

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT REPORT

NAME: Former West End Brewery Garden
(former SABCo Brewery Garden)

PLACE: 26531

ADDRESS: 107 Port Road, Thebarton
(River Torrens/Karrawirri Parri (adjacent Adam Street Thebarton))

This heritage assessment considers that the place meets criteria (f) and (g). Refer to Summary of State Heritage Place for final approved wording, including criteria statements.



Former West End Brewery Garden (former SABCo Brewery Garden), view of the eastern half of the garden from the Hindmarsh Bridge

Source: DEW Files 21 April 2021

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Statement of Heritage Significance:

The Former West End Brewery Garden (former SABCo Brewery Garden) and the West End Brewery Christmas Riverbank Display that is held in the garden at the end of each year, has strong cultural associations with a broad cross section of the South Australian community. From humble beginnings in 1959, both the garden and the displays have

been expanded to fill the riverbank adjacent to the former West End brewery. Throughout the year, many of the permanent structures in the Christmas display sit amongst the finely manicured lawn and garden beds, reminding those who pass of the scene that awaits them at Christmas time. For many South Australian families, it has become a rite of passage as parents and grandparents bring their children and grandchildren to view the display that they themselves visited as children.

The garden is also closely associated with SABCo, the State's largest and most profitable brewery. Designed, built and maintained by SABCo employees with support from SABCo, the brewery garden demonstrates SABCo's desire to give something back to the community, while also developing a positive public image of the company.

Relevant South Australian Historical Themes

Draft themes as of June 2020

4. Building Settlements, Towns and Cities

4.3 Shaping the suburbs (pre and post WW2)

5. Developing South Australian economies

5.8 Developing manufacturing, engineering and construction and service industries

5.9 Supporting workers and workplaces

5.11 Developing SA's tourism industry (welcoming tourists and visitors)

6. Developing Social and Cultural Life (Supporting and building communities)

6.5 Participating in sport, leisure and recreation (including eating, drinking and holidays)

6.6 Commemorating achievements, milestones and significant events

6.7 Continuing cultural traditions

6.8 Marking the phases of life

Comparability / Rarity / Representation:

The brewery garden is associated with gardens, specifically corporate and public gardens.

Gardens and designed landscapes are underrepresented in the South Australian Heritage Register (the Register).¹ A search of the Register using the term 'garden' yields 46 entries, while 'landscape' and 'landscaping' once further refined to include only designed landscapes yields a further six results.

The 'garden' results can be broadly classified into four types of entries:

- 7 entries are for State Heritage Places that are parks and reserves, forestry plantations, and/or avenues
- 7 entries are for State Heritage Places where an avenue, grove or single or a groups of trees are associated with a structure or dwelling
- 13 entries where the listing as a State Heritage Place is due to the heritage significance of the garden or designed landscape
- 19 entries where the significance of the State Heritage Place is identified as house and garden

The 13 State Heritage Places that have been entered in the Register because the garden or designed landscape is considered significant are:

- Pioneer Women's Memorial Garden, King William Road Adelaide, 1941 (SHP 16177) 1941
- Burdett's Wildflower Garden, Burdetts Road Basket Range, 1920s -1930s (SHP 14690)
- Edna Walling Garden, 11 Briar Avenue Medindie, 1939 (SHP 26302)
- Waite Arboretum, Waite Agricultural Research Institute, Waite Road, Urrbrae, 1928 (SHP 14118)
- Women's War Memorial Garden, Cross of Sacrifice and Stone of Remembrance, Pennington Garden King William Road North Adelaide, early 1920s (SHP 16182)
- St Vigeans Estate Garden, 9 Laurel Road, Stirling, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (SHP 14679)
- Glenalta Garden, 55 Old Carey Gully Road, Stirling, 1880s and 1920s (SHP 13961)
- Beechwood (former St Wilfred's) Garden, Snows Road, Stirling, late nineteenth century (SHP 10963)
- Soldiers' Memorial Gardens, Sunter Street, Strathalbyn, late 1910s – early 1920s (SHP 11751)
- Soldiers' Memorial Gardens, Esplanade Street, Victor Harbor, 1917 (SHP 12746)
- Wittunga Botanic Garden, Shepherds Hill Road Blackwood, 1902 to present (SHP 14781)
- Mount Gambier Cave Gardens and Environs State Heritage Area, Commercial Street East Mount Gambier, (SHA)
- Cave Gardens Reserve, 38 Commercial Street East, Mount Gambier (SHP 14725)

With the exception of the Pioneer Women's Memorial Garden that opened in 1941, all of these examples pre-date the Second World War.

Selected examples from the other three categories include:

- Hazelwood Park [Boundaries: Greenhill Rd, Howard & Davenport Tces, Hazelwood Ave & Hawthorn Cres], Greenhill Road, Hazelwood Park (SHP 14674)
- Silvicultural Reserves (P. radiata 1900, P. canariensis 1903), Kuitpo Forest, Brookman Road, Kuitpo (SHP 17050)

- Mann Terrace Olive Plantation, Mann Terrace North Adelaide (SHP 10960)
- Ring of Oaks associated with Salem Baptist Church, John Fisher Avenue, Gumeracha (SHP 12747)
- Mayura Homestead (Homestead, Early Kitchen & entrance avenue of pines), Mayurra Road Via Millicent (SHP 13843)
- Coward Springs Railway Site, including the railway station master's house, the engine driver's cabin, the original bore, rainwater tanks, date palms and tamarisk trees, near William Creek via Port Augusta (SHP 16266)
- Forest Lodge House, Outbuildings, Garden and Garden Components, 19 Pine Street, Stirling (SHP 16242)
- Loreto Convent (former Dwelling ('The Acacias'), Stables & Garden), 316 Portrush Road, Marryatville, (SHP 14151)
- Marbury School, including Main House (former dwelling 'Wairoa'), & Guesthouse, Stables, Garden, Gatehouse and Gates, 160 Mount Barker Road, Aldgate (SHP 13962)

The 6 State Heritage Places that have a designed landscape identified as a part of the place's significance are:

- Marion Cultural Centre, Warracowie Way, Oaklands Park, 2001, (SHP 26497)
- Adelaide Fire Station, 81-129 Wakefield Street, 1980s (SHP 26356)
- Kathleen Lumley College including Amenities Wing, Residential Wing, Master's Residence, Central and Front Gardens, Transformer Building, Southern Boundary Walls and Gates, 111-124 MacKinnon Parade, 51 Finnis Street, North Adelaide, 1968, landscaping designed by Ray Holliday (SHP 26350)
- Former IPEC Building, 259 Glen Osmond Road Frewville, 1963 landscape designed by Robin Sinclair Hill (SHP 13990)
- Belair National Park, Belair, late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (SHA)
- Umpherston Sinkhole, 160 Jubilee Highway East, Mount Gambier, 1886, (SHP 14734)

Four of the six places were created after the Second World War. Each of the four places include a designed landscape as a part of the design ethos for the site and the landscaping is integral to the significance of the place. The two other examples were created in the late nineteenth century and are a designed landscape (Belair National Park) and garden (Umphertson Sinkhole).

While the Brewery Garden (subject of this assessment) is a corporate/commercial/factory garden/designed landscape, it was also created to improve the public amenity of the River Torrens. As such it is also worth comparing the Brewery Garden with other municipal projects. Detailed research on South Australia's corporate/factory/commercial and municipal designed landscapes is limited, however, there were many projects completed in the second half of the twentieth century that are of a comparable quality, albeit that many have since been lost or have been re-landscaped.

In the 1950s and 1960s John Dwight, head of Parks and Gardens Department for the South Australian Housing Trust (SAHT), landscaped the grounds of a number of companies that built factory premises in the industrial area at Elizabeth. Most have since been built over or the landscaping redeveloped. Other examples of municipal and factory landscape designs include:

- Grundy Gardens, Adelaide Park Lands, Victoria Drive, Stanley Orchard, 1933-1936, remain intact.
- Veale Gardens, Adelaide Park Lands, South Terrace, 1959, remain intact.
- Elizabeth Town Centre, Philip Highway, Elizabeth, designed by John Dwight and Geoff Shedley, 1960s, now largely reconfigured or lost due to expansion of the shopping centre.
- Mt Lofty Botanic Garden, off Mount Lofty Summit Road, Mount Lofty, 1962-1965, designed by Allan Correy, remains intact.
- Highways Department Building landscaping, Warwick Street, Walkerville, 1963 designed by Allan Correy, since redeveloped.
- Napier Building Gardens, University of Adelaide, North Terrace, Adelaide, 1963, designed by Allan Correy, now substantially modified.
- Athelstone Shopping Centre, Gorge Road, Athelstone, c.1970, won a Civic Trust Award in 1971, the shopping centre has been entirely redeveloped resulting in the loss of its landscaping.
- Fremont Park, Main North Road, Elizabeth, designed by Robin Sinclair Hill, 1978, entirely reconfigured.
- Monier Ltd, 'Display Garden', Grand Junction Road Ottaway, designed by IG Addison, 1980, little remains of the original landscaping.
- Noarlunga Regional Centre, Beach Road, Christies Beach, 1980s, since reduced and simplified.

**Assessment against Criteria under Section 16 of the *Heritage Places Act 1993*.
All Criteria have been assessed using the 2020 Guidelines.**

(a) it demonstrates important aspects of the evolution or pattern of the State's history.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should be closely associated with events, developments or cultural phases which have played a significant part in South Australian history. Ideally it should demonstrate those associations in its fabric.

Places will not normally be considered under this criterion if they are of a class of things that are commonplace, or frequently replicated across the State, places associated with events of interest only to a small number of people, places associated with developments of little significance, or places only reputed to have been the scene of an event which has left no trace or which lacks substantial evidence.

SABCo is a significant and once prominent South Australian business that was integral to the South Australian brewing industry. While brewing beer was its main business, SABCo, like other South Australian businesses, had philanthropic interests and wished

to give something back to the community. It was this desire that resulted in SABCo's senior management supporting Andrew Crooke's (SABCo brewer) suggestion to improve the riverbank adjacent to the brewery and turn what had traditionally been land used as a rubbish dump into a garden. Beginning with Christmas in 1959, each year the brewery garden became the site for a variety of seasonal displays created by brewery employees with the Christmas Display becoming the main and eventually the only seasonal display.

Like the Christmas Pageant begun in 1933 and the more recent Lights of Lobethal begun in 1983, the Christmas Riverbank Display has become a part of South Australia's social and cultural life and demonstrates how South Australians engage with the Christian tradition of Christmas. However, there are many places that also represent this ongoing cultural tradition, including the thousands of Christian places of worship built in South Australia. The association between the brewery garden and the Christmas display held there each year, and the people of South Australia is better represented by criterion (f).

Similarly, the brewery garden is also one of many gardens created in South Australia during the twentieth century (see comparability, rarity and representation) and doesn't demonstrate an important aspect of South Australian's designed landscape or other history. The brewery garden does have a direct association with SABCo, a significant South Australian organisation and this aspect of its importance to South Australia is better represented under criterion (g).

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** criterion (a).

(b) it has rare, uncommon or endangered qualities that are of cultural significance.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should demonstrate a way of life, social custom, industrial process or land use which is no longer practised, is in danger of being lost, or is of exceptional interest. This encompasses both places which were always rare, and places which have become scarce through subsequent loss or destruction.

Places will not normally be considered under this criterion if their rarity is merely local, or if they appear rare only because research has not been done elsewhere, or if their distinguishing characteristics have been degraded or compromised, or if they are at present common and simply believed to be in danger of becoming rare in the future.

The brewery garden is one of many public/commercial/factory gardens created in South Australia during the twentieth century, for example Grundy Gardens and Veale Gardens in the Adelaide Parklands. While a number of gardens of this type have been extensively modified or even lost over the years, such as the Monier Ltd Display Garden, they cannot be considered to be uncommon, rare or endangered as they belong to a landscape typology that is still being created, often in association with a building, for example the Marion Cultural Centre (2001) (SHP 26356). As the brewery

garden cannot be considered to have rare, uncommon or endangered qualities, no further tests have been considered for criterion (b).

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** criterion (b).

(c) it may yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the State's history, including its natural history.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should provide, or demonstrate a likelihood of providing, information that will contribute significantly to our knowledge of the past. The information should be inherent in the fabric of the place. The place may be a standing structure, an archaeological deposit or a geological site.

Places will not normally be considered under this criterion simply because they are believed to contain archaeological or palaeontological deposits. There must be good reasons to suppose the site is of value for research, and that useful information will emerge. A place that will yield the same information as many other places, or information that could be obtained as readily from documentary sources, may not be eligible.

The brewery garden has been a constantly evolving designed landscape that has become an institution over the last 60 years for many South Australian's during the Christmas season. While the garden has continued to develop over time and suffered from both drought and flood, it has been recorded in hundreds of thousands of images over the years. Consequently, it is unlikely to yield information that will substantially contribute to the cultural history of South Australia that is not already well documented or readily available from other sources.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** criterion (c).

(d) it is an outstanding representative of a particular class of places of cultural significance.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should be capable of providing understanding of the category of places which it represents. It should be typical of a wider range of such places, and in a good state of integrity, that is, still faithfully presenting its historical message.

Places will not be considered simply because they are members of a class, they must be both notable examples and well-preserved. Places will be excluded if their characteristics do not clearly typify the class, or if they were very like many other places, or if their representative qualities had been degraded or lost. However, places will not be excluded from the Register merely because other similar places are included.

The brewery garden belongs to a class of places known as twentieth century public gardens or designed landscapes. The broad characteristics of the class include stone retaining walls and other hardscaping such as pathways and stairs, expanses of

manicured lawns, water features, and garden beds that feature massed colourful plantings and/or mixed plantings of trees and shrubs.

To be an outstanding representative of a twentieth century public garden, the brewery garden would need to be an exceptional or pivotal or influential example of the class. The arrangement of the built and living elements (design characteristics) are typical of the class and cannot be described as being designed or constructed to a higher quality than would usually be found in this type of designed landscape. Elements of the garden such as the grotto and cascade might once have been considered of a higher quality than typically expected of the class, however, they have since been either removed (grotto) or simplified (cascade with fountains) to a point that this can no longer be considered to be the case.

In many respects the brewery garden echoes earlier examples of other public gardens constructed in the middle third of the twentieth century, such as Grundy Gardens (1933-1936) in the Adelaide Park Lands and therefore doesn't encapsulate an evolutionary stage in the development of the class. Similarly, gardens built after it such as Veale Gardens drew inspiration from overseas examples rather than those in South Australia, and the brewery garden is not known to have influenced the design of other public gardens built in South Australia after 1959. While the brewery garden contains many of the main characteristics of the class of place, it is not considered to be an exceptional, pivotal or influential example.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** criterion (d).

(e) it demonstrates a high degree of creative, aesthetic or technical accomplishment or is an outstanding representative of particular construction techniques or design characteristics.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should show qualities of innovation or departure, beauty or formal design, or represent a new achievement of its times. Breakthroughs in technology or new developments in design would qualify, if the place clearly shows them. A high standard of design skill and originality is expected.

Places would not normally be considered under this criterion if their degree of achievement could not be demonstrated, or where their integrity was diminished so that the achievement, while documented, was no longer apparent in the place, or simply because they were the work of a designer who demonstrated innovation elsewhere.

While the brewery garden is an attractively landscaped portion of the Torrens riverbank, the design of the space, hard landscape elements and the planting scheme are all very modest, and in many respects reflect typical elements of public or municipal landscaping. For example the stone retaining walls, simple bed shapes (rectangular and kidney), mass planting of a single specimen plant (canna lilies), expanses of manicured lawn and background plantings of trees and shrubs. The inclusion of the model structures and animals may be unusual and quirky, however,

those elements of the garden have also been constructed using typical building techniques and materials and while well executed are not of an exceptionally high standard of design nor do they demonstrate a high degree of originality.

The brewery garden is a much loved garden, however, it does not demonstrate a high degree of creative, aesthetic or technical accomplishment nor is it an outstanding representative of a particular construction technique or design characteristic.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** criterion (e).

(f) it has strong cultural or spiritual association for the community or a group within it.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should be one which the community or a significant cultural group have held in high regard for an extended period. This must be much stronger than people's normal attachment to their surroundings. The association may in some instances be in folklore rather than in reality.

Places will not be considered if their associations are commonplace by nature, or of recent origin, or recognised by a small number of people, or not held very strongly, or held by a group not widely recognised, or cannot be demonstrated satisfactorily to others.

The brewery garden and the West End Brewery Christmas Riverbank Display that is held in the garden each year from November until 31 December, has strong cultural associations with a broad cross section of the South Australian community. From humble beginnings in 1959, when the first Christmas Display was exhibited in the garden, both the garden and the displays have been expanded to fill the riverbank adjacent to the brewery. Throughout the year many of the permanent structures in the Christmas display sit amongst the finely manicured lawn and garden beds, reminding those who pass of the scene that awaits them at Christmas time, when the garden is fully dressed and illuminated at night.

Tens of thousands of people come to visit the garden during November and December to view the Christmas display. For many families, it has become a rite of passage as parents and grandparents bring their children and grandchildren to view the display that they themselves visited as children. The brewery garden and the West End Brewery Christmas Riverbank Display it hosts each year has become a significant South Australian cultural tradition that has widely recognised associations for many South Australians.

It is recommended that the nominated place **fulfils** criterion (f).

(g) it has a special association with the life or work of a person or organisation or an event of historical importance.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place must have a close association with a person or group which played a significant part in past events, and that association should be demonstrated in the fabric of the place. The product of a creative person, or the workplace of a person whose contribution was in industry, would be more closely associated with the person's work than would his or her home. Most people are associated with many places in their lifetime, and it must be demonstrated why one place is more significant than others.

Places will not generally be considered under this criterion if they have only brief, incidental or distant association, or if they are associated with persons or groups of little significance, or if they are associated with an event which has left no trace, or if a similar association could be claimed for many places, or if the association cannot be demonstrated. Generally the home or the grave of a notable person will not be entered in the Register unless it has some distinctive attribute, or there is no other physical evidence of the person's life or career in existence.

The brewery garden is closely associated with the South Australian Brewing Company (SABCo).

SABCo was formed in 1888 after the merger of two prominent breweries, William Simm's West End brewery (Hindley Street) and Sir Edwin Smith's Kent Town brewery with William Rounsevell's wine and spirits company. While the wine and spirits portion of the business was disposed of in 1893, SABCo quickly grew to become the largest and most profitable brewery in South Australia.

In 1938, SABCo acquired their major competitor Walkerville Co-Operative Brewing Co. acquiring the Thebarton site and running it and the West End brewery (Hindley Street) until 1980, when the Hindley Street site was closed and demolished. In the decades after 1938, SABCo made improvements and expanded the facilities at both breweries, including developing the brewery garden at Thebarton in 1959 (subject of this assessment). While the phases of development and redevelopment that took place to brewery buildings and plant after 1938, mean the West End brewery (Thebarton) doesn't demonstrate a close association with SABCO in the same way other places do such as the Kent Town Malt House and Brewery (SHP 10268) and the company's administrative headquarters on Hindley Street (SHP 13354), the brewery garden does have a close association with SABCo.

The idea to create the garden was devised by SABCo brewer Andrew Crooke and supported by SABCo's Managing Director Roland Jacobs and General Manager Ron Aitken. SABCo intended to connect with the community by remediating the degraded riverbank and providing a display for the community's benefit. The first display was created for Christmas 1959.

In the following decades, SABCo supported the ongoing improvement and development of the garden, both financially and also by enabling brewery staff to create and maintain the garden and the seasonal displays in it. While the garden is not related to brewing, which is SABCo's core business, the brewery garden demonstrates other elements of SABCo business, including company philanthropy

and marketing of its image. The brewery garden is closely associated with SABCo and its desire to give something to the community, while also developing a positive public image of the company.

It is recommended that the nominated place **fulfils** criterion (g).

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

A linear garden on the southern bank of the River Torrens, extending west approximately 220m from the Hindmarsh Bridge towards the Sir William Goodman Bridge (SHP 10987). The brewery garden slopes towards the River Torrens and features:

- a large garden bed to the rear of the garden that extends its full length and is supported by stone retaining walls dissected at intervals with paths and stairways and planted with mature trees and shrubs including conifers and poplars.
- a large expanse of manicured lawn.
- a number of feature garden beds within the lawn, namely
 - 3 long rectangular beds supported with stone retaining walls, 2 are mass planted with red canna lilies and 1 with mixed conifers and shrubs
 - square garden bed with stone retaining walls and a concrete handle, containing hedged and topiary shrubs, giving the appearance of a basket or crown
 - circular bed with a single feature planting of bird of paradise plant
 - kidney-shaped bed, mass planted with apricot-coloured canna lilies
- a model red brewery truck set within a rockery planted with conifers (this is the remains of the original grotto which has been largely removed).
- model animals, such as deer, kangaroos and horse, and toadstool dotted about the lawn and garden beds
- a large rockery with pond (was once the cascade) featuring an island with statues of a kangaroo and emu in the centre
- time capsule celebrating centenary of SABCo,
- model 'inn' of the nativity. During the year the 'inn' doors are kept closed, however at Christmas they are opened displaying key figures from the nativity.
- model of a volcano with people inside depicting the Roman god 'Vulcan'
- Model of a half-timbered 'mill' with waterwheel and garden bed to front
- Model of a tree stump

Elements of Significance:

Elements of heritage significance include (but are not necessarily limited to):

- Layout of the garden and hard landscaping such as stone retaining walls, pathways and stairs
- Garden beds facing the river
- Mass planting of canna lilies (red coloured flowers) in the garden beds (not necessarily the current plants, it is the concept of mass planting of red canna lilies that is significant)

- Mass planting of different conifer species to create colour and texture (not necessarily the current trees and shrubs. It is the concept of the planting scheme that is significant)
- Model animals and toadstool located throughout the garden
- Model nativity inn, brewery truck, volcano (and figures inside), mill and tree stump
- Manicured expanses of lawn
- Remains of the grotto
- Pond with island and rockery (remains of the cascade)
- Square garden bed with plantings clipped to appear as if it is a basket or crown

Elements not considered to contribute to significance of place include (but are not necessarily limited to):

- The Hindmarsh Bridge, and the road and foot paths that pass above the garden

HISTORY

Abridged history of South Australian Brewing Company at Southwark/Thebarton

(Please refer to the West End Brewery Assessment Report (26522) for the full history of the brewery and SABCo, if required.)

In 1888, William Simms, owner of the West End Brewery on Hindley Street; Sir Edwin Smith, the owner of the Kent Town Brewery located on the corner of Rundle Street and Dequetteville Terrace, Kent Town; and William Rounsevell, owner of a wine and spirit business, announced the merger of their respective businesses to create the South Australian Brewing, Malting & Wine & Spirit Company Ltd.² In 1893, the wine and spirits portion of the business was sold and the South Australian Brewing Company Ltd (SABCo) came into being.

After the 1938 acquisition of its major competitor, the Walkerville Co-Operative brewing Company, SABCo operated two brewery sites: the West End Brewery (Hindley Street) and Southwark Brewery (Thebarton). The two sites operated independently until 1949 when administration was centralised in the SABCo head office on Hindley Street (SHP 13354).³

In the early 1950s, plans to expand operations at the Southwark Brewery (Thebarton) were implemented. Following this period of expansion and improvement, brewer Andrew Cooke suggested improving the appearance of the riverbank in 1958, leading to the creation of the brewery garden (see below).⁴

Annual reports from the 1960s indicate a range of new facilities and plant were built and/or installed during the decade.⁵ Then in 1971, SABCo restructured to become a holding company and was renamed South Australian Brewing Holdings Limited, with brewing conducted by the South Australian Brewing Company. Further improvements

and expansion occurred at the Southwark Brewery in the 1970s to enable the closure of the West End Brewery (Hindley Street) in 1980.

Further upgrades and improvements of the brewery took place in the 1980s while the company continued to diversify, acquiring a variety of new businesses. By the early 1990s, SA Brewing had become one of the largest manufacturers of water heaters in the world and appliances in Australia, and owned numerous packaging and beverage companies. The nature of these business acquisitions was such that brewing became a minor sideline for the company, and in 1993 SA Brewing announced a complete restructure. SA Brewing Holdings Ltd became Southcorp Holdings Limited and divided the business into four portfolios and the brewing division and brewery was sold to Lion Nathan. In 2009, Lion Nathan was acquired by Japanese company Kirin Holdings Co Ltd.⁶ The garden and Christmas Display continued under the new owners.

Brewery Garden

Michael Cudmore suggests that the idea to improve the appearance of the southern bank of the River Torrens, adjacent to the Southwark Brewery (later West End Brewery) was made in 1958 by Andrew Crooke, SABCo brewer. The idea was supported by General Manager Ron Aitken after he visited the Anheuser Busch brewery in Tampa Florida.⁷ In 1958-1959, Anheuser Busch established a new brewery on a 160 acre site, creating extensively landscaped grounds that became a show piece for brewery tours.⁸



Landscaping undertaken by Anheuser Busch at their new brewery in Tampa, Florida, c.1960s

Source: <http://bgthistory.com/attractions/defunct-attractions/anheuser-busch-brewery/>

While the South Australian site is substantially smaller, Aitken and Roland Jacobs (SABCo Managing Director) viewed the proposed improvements as a means to tidy and enhance land that had previously been used as a rubbish dump and to connect the brewery with the community.⁹



The bank as it appeared in c.1956

Source: SABCo Annual Report, 1956



Work on the garden begins, with dirt brought in to fill and level out some of the hollows in the bank, 1959

Source: SABCo Annual Report 1960.

George Rauch is credited with the design of the brewery garden and would later be instrumental in establishing Sab-Arumba at Walker Flat, a holiday camp for SABCo employees. Rauch and other SABCo employees, with financial assistance from SABCo, undertook the work required to create the built elements in the garden and replant the river bank, making further improvements each year. The first Christmas display held in 1959, was very simple, however, noticeable improvements were in place for the first Adelaide Festival of Arts display that was installed only a few months later in 1960.



First Christmas Display, 1959, note the grotto (left), garden bed with stone retaining walls at rear of the garden and rubble (far right) that will become the cascade

Source: Painter, p.285.



Display for the first Adelaide Festival of Arts, 1960, incorporated the Festival logo, note the growth of the plants and improvements to the lawn

Source: SABCo Annual Report 1960



Display for the 1962 Adelaide Festival of Arts, note the completion of the cascade (mid right)

Source: SABCO Annual Report 1962

In keeping with SABCo management's aim to create a connection between the brewery and community, a number of seasonal displays were installed in any one year, including annual displays for Easter and Christmas and more periodic events such as the Adelaide Festival of Arts and the Royal visit by Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip in 1963.



Brewery garden display for the visit of Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip, 1963, note the addition of the lily pads in the river

Source: SABCo Annual Report, 1963



Brewery Garden Christmas Display 1968, note the cascade, grotto and fountains in the river and cascade

Source: SABCo Annual Report 1969



Easter (1980) (left) and Christmas (1981) (right) displays

Source: SABCo Annual Reports 1980 and 1982



This image taken in c.1980 clearly illustrates the initial focus on developing the eastern end of the garden. Note the modification to the cascade, which has been scaled back to a large pond with island and a more natural cascade to its west, also note the growth of the conifer plantings. In the following decades, the western half of the garden is developed further.

Source: SABCo Annual Report, 1980

While displays were common for many seasonal occasions in the early years of the garden, the Christmas Display has become the annual event in the brewery garden. A vast array of 'temporary' props that feature only during the Christmas season are installed by the brewery and the whole garden is illuminated at night. As dusk falls and the lights are switched on, the northern side of the river bank fills to capacity as families come to view the display in what has become an 'iconic South Australian tradition'.¹⁰ One source suggests that as many as 300,000 people visit the Christmas display each year.¹¹

While the garden has been changed over the decades, with modifications to the planting scheme and new permanent displays, its basic design has remained largely the same. There have been a number of notable events that have impacted on the brewery garden, some include: the millennium drought that resulted in the water features being drained and permanently switched off; and, the year Moby Dick (the whale displayed in the River Torrens) made his great break for freedom when in 2005, the Torrens weir was accidentally left open and Torrens Lake drained, flooding the garden and sending many of the displays downstream, some as far as Henley Beach. In the 60 years the Christmas display has been staged, it has only been cancelled once, in 2020 due to COVID-19.

The closure of the West End Brewery in 2021 has left the immediate future of the Christmas display in doubt, however, the garden itself will remain. Lion, the owner of the brewery and City of West Torrens are currently having discussions to ensure the annual Christmas display is continued.

Chronology

Year	Event
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- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 1888 | The South Australian Brewing, Malting & Wine & Spirit Company Ltd is formed after William Simms, Sir Edwin Smith, and William Rounsevell merge their respective businesses. |
| 1893 | The South Australian Brewing Company (SABCo) is established after the wine and spirit portion of the business is sold. |
| 1938 | SABCo acquires its major competitor, the Walkerville Co-Operative Brewing Co and operates two breweries, its West End Brewery on Hindley Street and the Walkerville Brewery at Thebarton. |
| Early 1950s | A number of new structures are built at the Thebarton brewery, including the two Clearspan buildings. |
| 1958 | Andrew Crooke, SABCo brewer suggests the riverbank is improved, the idea is supported by General Manager Ron Aitken and Managing Director Roland Jacobs. |
| 1959 | The riverbank adjacent to the brewery is landscaped creating the Brewery Garden and the first of the annual Christmas displays is installed. |
| 1960 | A display is exhibited in the garden for the first Adelaide Festival of the Arts |
| 1962 | The cascade and fountains in the garden are completed in time to feature in the display for the second Adelaide Festival of the Arts. |
| 1963 | A special display is prepared in the brewery garden for the visit of Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip. |
| 1971 | SABCo restructures to become a holding company and changes its name to SA Brewing Company. It begins to diversify its business portfolio. |
| 1971-1972 | The land to the south of Winwood Street is purchased to expand the Southwark Brewery in anticipation of closing the West End Brewery. |
| 1974 | The closure of the West End Brewery (Hindley Street) by 1982 is announced. |
| 1980 | The West End Brewery (Hindley Street) closes early after the expansion of the brewery at Thebarton occurs more quickly than anticipated. |
| 1980s | Further site expansion and modifications take place at the West End Brewery (Thebarton). |
| 1984 | SABCo administration building on Hindley Street is sold. |
| 1985 | An additional 2.2 hectares is purchased adjacent to the West End brewery (Thebarton) and further expansion of the brewery occurs. |
| 1993 | SA Brewing Holdings become Southcorp and sells the West End brewery (Thebarton) to Lion Nathan. |
| 2000s | The water features in the garden are drained due to the millennium drought. |

- 2005** The weir is accidentally left open and the Torrens Lake drains, flooding the garden and sending many of the displays down river, including Moby Dick (the whale), some as far as Henley beach.
- 2009 Lion Nathan is acquired by Kirin.
- 2020** Lion announces the closure of the West End Brewery, to take effect mid-2021. To prevent the spread of COVID-19 the Christmas Display is cancelled for the first time since it began in 1959.
- 2021** Lion and the City of West Torrens begin discussions about the future of the brewery garden and annual Christmas Display.

References

Bird, Louise (2001), 'A Vanishing Garden Passport: South Australian Gardens of the 1920s-1940s', in David S Jones ed. *20th Century Heritage Our recent Cultural Heritage*, (Australia ICOMOS National Conference: Adelaide), pp.320-328.

Cudmore, Michael (1988), *History of the South Australian Brewing Company Limited*, (SABCo: Adelaide).

Painter, Alison (2012), *Beer Barons or Bankrupts Early Brewers in South Australia*, (Alison Painter: Adelaide).

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Southcorp (1993), Annual Report.

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Lion 'Our History', <https://lionco.com/who-we-are/our-history/#:~:text=Lion%20Nathan%20is%20formed%20when,and%20hotel%20operator%2C%20Lion%20Breweries.&text=Lion%20Nathan%20buys%20a%2050,Castlemaine%20Tooheys%20and%20Swan%20Brewing.>

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'The West End brewery is closing' <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-10-15/west-end-brewery-closure-what-does-it-mean/12767956> [accessed 19 July 2021].

SITE RECORD

NAME:	Former West End Brewery Garden (former SABCo Brewery Garden)		PLACE NO.:	26531
DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:	Riverbank garden with stone retaining walls, finely manicured lawns, mass planted garden beds, empty water features and permeant novelty displays (inn, truck, volcano, tree stump, mill, animals, and mushrooms).			
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION:	1959			
REGISTER STATUS:	Nominated 27 November 2020 [Date of Provisional Entry TBA after meeting]			
LOCAL HERITAGE STATUS:	Local Heritage Place (13 December 2001)			
CURRENT USE:	Garden 1959-present			
ARCHITECT:	George Rauch and SABCo (later Lion Nathan) employees 1958-2021			
BUILDER:	SABCo (later Lion Nathan) employees 1958-2021			
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:	City of West Torrens			
LOCATION:	Street Name:	107 Port Road (River Torrens/Karrawirri Parri (adjacent Adam Street))		
	Town/Suburb:	Thebarton		
	Post Code:	5031		
LAND DESCRIPTION:	Title	See table below		
	Reference:			
	Hundred:	Adelaide		
Title Reference:				
CT 5941/298 D64225 A2	CT 5138/158 D1038 A387	CT 5137/205 D1038 A383		
CT 5138/158 D1038 A391	CT 5138/158 D1038 A386	CT 6064/474 D1038 A382		
CT 5138/158 D1038 A390	CT 6137/685 F103751 A2	CT 6064/474 D1038 A381		
CT 5138/158 D1038 A389	CT 6137/684 D1038 A385	CT 6064/472 D82670 A31		
CT 5138/158 D1038 A388	CT 6137/684 D1038 A384			

PHOTOS

NAME: Former West End Brewery Garden **PLACE NO.:** 26531
(former SABCo Brewery Garden)



West End Brewery Garden showing the brewery truck and rock garden that was previously the grotto

Source: DEW Files 21 April 2021



West End Brewery Garden showing the pond and rock garden (previously the cascade)

Source: DEW Files 21 April 2021

NAME: Former West End Brewery Garden **PLACE NO.:** 26531
(former SABCo Brewery Garden)



West End Brewery Garden pond

Source: DEW Files 21 April 2021



Sign on the northern riverbank from SABCo about the garden

Source: DEW Files 21 April 2021

NAME: Former West End Brewery Garden **PLACE NO.:** 26531
(former SABCo Brewery Garden)



West End Brewery Garden showing the three mass planted rectangular garden beds

Source: DEW Files 21 April 2021



West End Brewery Garden showing the 'Inn' from the Nativity, the basket or crown shaped garden bed and one of the stairways that dissect the rear garden bed

Source: DEW Files 21 April 2021

NAME: Former West End Brewery Garden **PLACE NO.:** 26531
(former SABCo Brewery Garden)



West End Brewery Garden showing 'Vulcan's' volcano, the feature bird of paradise plant, and mill with rockery garden

Source: DEW Files 21 April 2021



West End Brewery Garden showing the tree stump and kidney-shaped garden bed

Source: DEW Files 21 April 2021

NAME: Former West End Brewery Garden **PLACE NO.:** 26531
(former SABCo Brewery Garden)



**West End Brewery Garden
showing one of the paths that
dissect the rear garden bed**

Source: DEW Files 24 March 2021



West End Brewery Garden showing an example of the conifers in the rocky gardens

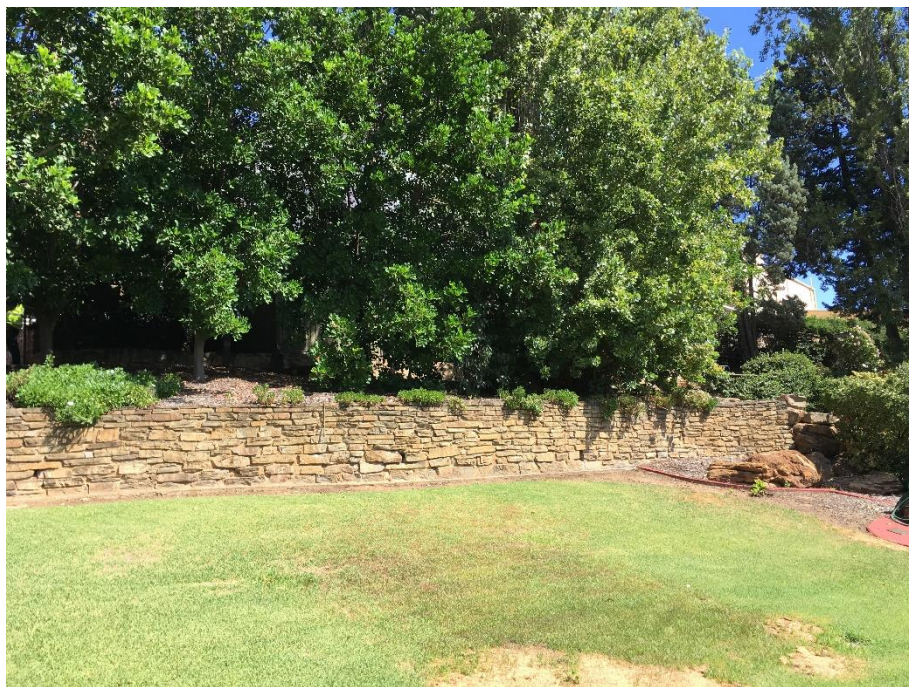
Source: DEW Files 24 March 2021

NAME: Former West End Brewery Garden **PLACE NO.:** 26531
(former SABCo Brewery Garden)



West End Brewery Garden showing the lawns, canna lilies and 'deer seated on a rock' model and background of trees in rear garden bed

Source: DEW Files 24 March 2021



West End Brewery Garden showing the stone retaining wall to rear garden bed

Source: DEW Files 24 March 2021

NAME: Former West End Brewery Garden **PLACE NO.:** 26531
(former SABCo Brewery Garden)



West End Brewery Garden showing the stone retaining wall to the rectangular beds

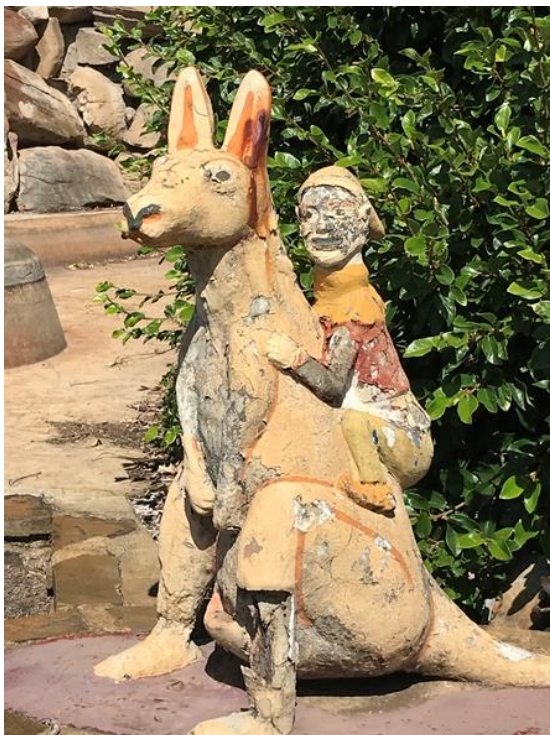
Source: DEW Files 24 march 2021



**West End Brewery Garden showing the pond (now dry) that was once a part of the cascade,
with central island with kangaroo and emu figures**

Source: DEW Files 24 March 2021

NAME: Former West End Brewery Garden **PLACE NO.:** 26531
(former SABCo Brewery Garden)



West End Brewery Garden showing examples of the figures in the garden

Source: DEW Files 24 March 2021

SITE PLAN

NAME:	Former West End Brewery Garden (former SABCo Brewery Garden)	PLACE NO.:	26531
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Former West End Brewery Garden (former SABCo Brewery garden), 107 Port Road, Thebarton, (River Torrens/Karrawirri Parri (adjacent Adam Street Thebarton), CTs as listed in table below, Hundred of Adelaide

Elements of Significance:

Elements of heritage significance include (but are not necessarily limited to):

- Layout of the garden and hard landscaping such as stone retaining walls, pathways and stairs
- Garden beds facing the river
- Mass planting of canna lilies (red coloured flowers) in the garden beds
- Mass planting of different conifer species to create colour and texture
- Model animals and toadstool located throughout the garden
- Model nativity inn, brewery truck, volcano (and figures inside), mill and tree stump
- Manicured expanses of lawn
- Remains of the grotto
- Pond with island and rockery (remains of the cascade)
- Square garden bed with plantings clipped to appear as if it is a basket or crown

LEGEND N ↑

 Parcel boundaries

 Outline of Elements of Significance for State Heritage Place

SITE PLAN

NAME: Former West End Brewery Garden (former SABCo Brewery Garden) **PLACE NO.:** 26531

Certificates of Title

CT 5941/298 D64225 A2	CT 5138/158 D1038 A387	CT 5137/205 D1038 A383
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CT 5138/158 D1038 A389	CT 6137/684 D1038 A385	CT 6064/472 D82670 A31
CT 5138/158 D1038 A388	CT 6137/684 D1038 A384	

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- ¹ Louise Bird (2001), 'A Vanishing Garden Passport: South Australian Gardens of the 1920s-1940s', in David S Jones ed. *20th Century Heritage Our recent Cultural Heritage*, (Australia ICOMOS National Conference), pp.320-328.
- ² Alison Painter (2012), *Beer Barons or Bankrupts Early Brewers in South Australia*, (Alison Painter: Adelaide), pp.148-154.
- ³ Painter, p.277.
- ⁴ Michael Cudmore (1988), *History of the South Australian Brewing Company Limited*, (SABCo: Adelaide), p.124.
- ⁵ SABCo and SA Brewing Holdings, Annual Reports (1950s-1992). Cudmore, p.131.
- ⁶ Southcorp (1993), Annual Report. Lion 'Our History', <https://lionco.com/who-we-are/our-history/#:~:text=Lion%20Nathan%20is%20formed%20when,and%20hotel%20operator%2C%20Lion%20Breweries.&text=Lion%20Nathan%20buys%20a%2050,Castlemaine%20Tooheys%20and%20Swan%20Brewing>.
- ⁷ Cudmore, p.124.
- ⁸ 'Anheuser-Busch Brewery History' www.bgthistory.com/attractions.defunct-attractions/anheuser-busch-brewery/ [accessed 19 July 2021].
- ⁹ Painter, p.284.
- ¹⁰ Play & Go Adelaide www.playandgo.com.au/est-end-brewery-christmas-riverbank-diplay-thebarton/ [accessed 8 July 2021]
- ¹¹ 'The West End brewery is closing' <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-10-15/west-end-brewery-closure-what-does-it-mean/12767956> [accessed 19 July 2021].