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# The Forgotten People & Company

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A HISTORY OF WENDER & DUERHOLT  
IN AUSTRALIA 1952-2000



HENRY SMITH

# Introduction

This book explains the history of the company and how the company ceased to exist and its name became forgotten because of the mistakes that were made right from the start and no one realised it including the owner E. Lohmann of the company.



Lennepe, February 1952

The Director Eugen Lohmann of the company Wender & Duerholt in Lennepe made many panels for camp accommodation as people who lost their homes due to the war. During the war the company made Baracken (camp buildings). Prefabrication came to an end after World War Two. The company then produced pre-cut timber framed houses. Due to the Berlin Wall making a division between East and West Germany the director Eugen Lohmann had to seek a safe haven for his company. With long time Jewish friends suggestions, to move elsewhere the direction was Australia.



The financier for the project was unknown to the workers. Regardless of plenty of work available in Germany many employees of Wender & Duerholt voluntarily joined the Director's ambition and loaded the camp accommodation panels to be sent to Australia. They also signed a contract of loyalties to work for the company for two years to help erect 500 pre-cut timber framed houses in a land of which most of them had never heard. The Journey became documented from still pictures from with book has been published and a little later a video produced.

The video "The Journey of the Employees from Wender & Duerholt (Australia) In 1952 to the Marion District in South Australia, Building Timber-frame Houses for the South Australian Housing Trust" are available on Youtube.



Video Part 1A



Video Part 2B



# About The Author

Henry Smith was born in Germany in 1930. He came on the ship "Roma" to South Australia arriving on 20th March 1952. He came with the company Wender & Duerholt as a contract worker tradesman joiner & carpenter to South Australia. He became a migrant and was naturalized in 1957. While assisting plumbers, Henry became interested in welding, achieving a certificate in December 1968. A safety certificate in 1969 meant that he could also take charge of any building project. This was followed by a builder's license, which became compulsory in July 1978. Licence No. G 2033. During this time Henry was heavily involved with the St. John Ambulance Association and received his first, First Aid Certificate on the 1st of May 1978.

Henry went on to work in the concrete and steel structural industry and later worked for the railway. He was also asked to Commission as a Justice of the Peace for the State of South Australia, (reg.16158) this he accepted on the 20th of December 1979. Furthering his education every step of the way and worked voluntarily in the courts system many hours. This is un-paid position.

In time Henry also qualified as a security guard and was offered employment during the Grand Prix, this he accepted and carried out his duties two weeks per season from 1986 to 1989. During 1988 Henry also completed certificates in "Emergency of Fire" and his fifth First Aid Certificate. He worked in the Art Gallery as Security Guard and escorted Prince Charles through the Gallery. He retired from work at his age of 58, due to ill health. Age 65, (a pensioner)

He joined a group of 5 people and helped to establish ACE Adelaide Community Education TV now called channel 31. at a personal cost of \$30.000 over 2 years under the director of Rita Freeman. In helping the TV station ACE along; (un-paid position) along as a volunteer pensioner, keeping mentally fit. In

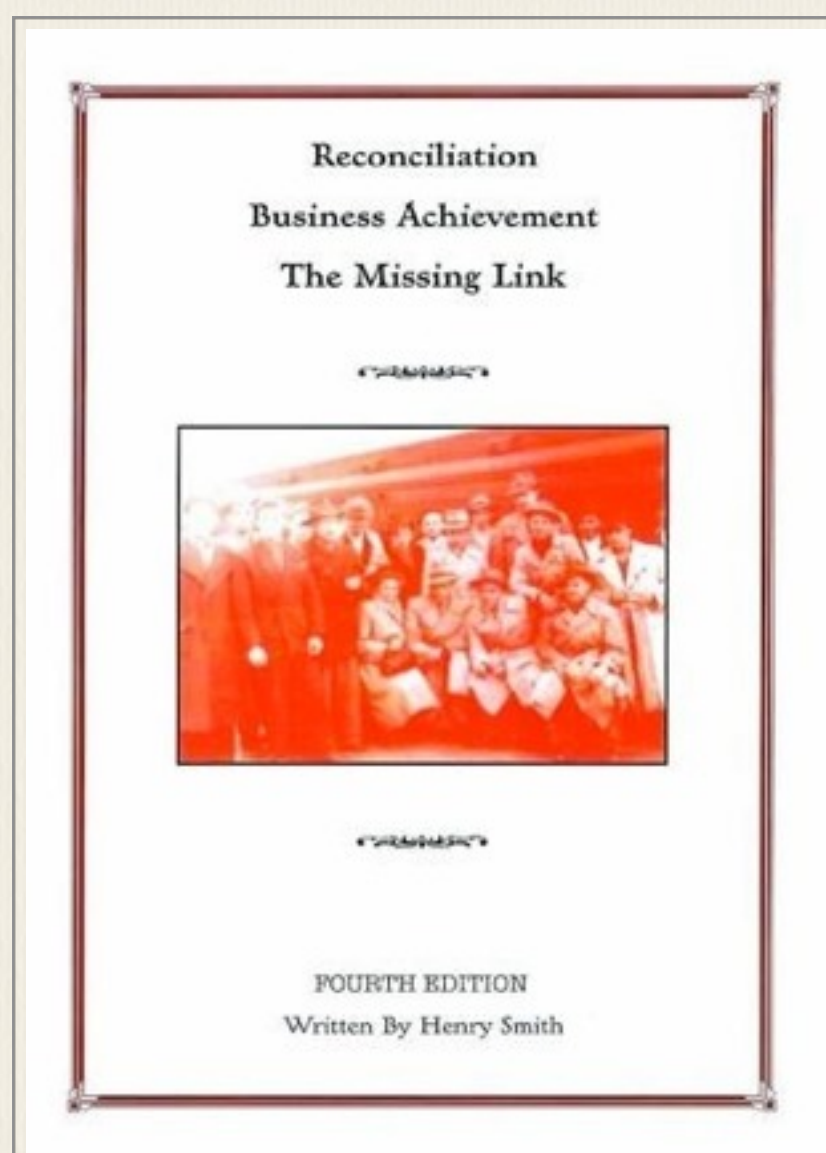


January 1997 he completed the filming and editing of a video on South Australian History, "Where do we meet", a video very much recommended by the State Library and by the then Governor of South Australia, Sir Eric Neal. (see YouTube video).

He also produced a video of Wender & Duerholt 1952 - 2002 how they had worked in the Marion district for the Housing Trust. He has produced many videos and four of his video scripts are in his book. (1) Where do we meet? (2) Pioneering The Benefits We reap. (3) Ship called "Roma" Brought in 1952 the first 19 people for Wender & Duerholt to Australia. (4) Colonel Light Vision. And many more are listed in the index.

Henry Smith named his book a "diary". The Founders of Wender & Duerholt were Wilhelm Wender and Ludwig Duserholt in 1870's, (see page 181). Albert Schmidt received an Orden from the King of Prussia in 1880, (see page 183 Lennep, Germany). Schomburgk, born in Fregburg arrived with Carl Linger on the ship called "Princess Louise" in 1849. Schomburgk received a honorary Dr. Title from the King of Prussia on the 4 April 1868, while living and working in the Botanic Garden South Australia (see page 53). The Kaiser of Prussia formed Germany in 1871; it was called the Second Reich.

A book written of 364 pages by Henry Smith in Australia Reconciliation - Business - Achievement, The Missing Link. See pages 202-203-231-233.



A book having the Title "Reconciliation Business Achievement The Missing Link" of 362 pages also gives the full history of Wender & Duerholt in Germany and in Australia. The book "4th edition" has been updated since 1/3/09 is also available on C.D.ROM. Information in Books & Videos is available on German Settlement History in South Australia at the State Library.

There has seldom been a worker who has received the full value for labour that he or she has given to an employer. The good will Energy, given voluntarily "makes you feel good" but seldom is rewarded by an organization.

Energy produced in any human body must be used, otherwise the body by nature will disease in bad health. But be aware to whom you will give your spare energy in any organization or Authority in not to become a Fool, a problem were people never will recover from there downfall. Philosophy has been around for many thousands of years.

The power of Philosophy has been used by religious groups, - by politicians - business organizations. The power in Philosophy by any organization is the same. Keeping control over its workers.

When the worker discovered the Philosophy of the ruling bosses in Authority the employment structure in most cases changed. The changes are unavoidable in Private Enterprise, governments of any countries, or religious organizations.

Unfortunately the worker has to take the brunt in losing his job, losing the promised benefits including the weekly income in wages.

In volunteering to sign a contract, in this case, with Wender & Duerholt, to come to Australia to build the German made imported timber frame houses for the Housing Trust was completed in 1955.

The agreement over employees personal fare promised in the contract was not kept. (Copy of contract on page 150) The Housing Trust did get the 500 imported Timber frame houses built by the German contract workers working for Wender & Duerholt..

Wender & Duerholt a company established over several generations in Germany. In Australia the company had at least four Directors and they were part owners at different times in the company. Therefore some people have been forgotten, due to their difficult time in defending themselves in their adventure.

The political side of the Federal and State Governments in Australia in dealing with individual citizens in this country. On three occasion 2004 -2005 -2006

"Henry Smith" was nominated for the Australian of the Year Award. He received nothing other than he had been nominated .

Sir Eric Neal then the Governor of South Australia expressed an appreciation in April 1998.

On page 266; Bruno Krumins, AM Lieutenant Governor of South Australia. It reads: Dear Mr. Smith: Congratulation on publishing the book “Reconciliation Business Achievement, The Missing Link”. You have made an invaluable contribution to the history of S.A. thank You for the book + the video film. 2013 Proclamation Day; the Governor of South Australia.





# Notices

No comprehension can be drawn, the history of Lieutenant Governor, Mr. Hieu Van Le, AO, when he entered Australia after the Vietnam war compared with any volunteering contract worker including workers from Wender & Duerholt entering in to this country after the Second World War. in 1952. The history in the multicultural system became very much distorted by today's political bureaucracy system. The Lieutenant Governor, Mr. Hieu Van Le, a Vietnamese entering Australia by boat after the Vietnam War without migration papers.

The Premier appoints a Governor and Lieutenant Governor. He became the head of the multicultural organization and selected people for committees.

The multicultural committee selected people they favored for the Awards and they do not support the Monarchy system.

I was told, the week before the 20 November 2008 by the people in the office of the Multicultural SA, a person with a title as JP cannot be considered an prospected entry for the Award. "You have old History, get out of this office, get through the bloody door."



**Certificates by the Honourable the Attorney General for the  
State of South Australia**

WHEREAS, by certain Letters Patent, under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, constituting the Office of Governor of the State of South Australia, it is amongst other things provided that the Governor may constitute and appoint Justices of the Peace for the said State:

of EDWARDSTOWN was, under the aforesaid power, duly constituted and appointed to be, during pleasure, a Justice of the Peace in and for the said State, to do all such acts and things as by law appertain to the Office of a Justice of the Peace.

*Attorney General.*



MR. HIEU VAN LE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**NOMINATE FOR GOVERNOR'S MULTICULTURAL AWARDS**

His Excellency Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce AC CSC RANR, Governor of South Australia, has established a new annual set of awards - The Governor's Multicultural Awards.

I have great pleasure in inviting you to nominate an individual or an organisation for the inaugural Governor's Multicultural Awards.

Please find enclosed Guidelines and a Nomination Form. I urge you to submit your nomination/s as soon as possible, as the entry deadline is **10 October 2008**.

The awards will be judged by a Committee appointed by the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission, in conjunction with the Multicultural Communities Council of South Australia Inc. and will be an opportunity to acknowledge exceptional achievements.

The 2008 awards will be presented by His Excellency the Governor at Government House on 20 November 2008.

The time has come for us to recognise, at the highest levels, the many outstanding contributions made to multiculturalism and community harmony.

South Australia has been a leader in the adoption of multiculturalism as a policy with which to build a cohesive and harmonious society.

It is important to acknowledge and appreciate the many benefits it has provided to us and to praise the immense contributions that migrants and refugees have made to the nation and the State.

I look forward to receiving your entries.

Yours sincerely

September 2008

Ref No: MSA 59/07

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Letter from the multicultural office Flinders Street.



MR. HIEU VAN LE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

MSA REF: 09/1144

Mr Henry Smith JP  
134 Corunna Avenue  
Melrose Park SA 5039  
henrys@internode.on.net

Dear Mr Smith

Thank you for meeting with me at the Proclamation Day Ceremony and raising the issue of your nomination for a Governor's Multicultural Award.

Multicultural SA has looked into the records and found that you were nominated in the Volunteer Award category of the Governor's Multicultural Award in 2008. There was an overwhelming response from individuals and organisations and, following the receipt of nominations, I wrote to all nominees and nominators in October 2008.

The record shows that I wrote to your nominator, Mr David Douglas Lee, to acknowledge the receipt of the nomination. I also wrote to you at the address provided on the nomination form, 134 Corunna Avenue, Melrose Park, to congratulate you for being nominated for an award. I stated in that letter that an independent judging panel had been appointed to determine the award winners. Neither Multicultural SA nor myself had any influence over the decisions made by the independent judging panel.

In a further letter to you, dated 20 November 2008, I attached a copy of a letter from the Chair of the Governor's Multicultural Awards 2008 Judges Panel, Mr Alan Tidswell. That letter included a list of the winners of each of the Governor's Multicultural Awards categories

The panel reported that it was very impressed with the quality of many nominees, however, only six awards could be made. Unfortunately your name was not on the list of award recipients determined by the judging panel.

On another matter that you raised with me at the meeting, I wish to confirm that the Multicultural Communities Council of South Australia is an independent community based organisation and their views are completely independent of Multicultural SA and the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission.

Thank you again for raising the issue of the Governor's Multicultural Awards with me and I hope this letter clarifies the process of how nominations are considered.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Hieu Van Le  
Lieutenant Governor  
Chairman,  
South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission

Letter from Governor advising me of the selection that was made by the committee





# History of the Business

## **Das Klee Batt (Partnership)**

Das Klee Blatt; so beschreib man Personen in einer Company im Bergischem Lande. In 1951 Mr. Eugen Lohmann in Lennep appointed the Management for his company Wender & Duerholt Australia.

The no.1 manager was Robert Schultz, ex Remscheider (a Australian citizen, living in Adelaide) for information and rules and regulation in Laws.

Manager no.2 was Helmut Link a Technic Zeichner, Draftsman (from Lennep) supervisor for the building site.

The Housing-trust gave Helmut Link the Title "Architect" in 1954.

Manager no.3 was Walter Wiegmann (from Lennep) "the Kaufman" purchasing officer of goods for the company in South Australia.

## **Records in the Housing Trust Documents**

In an interview Walter Wiegmann and Averil Holt on the 18 October 1981 it reads; We came out as Assistant Managers, and then in 1955, we became Directors of the Company, and then gave the companies , companies business right to the day when Mr. Schultz and Mr. Link and myself separated from Wender & Duerholt. So ended Das Klee Batt.

Eugen Lohmann borrowed the money for the project in batches from German Banks and also had borrowed money from German Banks for his contract employees he sent to Australia. These employees did not know from where this money was drawn. The project for the South Australian Housing Trust income for

Wender & Duerholt, Eugen Lohmann reinvested his personal part of his income back into Wender & Duerholt Australia. Between 1950 - 1977 Eugen Lohmann and family had made fifteen trips by air to Australia.

In 1976-78 the Company Wender & Duerholt complex in Lennep became rearranged at this time Eugen Lohmann had dispatched many wood working machines to his personal new workshop in Perry & Iris Ave. Edwardstown South Australia. In 1962 Eugen Lohmann's personal donation „The Rainmakers“ for the Park in the Housing Trust area at Christies Beach but did not generate enough power for him to obtain control again over his company in South Australia. However it did give him the right over a block of land in Perry & Iris Ave. not too far from Wender & Duerholt base Bennett Ave. Edwardstown where he had stored the woodworking machines.

In 1976 Henry Smith was working as a subcontractor for a subsidiary firm building transportable timeframe homes. Wender & Duerholt (Australia) was only the supplier of building materials to that firm. In 1976 Eugen Lohmann came and invited Henry Smith and asked him to come and see his new workshop where he had installed the old woodworking machines from Lennep Wender & Duerholt workshop in Germany, E. Lohmann was hoping to make plastic veneer cupboards. Henry responded he had no experience in plastic lamination of timber with these machines. Eugen Lohmann responded (in German) ‘DAS IST RATHER SCHADE’. Shortly after that meeting Eugen Lohmann returned to Germany. It was his last trip to South Australia.

His personal house in Blackwood was sold. The company Wender & Duerholt Australia was put on the market in 1981. Another building company Emmett and Sons bought Wender & Duerholt in Bennett Ave. and Eugen Lohmann's section in Perry & Iris Ave. Edwardstown as well. The company Wender & Duerholt in Lennep Germany disappeared.



# The beginning of Wender & Duerholt in Australia

On the 18 February 1952 a group of 18 men and one married woman left Germany on an adventurous journey to South Australia. They had signed a contract with the company Wender & Duerholt G.M.B.H. in Germany to erect 500 Timber-frame houses for the Housing Trust in South Australia in a time frame of two years.

The paper in hand by those voluntary contract workers was a two-year Visa granted by the Commonwealth Government. Traveling to a Continent many of them never had heard of. Their journey began in Lennep. They travelled by train to Cologne, and then by express train to Genoa, staying over night in a Hotel before boarding a ship called “ROMA” which sailed under the flag, Flotta Lauro, down the coast of Italy.

These young men all but two were too young to have been in uniform and serve in World War two but now were traveling the world in a peace time situation. Crossing the Mediterranean Sea to Port Said through the Suez Canal to Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean to Colombo. Staying some 24 hours in Ceylon, and then sailing on to Australia.

The next stop was Fremantle Western Australia. The Immigration people came on board to check on papers however nothing was said nor did the contract workers understand sufficiently the English language. They sailed on to Port

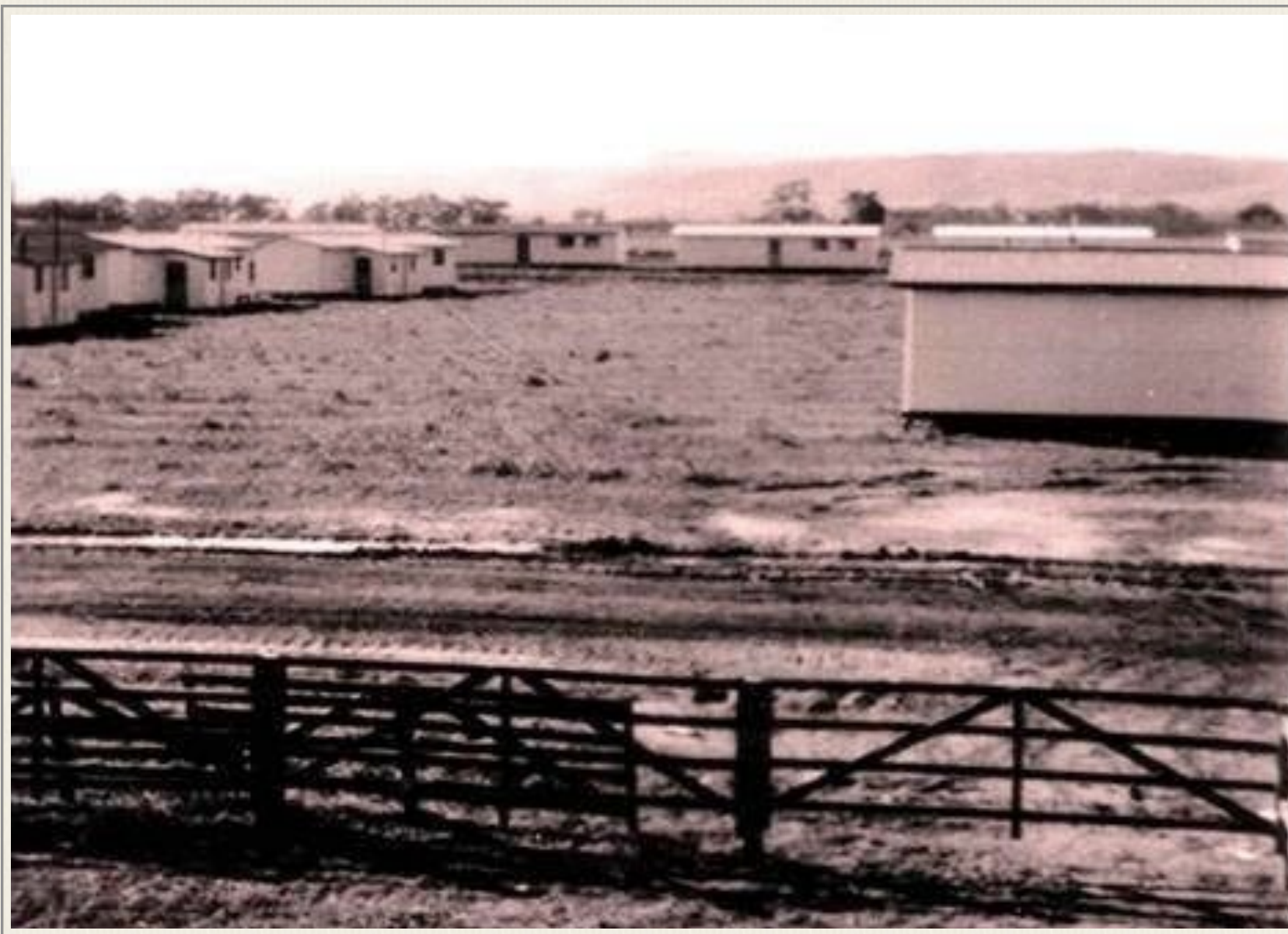


Melbourne, Victoria and disembarked the ship. It was March the 20th 1952. The language became a more outstanding problem. In the group were two managers appointed by the Owner - Director Egon Lohmann of Wender & Duerholt. These managers and the wife of one of the two men found themselves accommodation in the city while the papers had to be sorted out for continuation of their journey. This 500 houses were mend for the Victorian Housing Commission. Due to not having any money, most of the men were left to fend for them selves carrying their suitcases to the Botanical Gardens. There they stayed and waited two day's for the outcome of paperwork. Luckily the Roma stayed in port for another day so they managed to go to the ship to have a meal. The train tickets became available for Friday night's-journey to Adelaide arriving at 10 AM at the Adelaide railway station journey to Adelaide arriving at 10 AM at the Adelaide railway station.



The group of 19 people stepped from the train with excitement – confused and some how lost again. There was no one there to meet them. After some hours of





waiting a bus arrived and took the group on a journey to Warradale known to the locals in those days as “the Bush” and next to an army camp. The Bus stopped just past the Army camp on Morphett Road adjacent to a partly destroyed vineyard.

The Housing Trust had started to build some four-room cottages. At this time none of the cottages were completed no electricity was connected but the Housing Trust Authority came to assist in rescuing the contract workers and made three cottages available as accommodation. A near by milky, a small farmer, brought some bales of straw, which were used as beds. During the voyage the manager for the company Walter Wiegelmann had handed out at different locations travel allowance to each person the total amount of travel allowance was 10 pounds. Little money was left in any one-pocket when arriving in Warradale. For the following week the group managed to survive the best they could eating the cheapest food available mainly bread, fritz and jam. Eggs were obtained from a nearby farm and picking the left over grapes from the destroyed vineyard. Some



days went by before the company bought a teapot big enough for the people. The cost of a cottage came to 16 shillings per week for rent. The amount was divided amongst the men living in these temporary buildings, and the company Wender & Duerholt made the deductions by taking the money out of the weekly pay packets. The contracts signed by the workers in Germany, it was very clear the cost of the fare had to be repaid to the employer Wender & Duerholt and the company would make a weekly two-pound deduction out of the wages until the cost had been recovered. It was also mentioned that if the company was successful and the project finished the money collected for the fares would be given back to the workers?



Wender & Durholt also stated in the contract paper that the company would provide camp accommodation for its workers. But nothing was mentioned to any one when signing the contract that the workers had to provide their own tools of trade for the project.



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