

Preserving Memories

A joint project of the
City of West Torrens and the
West Torrens Historical Society Inc.



Bea with City of West Torrens Mayor Michael Coxon

Bea Julian

2026

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Bea Julian

I tend to be like a flea. I know that I jump from thought to thought. That's how my mind works, because I think visually and in colour. Like I've done a painting just using all those colours.

Beatrice Veronica Julian was born in Melbourne 1944, to parents Ivy Violet Crowhurst and Leonard Cornelius Julian, and baptized as a Catholic in Saint Patrick's Cathedral.

At home she was Beatty, at school she was Beatrice, later she was Bea.

Growing up in Gray Street, Plympton, she went to school and church locally and went on to the Thebarton Technical College.



Bea is quick with a story or two...

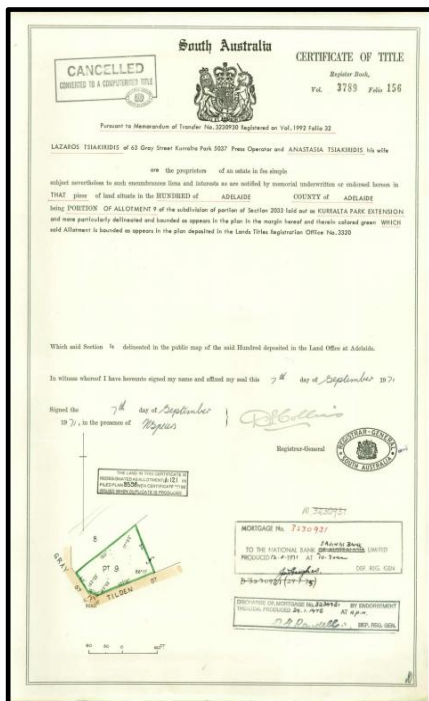
She tells of her mum's large family raising her own family, travel, teaching, writing, painting and her other creative talents.

Family Background

My two brothers were born here in Adelaide; I had my fourth birthday here. Around 1945 we moved from Melbourne to live with my mother's parents, at 63 Gray Street, Plympton - where the bus goes down near the creek. That house is still there. There are now two houses built in the backyard.



Kurralt Park area, 1949 [Westmaps Public]



63 Gray Street Plympton

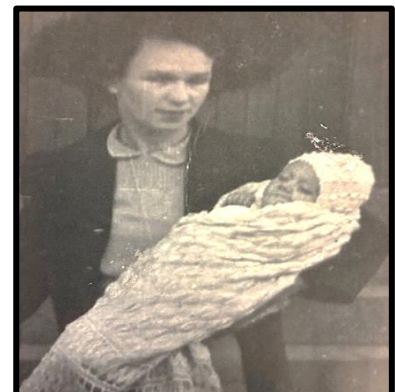
The house only had two bedrooms, Grandma and Grandpa originally had the front room, then the second room was Mum and I, the boys had the sleep out.



63 Gray Street, 2025 [Streetview]

My middle brother is James Edward, but he's called Ted. The younger one is Arthur David, but he was called David. I chose his name when I was a little girl because I liked the little boy next door. I never saw him because we just used to trade apples and oranges through the cracks in the fence!

The house had a huge front yard. In front of the lounge dining room, there was a well, I think it had been filled in. We had four pine trees, which we used to top every Christmas and give to the neighbours. Some trees are funny, because if you top them, they die, but these were just pine trees. I still smell pine. I love the smell.



Earliest photo Mum and Me

Brother, Ted (1946-)

Ted now lives in Tailem Bend and loves it. He looks like our dad, and he used to get belted more than us because of it. He is nothing like Dad in personality.

He wanted to apprentice as a mechanic, but Mum went to see a neighbour, and he got a cabinet maker apprenticeship with Hamra Brothers furniture makers. He was so tired when he used to come home because they'd give him all the dirty work. He had an apron; Mum would have to scrape off that much glue.



Hamra Bros, 8-10 Bray Ave, Underdale, c 1988

Ted got called up during the Vietnam conflict but wasn't posted to Vietnam. He was sent to the country. He got married to Wendy while in the army; they had 3 sons. He then married Mary; they had a daughter. Now he is married to his third wife Ruth.

He was an athlete, now he's like a round bubble. When I teased my daughter, I say both your uncles were athletes, you know, especially Ted. They played soccer because all my aunts and uncles are very tall, and we were the short family.

I never think I'm short. I used to think I was tall, and I suppose I was; I had the hairdo and the heels. I just think other people are too tall, except when I'm trying to get a book up too high on top of the cupboard.



Ted and Me, circa 1948

After he left Hamra Bros, he bought a milk run, then he bought another milk run, and had two milk runs. Then he bought a cab and was a cab driver.



Ted on his bike, he looks like our dad

Brother, David (1948 - 2013)

David was the devil like Dad. David wanted to be a girl's hairdresser because he thought he'd meet girls.

David went to work at Rainsford's on South Road. Later ended up becoming a mechanic but before that he used to buy and sell bikes and cars.

We had a little car that had a soft top, you cranked it up, they called it the flea. He drove it to Plympton High School. He stopped going to school, but Mum didn't realise.

Mum was a very gentle, sweet person. She put on her hat and gloves and talked them into not expelling him.

David passed away in 2013 at age 65, his funeral was on Halloween at Centennial Park.



Mum, Ted, David and Me, circa 1950

I didn't realise I had to identify him first as he was being cremated. I had said I wanted him to wear these red silk pants and bought him a designer shirt. He had cupboards of beautiful clothes, both he and Ted used to do their own ironing. My daughter says I am a domestic feral so not good at ironing.

At the funeral, Ted had fallen asleep, then I started to cry because this huge black bird shot up in the air and I thought like a spirit, then there were three black birds. Then I am half crying and half laughing, it was spooky.

Mother, Ivy Violet Crowhurst (1917-1984)

I used to be very blonde with fine straight hair and Mum had curly hair. She used to curl my hair with bobby pins, which I hated. When I had a leading role in a Charles Dickens play in Year 7, she used rags to curl my hair.

I had this beautiful dress. My auntie worked for I think it's Linton's. During the war, they changed from couture to uniforms. Eventually they were kicked out of their place in the city, it was taken over by the electricity company, they moved out to somewhere like Tanunda or Eudunda. After the war they started up again in Chesser Street in the city, and my auntie worked there. That's where Mum was given all the lengths of fabric from Switzerland. Some of them were so many pounds a square inch, like the beautiful fine woolen ones. Mum did beautiful smocking and that sort of thing. Mum would have joined the firm, only she was too slow. She was meticulous.



Grandma Crowhurst, Mum and Me at 63 Gray Street

Everyone thought we were a rich family. They didn't know how poor we were because we were immaculate, best-dressed kids in the neighbourhood. The dress, I always thought I had it still, but no, all my cousins were waiting for my outfits. I had matching twin sets and from the fabric, I had beautiful pleated skirts. I remember there were no school uniforms back then, and I had the same outfit that I had in reception to year seven, but it had been turned into a pinafore. I have Mum to trust for my good skin. I had to wear a hat all year, straw in summer, felt in winter.

Grandma and Mum both were fabulous knitters. The boys had jumpers with a bucking bronco and a cowboy and that sort of thing.

My aunties, for the time, were all very well educated, one was a private secretary to Elders.

My mum had seven sisters and two brothers. Her mum and sisters helped her with us as she was bringing us up alone. My father used to come and visit from time to time. He wanted to kidnap me, but not the boys.



Father, Leonaard Cornelius Julian (1912-1962)

Mum and Dad married in Melbourne in 1943 during the war.

He was always getting in trouble growing up, and then again in the army. He'd been up in Darwin, and he'd been a soldier in the war. He was a Sergeant but was a naughty boy. He's always getting his getting his stripes, losing a stripe.

My father was a sort of a pariah in the family, because everyone hated him, which affected me growing up.

As a youth he was arrested for petty stealing a few times.

ADAM POLICE GAZETTE.		[December 19, 1928.
FREDERICK CHARLES COLEY (16), SYDNEY LEONARD CHENOWETH (16), ARTHUR VINCENT HUGHES (17), LEONARD CORNELIUS JULIAN (17), LANCELOT CHARLES GOODWIN (16), and VERNON AUSTIN WILSON (15), by P.C.C. Alchurch, for larceny from Henry Berry & Co. Pty., Limited, at Adelaide; each fined £1 and costs 10s. Tried at Adelaide on 11/12/28.		



Dad with Sargent stripes

Then in 1941 for a publican's offence.

LEONARD CORNELIUS JULIAN (29), summons, breach of section 205 of the Licensing Act at the Flagstaff Hotel, Adelaide; fined £5 and costs 10s. P.C.'s Trotman, Hudson, Winch, and P.C. Turner. P.C., Adelaide, 7/3/41.—(C.2324.)



Dad, not long before he died in Victoria

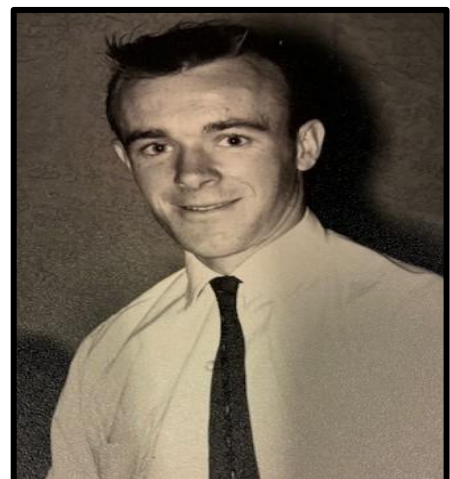
Things with Mum weren't good. Mum left Dad when she was pregnant with David and she was granted custody.

LEONARD CORNELIUS JULIAN, summons, threatening IVY VIOLET JULIAN; released on bond for 12 months, or 14 days. P.C., Adelaide, 25/11/47.—(C.586.)

She was granted a divorce in 1954.

Ivy Violet Julian. of Grey street. Plympton. against Leonard Cornelius Julian. of Yatala. for five years' separation under a court order. Mr. C. V Smith for Mrs. Julian.
--

Advertiser, 17 Feb 1954, p16



Ted as a teenager

I don't like this photo of my dad, a gambling man, a larrikin, but it does show a loving relationship.

My brother David was the same and that is exactly what I ended up marrying too. Somebody I would never choose now.

I had nice boyfriends, all Australians, good boys, all in Legacy. They said to me, "Why didn't you marry one of us?" I said, "Because nobody asked me!"

Legacy Australia is a service club that has been supporting veterans' families since 1923.



Me held by Dad, probably at the races

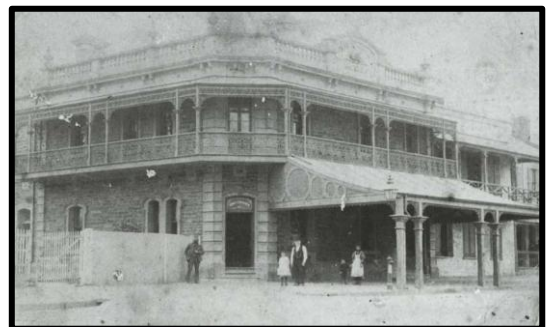
The Julian family were from Gawler, and they were into hotels. That was a no-no because we were all Methodists. I'm baptized Catholic. My two brothers were Methodists. Although I was a member of Plympton Uniting Church, All Saints, I think I have a foot in both denominations.

My father's father James Edward Julian was a publican and died in 1936.

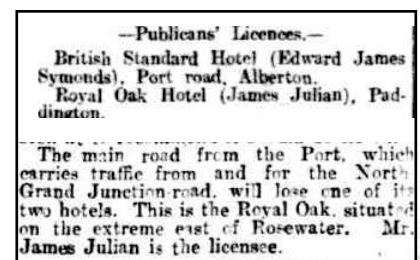
Paternal Grandfather, James Julian (1885-1936)

Publican 1906 – 1924

1906-1906 Black Swan, North Terrace Adelaide
1907-1909 Royal Oak, Paddington (now Rosewater)
1910-1911 Lady Daly, Hindmarsh
1913-1913 Prince Albert, Gawler
1915-1915 Tanners Arms, Bowden
1916-1916 Globe, Bowden
1916-1916 Royal Mail, Stone Hut
1917-1918 Victoria, Willaston
1918- 1918 East, Adelaide
1918-1919 Railway, Lyndoch
1919-1919 Bucks Head, North Terrace Adelaide
1919-1919 Salisbury Hotel Salisbury
1919-1920 Victoria, Willaston
1921-1921 Angas Park, Nuriootpa
1924-1924 Yongala, Yongala



Black Swan Hotel, North Terrace c1880 [SLSA B41020]



Advertiser, 12 Feb 1909. p9

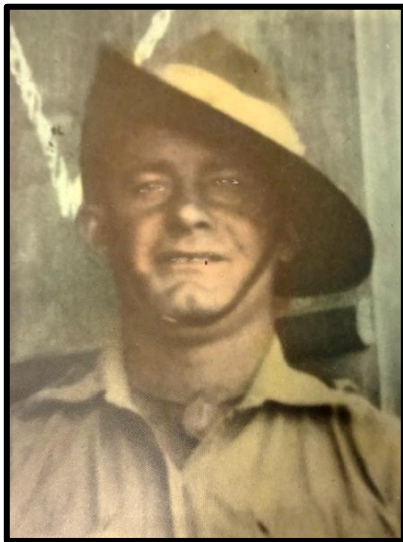
<https://localwiki.org/adelaide-hills/tags/hotelsandpublicans>

Paternal Grandmother, Mary Jane O'Toole (1890-1954)

Born in June 1890 in Emu Flat, Victoria, to James O'Toole and Mary Ann O'Sullivan.

My Dad was born in Gawler, South Australia, 1912. His brother James Edward Julian was born in 1916, and was engaged to a girl named Ivy, then was killed in World War 2. They had a sister Mary Veronica Julian who died at just 12 months old. Their younger brother Ronald Joseph was born in 1920 and was 16 when their dad died in 1936. Their mother Mary Jane O'Toole married James Lawrence O'Connell in 1937, and they moved to Melbourne with Ronald taking the name O'Connell.

Paternal Uncle, James Edward Julian (1916-1942)



March 8, 1939.]	THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN POLICE GAZETTE.	105
JAMES EDWARD JULIAN (22), by M.C.'s White and Custance and P.C. Harvey (R. M.), for offensive behaviour, at Barmera; fined £1 and costs 7s. 6d., in default seven days (imprisoned). Tried at Barmera on 27/2/39.—(C.2227.)		

The youngest James Edward Julian died in Papua New Guinea during WW2.

JULIAN, Pte. JAMES EDWARD, SX.3499. A.I.F. 2/27 Bn. Australian Infantry. 29th November, 1942. Age 26. Son of James Edward and Mary Jane Julian, of Richmond, Victoria. B5. E. 23.
--

Paternal Uncle, Ronald Joseph Anthony O'Connell (1920-1979)

12532 O'Connell, Dulcie Isabel, 84 Cecil st., home duties, F
12533 O'Connell, Eileen May, 31 Bevan st., S.C.6, home duties, F
12534 O'Connell, Ivy Frances R., 172 Montague st., cleaner, F
12535 O'Connell, James Laurence, 84 Cecil st., accountant, M
12536 O'Connell, John, 28 Nelson rd., —, M
12537 O'Connell, Margery Joan, 106 Beaconsfield pde., S.C.6, waitress, F
12538 O'Connell, Mary Jane, 84 Cecil st., home duties, F
12539 O'Connell, Michael Daniel, 31 Bevan st., S.C.6, boilermaker, M
12540 O'Connell, Patrick Joseph, 76 Stead st., S.C.5, gas worker, M
12541 O'Connell, Philip, 180 Ferrars st., manufacturer, M
12542 O'Connell, Ronald Anthony, 84 Cecil st., boilermaker's assistant, M

1949 Election Roll showing Ronald and his wife Dulcie living with Mary and James at 84 Cecil St Port Melbourne. Ronald listed James as his father on his WW2 enlistment paperwork



Maternal Grandfather, Arthur Walters Crowhurst (1872-1952)

Maternal Grandmother, Elizabeth Annie Ross (1882-1962)



Arthur Walters Crowhurst, my Grandfather

Grandpa was tall, bony and very English looking. He died when I was about 8. Grandma had pitch black hair, rosy cheeks and high complexion, but nearly all my family have blue eyes and fair skin. Only two aunties had the dark hair and a different complexion, the rest had blonde hair, blue eyes. The blue eyes go through the family on both sides.

Grandma had hazel eyes and you had to watch for the eyes, because if they changed colour, they would go this dark, stormy grey green, you had to look out. Grandma died when I was about 18, she was like my second mother.

I had a friend whose granny was tall and skinny, I didn't think she was a real grandmother, mine was big and cuddly.

My grandparents came from Broken Hill, New South Wales and married in 1902.

Grandpa worked in the mines and was told if he stayed in the mines he wouldn't last long. He asked his father for his portion, and he bought a fruit and vegetable shop in the main town.

One day he saw my grandmother who was very distinctive. She was 19 and he was 29.

They moved their family in a covered wagon to Ramco near Waikerie in the South Australian Riverland. They had 12 children. Their first-born son Cecil Arthur Crowhurst died at 2 months old, and their 10th child Lily was stillborn. Mum was their 8th child.



Crowhurst Grandparents

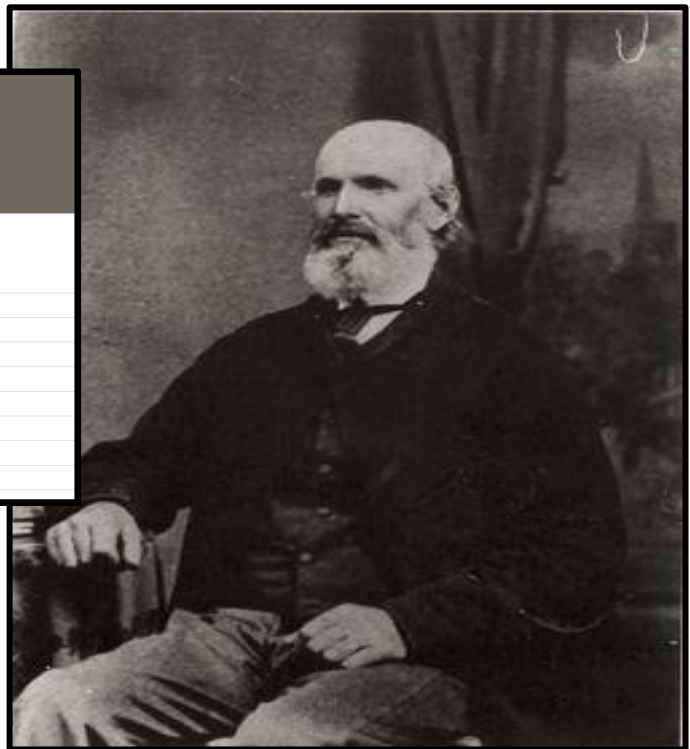


Maternal Great Grandfather, Thomas Crowhurst (1818-1890)

My parents and grandparents were born in Australia, but my great grandparents came over in the sailing ships. My great grandfather sailed to Hobart as a soldier; it took him seven years to buy himself out of the army.

He married Euphemia Ross in Hobart then they travelled overland to Adelaide in 1842. Mrs. Euphemia Crowhurst died in 1891 on North Terrace.

INDEX RECORD FOR	
Crowhurst, Thomas	
UK, Worldwide Army Index, 1841	
Info	Connections
Comments	Browse
Full Name	Crowhurst, Thomas
Incident Date	1 Jan 1841
Rank Name	Private
Service Number	1268
Duty Location	Van Diemens Land
Primary Unit	51st Regiment Of Foot
Archive Reference	WO 12/6203
Conflict Period	Other Service
Served For	United Kingdom



Thomas Crowhurst, My great grandfather

Thomas was baptized on 29 Aug 1819 in Lamberhurst, Kent, England. Date Arrived: 8th Dec. 1839 Ship Arrived on: 'Barossa.' I believe he first served at Port Arthur, in Tasmania. Thomas Crowhurst listed as a foot policeman in the 96th regiment. He was born in 1819 in England, the 5th of 10 children, and came out to Australia as a private. His parents were John Crowhurst and Ruth Rabbitt.

He married Euphemia Ross (born around 1808) on 17 Oct 1842, St David's Church of England, 23 Murray Street in Hobart Town. He arrived in South Australia with wife Euphemia from Tasmania in 1846.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/201645088/thomas-crowhurst>

Maternal Great Grandmother, Jane Crowhurst née Thorburne (1836-1893)

Jane Thorburne arrived in Port Adelaide, South Australia in 1854 from Liverpool with her family, on the ship *John Bunyan*.

Walters James, 37 - Farm Labourer, Lancashire

Elizabeth, 39

Jane, 18 - House Servant with parents,

Elizabeth 13,

Agnes 9,

Mary Ann, 6

Jemima, 4

EMIGRANT SHIP "JOHN BUNYAN."

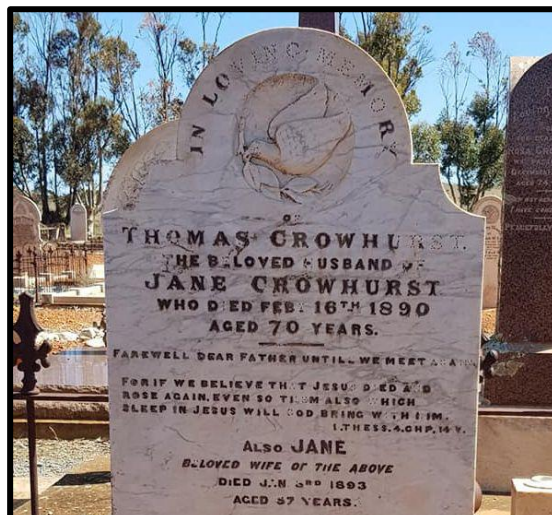
This arrival is elsewhere specially announced and particularised. From the official list of all the passengers who embarked at the port of Liverpool, we learn that 60 were English, 181 Scotch, 99 Irish—the total being 340, estimated as equal to 274 adults. The ship was becalmed three weeks on the line. There were five births during the voyage; and among the infants and children of or under four years of age, the number of deaths was 28. The classification, "Farm and domestic servants," is simple enough, and it appears to apply to all who have come out under the auspices of the Commissioners.

SA Register 24 May 1854, p2



Jane Thorburne

Surname:	THORBURNE
Given Names:	Jane
Parents:	Jas. John & Eliz.
Life Information:	Birth 1836 Annandale? DFS SCT. Death 3.1.1893 Terowie SA.
Occupation:	Not Recorded
Residence:	Not Recorded
Spouse(s):	Thomas CROWHURST (SA)
Children:	Cassandra Jemima BOWKER (1856-1919), John (1857-1907), Agnes Edith McLEISH (1858-1929), Geo. Wm. (1860-1929), Jas. (1862-1912), Ruth McLEISH (1865-1936), Thos. Chas. (1867-1940), Wm. Henry (1870-1921), Arthur Walters (1872-1952), Laura Eliza COCKSHELL (1874-1958).
Notes:	Arr: 1854 JOHN BUNYAN.



Maternal Great Uncle, George William Crowhurst (1860-1929)

Obituary

He had a very clear memory and remembered the conditions of the district and the Broken Hill mining activities in the early days. Although not having taken any active part in public life, he made many staunch friends and was always a willing helper to those in need. Mr. Crowhurst was well known in and around Jamestown. The respect in which he was held by residents of the district was indicated by the very large number who attended the funeral.

Chronicle, 8 Aug 1929, p54

MR. G. W. CROWHURST
Mr. George William Crowhurst, who died at his residence, "Fairview," Terowie, on July 16, was the oldest resident in the Hundred of Gumbowie, having gone to Terowie with his father, Mr. Thomas Crowhurst, 52 years ago. Mr. George Crowhurst was born in 1860 at Woodchester, near Strathalbyn, where his father selected land on his arrival from England. When the northern areas were surveyed, Mr. Thomas Crowhurst settled near Terowie. After some years of farming with his father, Mr. Crowhurst learnt the blacksmithing trade in Terowie, but he preferred agriculture, and his father purchased land for him in Parnaroo and he retained that holding until his death. He subsequently purchased property in the Hundred of Gumbowie. Mr. Crowhurst had two daughters by his first marriage, and in 1889 he married Miss Emily Steggall, of Terowie. His eldest son, George William, was killed on active service in December, 1917. Mr. Crowhurst leaves a widow, two sons, Messrs. W. S. and S. R. Crowhurst, and seven daughters.

Maternal Great Uncle, William Henry Crowhurst (1870-1921)

(Murdered at Riverton Railway Station, aged 51)

Catherine D. Crowhurst, domestic servant, residing at Glen Osmond, said the deceased was her father. William Henry Smith, motor garage proprietor, of Peterborough, deposed that on the morning of March 22 he saw deceased at Peterborough. Witness joined the morning train for Adelaide, and journeyed to Riverton with Crowhurst, and the northern town was reached at about 9 o'clock. He and Crowhurst had breakfast together and later walked down the northern end of the platform.

RUSSIAN'S SECOND COMMITTAL.

Mr. Crowhurst's Death.

"This is Awful."

When there he looked up and saw accused pointing a revolver at him. Tomayeff was on the platform and beyond the guard's van. Accused was about 15 yards away when witness first noticed the revolver. Proceeding, witness said: 'I stood still for a second, and then Crowhurst and I turned sideways on to walk into a carriage. I heard the revolver in accused's possession go off, and I was hit in the thigh. Another shot struck deceased in the leg. I helped Crowhurst, into a compartment. Altogether I heard from 30 to 60 shots fired. Crowhurst was in good health. Nothing was done by either of us to cause accused to fire at us. I had never seen him before.' Did Crowhurst appear to be in pain? — He did not complain. He said to me, "This is awful."

—Cause of Death. —

Dr C.F.Turner, medical superintendent at the Adelaide Hospital, said he examined Crowhurst immediately upon his arrival at the institution on March 22. There was a small punctured hole in the left thigh, caused by a bullet, which was removed that afternoon. On April 1 Crowhurst died, and the cause of death was embolism of the lungs, which was caused, in his opinion, by a large clot of blood formed in the left thigh, reaching the lungs. It might have been primarily caused by the wound in the deceased's thigh. While at the hospital Crowhurst had never been classified as being in a serious condition.

The Register, 8 Apr 1921, Page 8, Russians Second Committal

Maternal Aunt, Beatrice Mary Crowhurst (Mader then Marriott) (1915-2005)

Mum's sister Auntie Beattie married Roy George Gustav Mader, sometimes spelled Maeder. Roy died in 1942 in Papua New Guinea. He was killed in a knife attack while attempting to investigate / arrest a 'Buliga', a 'Cargo Cult' leader at Motorina Island, Milne Bay District.

Auntie Beattie remarried Alan Marriott. He wasn't a real handsome person, like her first husband. When she met him ten years later, he said to himself immediately, I'm marrying that woman. Well, my auntie was very anti marrying, and she was a bit of a snob, she mentioned she was visiting Sydney with 'Lady something or other'.

Before she died, she told me that he was the love of her life.



*Auntie Beattie and Roy George Mader,
a very handsome couple.*

When I would go there, my Uncle Alan won my heart, he became my favourite uncle.

When I was 15, it was the first time I went by plane. My mother said I wasn't to sit next to a man. She said I had to either sit by myself or a lady. In comes a drunken Pole - I later married, a Polish man, I seem to attract them. Anyway, there he is, he's leaning over me, showing me through the window. I'm mortified because I virtually had nothing to do with men at all, only a few uncles, who I only saw them once or twice a year. Then when the plane stopped, he took my hand, he slobbered all over my hand and kissed it. Thank God it wasn't on my face. He gave me a silver button from his jacket; he was in the Air Force during the war. It probably meant a lot to him, but I was just mortified.

My Uncle Alan met me at the airport and they lived in Healesville, which was country in those days.

When I was sick because I used to get a lot of throat things, bronchitis, tonsillitis, pharyngitis, all that sort of stuff. He tucked me into bed with a lemon juice and an aspirin; I'd never had that before in my life.

Maternal Uncle, Stanley Roy Crowhurst (1906-1939)

(Drowned in 1939 flooded River Murray)

Uncle Stan was killed in the floods up the river; Grandma had pitch black hair and she went grey because it took two weeks before they found the body. He left four children, Kelvin, Donny (his twin died at birth), Jim and Juanita (born 3 months after Stanley's death).



Body Found In River After 3 Weeks

BERRI. Saturday.—After nearly three weeks the body of Stanley Roy Crowhurst, who was drowned in the Murray at Berri, after diving from a swamped canoe on July 2, was recovered this week. The discovery was made by Mr. Ken McGregor and Mr. Howard Busbridge.

The police submitted a report to the coroner (Mr. M. A. Guy), who deemed an inquest unnecessary.

The relief fund for Crowhurst's widow and three children has now reached £35.

The Mail, 22 Jul 1939, p4

CROWHURST.—On the 2nd of July, at Berri (result of accident), Stanley Roy, beloved elder son of Mr. and Mrs. Crowhurst, Walkerie, father of Kelvin, Don, and Jim, and loving husband of Ida, aged 33 years.

Chronicle. 13 July 1939, p25

His son, Donny, contracted polio and was treated by Sister Kenny, who the doctors disliked despite the great results she was getting. Sister Kenny left for America and the doctors cut Donny's sinews behind his knees. He always used crutches. He handmade toys later in life.

Sister Elizabeth Kenny was a self-trained Australian bush nurse who developed an approach to treating polio that was controversial at the time. Her method, promoted internationally while working in Australia, Europe and the United States, differed from the conventional one of placing affected limbs in plaster casts. - Wikipedia



The wife he left behind, Auntie Ida, was always dying, Stanley had to do everything.

After he died, she had enough energy to marry a Kidman and have another child, Peter. He wrote a book about being a Kidman on the big properties that they owned; she was mad that she wasn't mentioned in the book. They lived, and still live, in Berri.

Growing up in Gray Street Plympton, late 1940s

We lived in a 'small world' – a few neighbours, family, no car or telephone. It was a safe neighbourhood. Everyone looked out for the neighbours and the children were safe roaming. My friends, the Bogisch family four girls, lived in Gray Street, just along from me. All of us went to Plympton Primary School. Ruth Bogisch was five months ahead of me, so she'd been at school for six months when I started school. I went through in two years, then Bronwyn and Ruth had two and a half years in junior primary.



Bronwyn, Me, Ruth and Blinky

Bronwyn Fischer was another neighbour; she was an only child. She was five months younger than me. She wasn't in my class at school. Her father was very high up in one of the early finance companies of the state. I think the founding person was also called Fischer. Bronwyn had a little dog called Blinky Bill, Blinky we called him. He liked to roll on a dead rabbit. You can imagine the smell - I can still smell it! Another day she found a dead rat, she buried it. Two weeks later, she wanted to see whether it had gone to heaven. She dug it up again and it hadn't gone. Her Dad was also in the in the Army Reserves on the weekends. He was very high up in the Reserves.

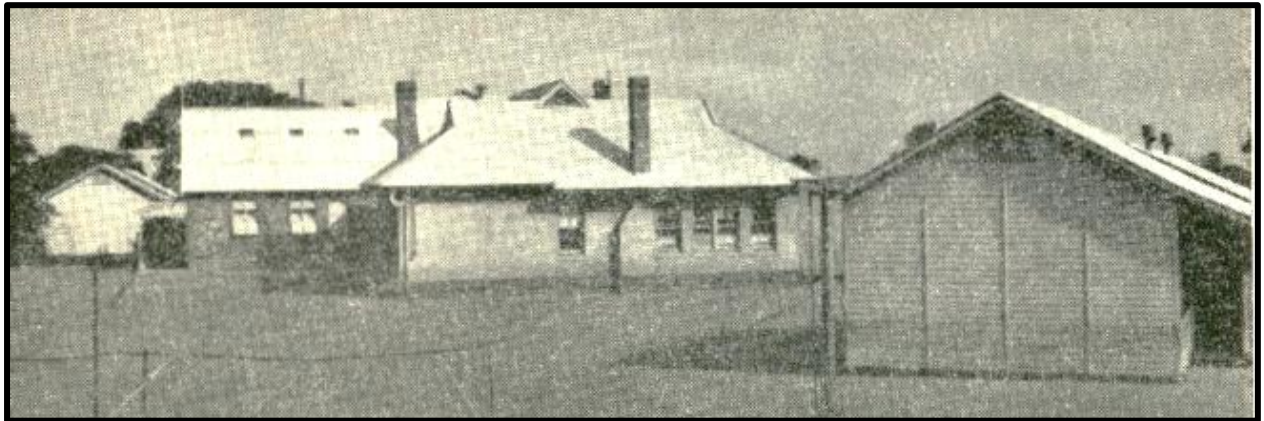
We used to spy on the neighbour that we thought was a spy. We called him Spud Thrower because he used to throw his potatoes. I was dressed in my best spying clothes; a white dress and we crept up and went over the bridge. We used to play, along the creek, so we knew where everything was. There was a shelf under the bridge. You could sit in it up there. When we thought it was time, we crept out of there and crept up to his porch. I tripped over the milk can and, of course, all the lights went on. Off we went. We ran like hell over the bridge.

Other special things that we had was my brother's fifth birthday. We went to the Koala Farm which was near the zoo. You could have rides on a camel. My brother had a picture of a koala and one with a kangaroo. When it was his 60th birthday, I looked for the one with the koala, but I could only find the one of him with the kangaroo. I made a special card with that. It was a little bit like the children's zoo, but probably more interaction, more things to do. I think there were only Australian birds and animals.

Another special treat, my cousin Elle Lovegrove worked for Dulux, and we got invited to their Christmas party. She was single at the time, and we all got beautiful presents, which she paid for.

Plympton Primary School, late 1940s and 1950s

I went to the Plympton Primary School and from then on it was all girls only. When I was in year seven, there were 52 girls in the class.



Plympton School, 1953

Ruth and I blotted our copybook on the very first day of school, because when the bell rang, you stood stock still and you did not move. Well, Ruth and I went on playing. I was biting my apple. When the headmaster came in, he said, "What do you think you're doing, girls?" I said, "Ruth hasn't had her turn on the slippery dip, and I haven't finished eating my apple." That didn't go down very well. There was a naughty line, where children went to stand on the line instead of playing in lunch and recess times. I got the strap, but nobody ever knew about it because I was so humiliated.

On a Friday, the headmistress would take the whole school for story to give the teachers time to balance their role and do a few things. That's the only time I can remember that they had time off. She said, "Everyone sit down." She said it three times, but I apparently wasn't sitting down. I was squatting, but I wasn't aware of it. "Out!" I had to go out, then I got thrashed and I remember sobbing. I was used to being punished, but not if I thought it was unjust. I was humiliated because I was crying when I came back into the classroom. Of course, everyone must have known what had happened, but it was never discussed, never told the parents, never told anybody.

I remember getting ink stamps for reading, which I was very good at. In fact, I was good at school. I loved school, except for getting punished.

We also all had a little mirror, and I think we all spoke with an English accent in those days because it was "a, e, i, o, u" and that sort of thing. All the speech lessons. The little mirror was for seeing your mouth shape and for phonics, which I later taught when I was teaching, and I would if I was going back. They've just rediscovered it, something new.

We had a Friday test every week. I would have been towards the top of the class except for my arithmetic, which I was not good at. From about year five I had tried harder and harder to master mental arithmetic, because that was really quick.

I also wasn't very good at sewing. It took me a whole year to hem one side of a tea towel, and it was dirty. The thread was dirty and everything. Then I was told I had to hurry up, and I finished in ten minutes. I was however always very good at art. I won a prize in year seven.

Year seven was the year we had the inoculations; we had to go to the town hall in town. It was Tuberculosis (TB), that's the one that's left a mark. We had to undress to the waist, and I remember I was only less embarrassed because one girl was hugely endowed, they hung right down to her waist. I was very embarrassed. I'd got my period when I was nine, and I used to have treatment. I'd get terrible pains, my brother had to be sent home during a broadcast in Social Studies, get a bike and ride home to get my medication and back again, which would never happen now, because the kid wouldn't be allowed because it was a fair way from the school down the end of Gray Street.

Queen Elizabeth's visit in 1954

In 1954, we went to the Victoria Park to see the Queen. We'd already seen her come down the Anzac Highway. My cousin Peter Goodridge won first prize for the best photograph of the Queen and Prince Philip. I've got photos and the things Mum gave us when we went to see the Queen.



Peter's winning photo, 1954

Those were the days when they had proper flowers, years later I took the kids to the same place. The Queen looked all modern, she wore blue, which she looks good in, with little white spots. She looked terrific.

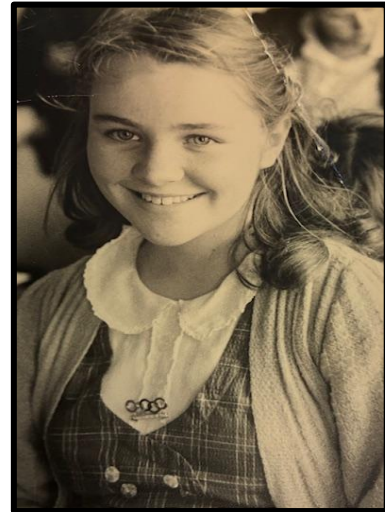
Flowers came from all over the state, carpets of flowers in Victoria Square and down North Terrace. Everything was beautiful. The floats came and the girls were dancing, I don't remember boys dancing, but maybe they did. The girls were decorated with flower headdresses and beautiful costumes.

Mum gave each of us a flag. Mine was a plastic Australian Flag which has my name on it, my brothers had the Union Jack. We had to sit on a piece of plastic on the grass, it went on for quite a few hours.

High School Friendships

They wanted me to go to Adelaide High because I had the right number of marks. I think it was called the Progress Certificate. I said, "No, I want to do art." I didn't go to Adelaide High, I went to Thebarton Tech, and I loved it.

They gave us IQ tests, and I was put in a team. That's where I met my best friend Mary, who's Greek. My aunty had taught for years at Woodville, then she was a demonstration teacher at Richmond Demonstration School, so I had heard of Mary and her sister Barbara.



1956 Melbourne Olympics pin

When we met, we gelled straight away. I've never had any difficulty with accents. Her sister Barbara was a little bit younger; she was about three months younger than me; she didn't have the same accent. Mary has still got an accent because she's been back to live in Greece. Their father was head of the Greek community at the time. He'd been to America to study, and he came back to Adelaide. He had a stroke; he died when we were in third year in high school. That was a terrible thing for them because their mother was left alone and she didn't speak English. She had a wonderful sense of humour. She called her Cocky, "No Speaky". I heard years later that she thought I was her third daughter. Even now, that made me quite emotional. When I was in Greece, I bought her an icon from the Mount where you go up all the steps.



Mary and Me

Mary and Barbara were born in Rhodes. There's a wonderful picture of her and Barbara in their clothes by an old door, black and white, I love that photo. They've got it in their house. Mary became the chef of one of the first Greek restaurants in Adelaide, she was always a fabulous cook.

A coincidence was that before that she worked for Lintons. They didn't want to take her on because when she left school, she was 17 or 18, and they thought she might get married. Everyone loves her anyway, so she's a fabulous embroiderer and chef. When Mary got married, I was her Matron of Honour.



My debut at the Thebarton Town Hall, 1960



My handsome Legatee Bruce Todd

Teaching and taking care of my Mum

I taught Sunday school starting when I was 18, I was still at college. Every week they'd asked me, "Can you do it?" I said, "I had this organized on the first day." I had all these resources, which I've still got.

I would do costumes because I am very interested in other cultures. I dressed all the school, we didn't do weeks and weeks of meetings, we all just divided it up between us. A friend and I, we did the costumes, and I never ever put an Indian costume on a blonde kid, I made sure that it was appropriate. One kid came along who was a German kid. I said, "Carl, what are you?" He had this thing tied around over his face and he said, "I'm a robber and they're in every country!"

I gave up all my ambitions because I would have been sent to the country to teach and Mum was just too ill. I looked after my Mum and my brothers. I moved out because I had a big row with my two brothers because I was washing and ironing and cooking and everything. My grandmother had died at this stage, and my mum had a mental health issue.

The woman on the corner, who was well known for her charity work, organized the neighbours to go through our house, gave all my mother's clothes away to charity. My brother gave all my makeup and jewellery to his girlfriend. I got all the materials, and the letters were given back to my auntie, but not these big reels of film, which should have been preserved. There are pictures that my cousins got from New Guinea.

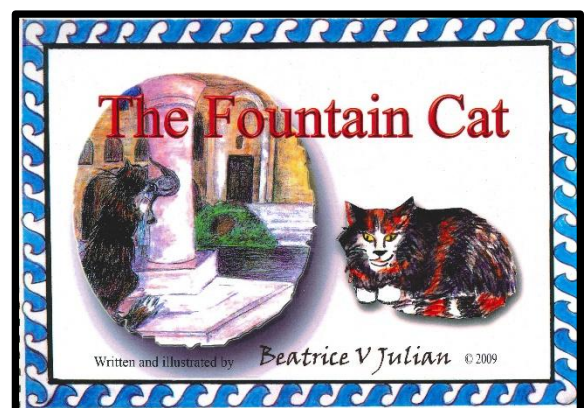
The mental hospital they had then was Glenside. I've got bad memories - I can still smell the place and see the place. When Mum was in hospital and it was my younger brother's birthday, and all he wanted was a yo-yo. Grandma had to go on the bus and take me. We didn't have money for a yo-yo.

I was teacher for 17 years at Forbes Primary School. We were all trained in the Wirral Way. The principal gave us time out to do computing. She was ahead of her time then. I only used it for Photoshop. There were other places before that. Then I went to Glenelg Primary School for ten years. I went on to teach the Camden Community Art Classes. The group's paintings would be entered in the Royal Adelaide Show. One year the children from Reception to Year Seven Art Club from Glenelg won 60 certificates.

The South Wirral Way of Excellence in Teaching is a structured pedagogical approach used at South Wirral High School to improve curriculum consistency and student progress.

Writing books and painting

I taught Sunday School for many years, and I've written lots of books. I've written and I've got several written and I've done and illustrated and not done anything with them. I've written Plays. I've done heaps of things when I think about it. A couple of years ago, I was in a big exhibition with my daughter. We had 16m of wall space for our art, I'd written and illustrated a tape, 'The Fountain Cat', which was set in Rhodes, Greece.



'Children enjoyed table wrestling, indoor soccer, and author Bea Julian's reading of her new picture story book, The Fountain Cat, which was inspired by her time spent on the beautiful island of Rhodes.' <https://greekreporter.com/2009/10/13/adelaide-glendi-a-roaring-success/>

Marriage and Children

I married a Polish man, Richard Peter Strawinski, who worked at Chrysler.

Richard was born in a German work camp during WW1, two pounds, size of an empty milk bottle, put in a shoe box lined with cotton wool. He ended up quite a large boy.

His mother and her brother were hiding in the forest. They had a big farm in Poland, the Germans were waiting for them, and they took them into Germany, and that's where Richard was born.

We had 2 children, Dean and Julie. We were married for 30 years. I did change my name back to Julian, but I didn't do it until after my husband died, although we were divorced.



My engagement photo, 1966



Me with Mum

Aunty Isabel helped me with my wedding dress. I had it up on a model on the dining room table when my white cat, Angel, tried to get up and have kittens under the train. I stitched the lace roses all around the train.

“We had a fit” when Richard found the scrap from the lace by the bin.



On the lawn at Gray Street, Me, Mary, Sandra (Legacy), Janice (Richard's sister)



Ted, Beatty and David, my wedding 1966



My Wedding Day

Mind like a Flea

I tend to be like a flea. I know that I jump from thought to thought. That's how my mind works, because I think visually and in colour. Like I've done a painting, just using all those colours. I've always been like that. I worked better when there was school. I used to hate school holidays. I worked better when I was at Hamilton and I had a person who disliked me; she was so focused, I used her structure. When I did my final thing, I was the only one that did it. I got full marks for the whole eight years I was there.

Eulogy for All Saints Uniting Church, Mooringie Road

I was a member of All Saints Church council and painted many Easter and Christmas art works and exhibitions for them. Recently, my church closed, All Saints Uniting Church, on the corner of Mooringie Avenue and Marion Road. I first went there when I was maybe 6 or 7.

When I was around 5 years old there was a little church on the corner where the creek is. I think it's Daly Street, South Plympton (Grassmere Reserve). There was a scout hall, then a Guide Hall there, but they are gone now. On the opposite side it used to be the baker's and the milkman's stables. I can't remember whether it was a church because I was only a little girl. We went there on a Sunday all dollied up. It was Sunday School and I had to be dressed up in my straw bonnet, ruched silk lined. My brothers wore little blazers and a matching hat with that little button on the top. One had blue and the other one had maroon. They said, "Everyone take off their hats except the Julian boys," because they used to hold on to their treasured hats (bought by Mum's eldest sister, our Aunty Laura Lovegrove).

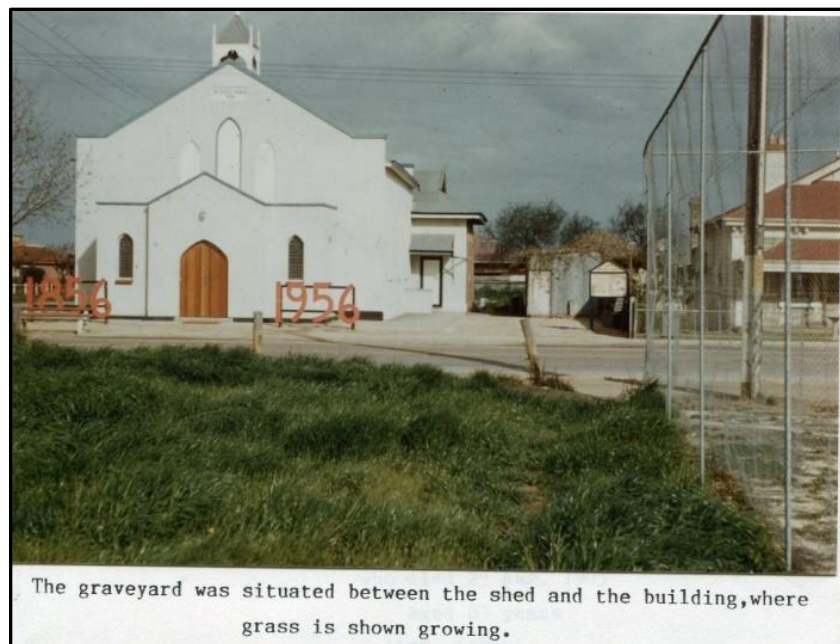


Plympton, 1959 - All Saints Uniting Church (red); Our home (orange); Old hall on Cross Street near the creek (yellow)

I was thinking about my funeral; I was so angry when I couldn't get to go out in a box from the All Saints Church. I was on the committee, the council of the All Saints church, I didn't agree with everything. I went to a committee meeting one day and thought look at all these men running it. I asked them if they thought that was representative of our community. I was put on the church council.

I used to volunteer at Hare Street in kitchen and later in the front of house. There was a fallout, and Hare Street and All Saints broke the partnership, except the volunteering. They were all there on the last day, which was quite lovely. I made the mistake of going back.

I was thinking about my own time. I was annoyed because the thing I loved most was the stained-glass windows. They were mounted on walls in the new part with lights behind, which used to be the hall. I was there because Julie and Gustav were helping clear out the church. I had no intention of doing anything, but I went in there anyway. I said, "Can you take my picture by the windows?" She'd already done it. This is my favourite one, I said. Then I started with my eulogy. You would have seen their faces. Jeff the minister, he's a lovely person, put the light on and then I went full pelt. Then he said, "I never thought of it like that." I thought even if nothing's ever done, I felt like I'd ticked the box.



The last word

Thank you for your great concept. I really enjoyed the continuation and the entwining of the subjects and of the people who lived and grew up in West Torrens. Many of our neighbours have had local success and we have crossed paths over the years. I suppose we were an active village.

Our world was family and the immediate neighbours we lived with. We had no telephone, car or TV, the latter we had in our late teens. I have wonderful memories of my long-lasting childhood friendships, and willing help given by neighbours who helped without intruding. We were self-sufficient and proud.

Thank you for your discretion and understanding, I believe you make a difference to each person you have encountered. Your interest, very thorough research and your sincerity have made such an impact.

I believe that I am finally a whole person with a greater understanding of my background and my part in the community.

Bea Julian, 10 May 2026

The *Preserving Memories* project aim is to interview people who have lived in or had extensive connections to the West Torrens area. The West Torrens Historical Society Inc, in conjunction with the City of West Torrens invite them to share their memories and talk about the events and experiences which helped to make up their life's story. It allows us all the chance to reflect on the past and to preserve those memories into the future.

Thank you, Bea, for participating, and sharing your life story and experiences.

Interviews were conducted between March 2025 and March 2026 by Susan Williams. This document was compiled by Susan Williams. The opinions and views expressed in this interview, and documented in this transcript, are not necessarily the views and opinions of the interviewer, nor the City of West Torrens, and therefore neither accept responsibility for any comments or opinions expressed by the person being interviewed.

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16 July 2026