved in quality up to the 1880's.

Environmentally, Sturtbrae is important as an important reminder of the once predominant rural landscape of the area. It may be seen as an important greenscape between the Flinders University grounds and encroaching suburbia.

The Integrity of the building is fair. Although it is in reasonable condition, the recent pressed metal tiles are obtrusive.

Sturtbrae is not currently on any other heritage lists.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Sturtbrae, 7 Bellevue Drive, Bellevue Heights, be included on the Register of State Heritage Items, and that it be categorised A3, H2, H3.



Barry G. Rowney  
MAB:SK

South Australian Heritage Act 1978-80	Register of State Heritage Items ITEM EVALUATION SHEET Buildings and Structures						
	Item STURTBRAE 7 Bellevue Drive, Bellevue Heights						
Age Begun 1840s to 1880s	Theme		Office 6628-10997				
Period 1836-51 1852-1883	Subject SETTLEMENT - Early Settlement		Region 2 Adelaide Metro				
Building Type Dwelling	Style Early - Mid Victorian		Status				
<u>Qualitative Data</u>			<u>Grading</u>				
Component	Comment		E	VG	AG	FP	NA
<u>History</u>							
1. Context:	Established as a farm in the 1840s, "Sturtbrae" typifies the houses of early settlers in the Mitcham area. These dwellings grew as the district became more intensively cultivated and owners became more prosperous.			*			
2. Person/Group:	Established by the Shephard family, esp. W.T. Shephard, Sturtbrae has also been owned by W.G.J. Mills, MLC, and family from 1923.			*			
3. Specific Event:	Not yet established.					*	
<u>Architecture</u>							
4. Architect: Engineer: Builder:	Not yet established. Not yet established. Not yet established.						*
5. Design:	Unorthodox and haphazard planning, where the reputedly 1840's nucleus was added to. Each construction stage is distinguished by individual roof shapes. Little attention was given to detail, except in the 1880s section.					*	
6. Construction:	Random stone construction to all sections, with brickwork to corners and opening surrounds.				*		
7. Interior:	Relatively intact, since the last construction stage, but overall importance diminished by the numerous stages and hence tacky appearance.				*		
8. Representation:	An interesting example of a building which expanded with an increase of wealth or a change of ownership over a period of 40 years.			*			

I.E.S./D3/211081

South Australian Heritage Act 1978-80	Register of State Heritage Items ITEM EVALUATION SHEET Buildings and Structures	
	Item STURTBRAE 7 Bellevue Drive, Bellevue Heights	

Component	Comment	Grading				
		E	VG	AG	FP	NA
<u>Environment</u>						
9. Continuity:	Of significance in retaining some of the once broader rural atmosphere. With its vineyards, the item forms an interesting greenspace which complements the adjoining grounds of Flinders University.		*			
10. Local Character:	An important reminder of the early rural character of the Mitcham Area		*			
11. Landmark:	The property is situated in a valley and is dwarfed by the surrounding hills and residential development. It is however a well known historical landmark locally.			*		
12. Alterations:	The numerous construction stages have resulted in some alterations working but the most unsympathetic alteration is the pressed metal tiling on several roof areas.			*		
13. Condition:	In good physical condition.			*		
14. Compatibility:	Sturtbrae has been in continuous residential use.*					

<u>Supplementary Information</u>			
15. Adaptation:	Due to the awkward planning and size of the rooms, the item has limited to low adaptation potential.		
16. Interpretation:	Of little value as an active interpretation centre. May be used to illustrate the progression of a lifestyle in the local sense.		
17. Current Situation:	The property is presently owned by May and Margret Mills and there is no threat.		

Evaluated By	Kate McDougal Cons. Historian	Lothar Brasse Cons. Architect	Date
Reviewed By	Mark A. Butcher Register Supervisor		Date
South Australian Heritage Committee Categorization			Date

I.E.S./D3/211081

STURTBRAE, 7 BELLEVUE DRIVE, BELLEVUE HEIGHTS

The house known as Sturtbrae is on part of Section 34 of the Hundred of Adelaide. This section was part of Colonel William Light's second survey - Survey B - which made land in the Mitcham district available for settlement.

Section 34 was granted in 1839 to Thomas Maslin, who then settled at Aldinga, and in 1848 William Shephard a farmer bought the section from Maslin. The earliest part of the house was built by William Shephard for his wife Anne and son William Thomas. This was a one roomed stone structure with an underground dairy, semi-excavated into the side of the slope which rises away from the creek, a small tributary of the Sturt River. This original room was added to and grew to be a house of five rooms by 1864.

William Shephard died sometime during the 1850's and his wife and son continued to expand the property. In 1860 they acquired the adjacent section No. 33. William Thomas Shephard became an established figure in Mitcham and was councillor on the Mitcham District Council in 1877. In 1878 he purchased section 35 which extended the farm area northward. Shepherds Hill Rd. is a reminder of the early association of the area with the Shephard family.

In 1886 the house was bought by George Perrin who extended the house even further and then presented it to his daughter Mary Ann Walker as a wedding present in 1887. The Walkers lived in the house until it was bought by William G.J. Mills in January 1923. Mills had just left his family property Millbrae near Nairne in the control of his son and moved to Adelaide. He was elected a member of the Legislative Council in 1918 and found he needed to be closer to the city. Mills was also the Chairman of the Country Party in 1921. Sturtbrae was developed as a fine woolled Merino stud and a large orchard and vineyard were cultivated on the slopes of the hill above the house.

W.G.J. Mills died in 1933 but the house and property remained in the Mills family and in 1954 was purchased by two of his daughters, May and Margret, in partnership. The farm lands were subdivided in 1965 and 1966 and the suburb of Bellevue Heights created. The house and a large garden remain and are carefully maintained by the Mills sisters and relatives.

Sturtbrae is important for its reminders of early agricultural development in Mitcham and its association with historically significant families during the growth and consolidation of the area.

Sources

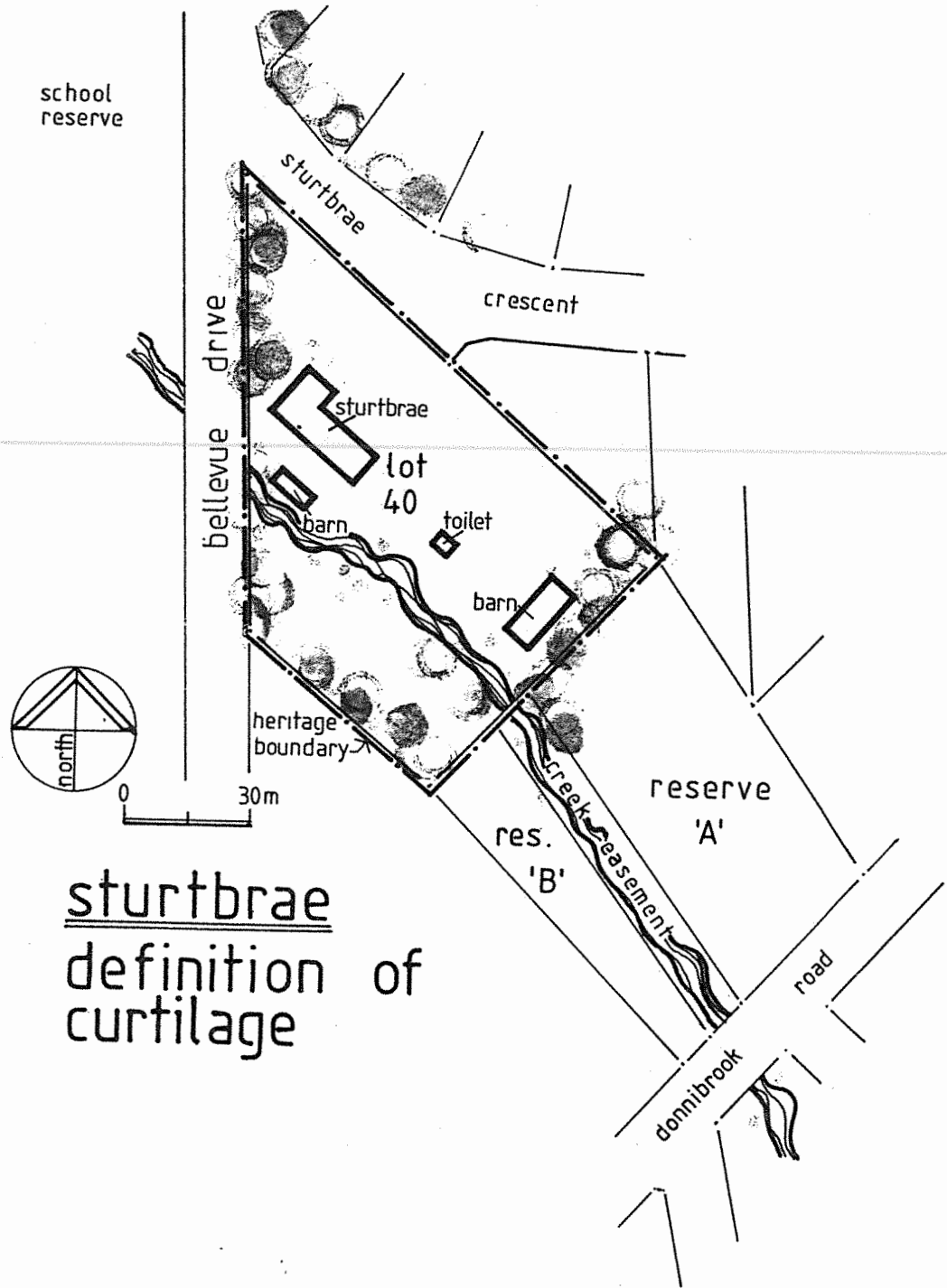
- M. Mills, Millbrae and its Founding Family (Adel. 1973)  
W.A. Norman, The History of the City of Mitcham (Adel., 1953)  
Lothar Brasse and Alexandra Marsden City of Mitcham Heritage Survey (Dec. 1979)  
G.R.O. & L.T.O. documents  
Interview with Miss May Mills, Sturtbrae

Kate McDougall

REGISTER HISTORIAN

KMcD/SKSK

22 6 82



sturtbrae  
definition of  
curtilage



FILM 497  
NO 13

STURTBRAE, BELLEVUE HTS.

JUNE '02  
LATHAM





FILM 497  
NO 10

STURTBRAE, BELLEVUE HTS.  
TOWARDS THE 1886 SECTION

JUNE '82  
LOHMAN