

Preserving Memories

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

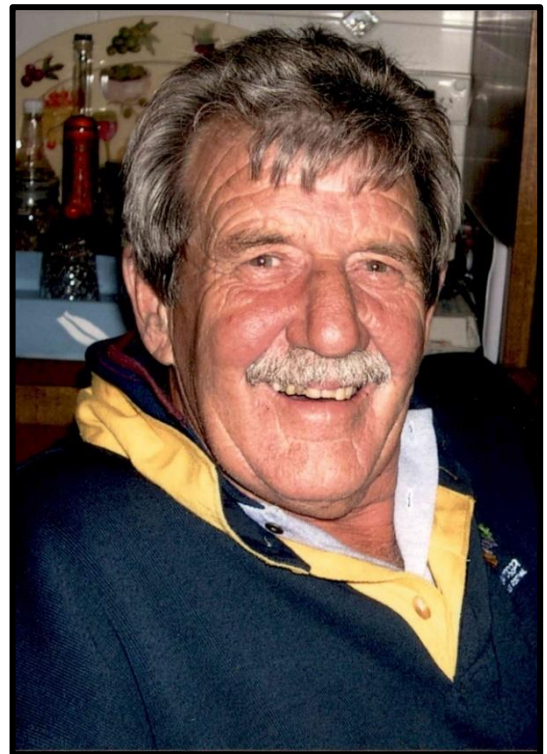
LEE PRETTEJOHN, Lockleys

‘I REMEMBER DRIVING BACK TO THE NURSERY ONE DAY WITH THE UTE PACKED TO THE BRIM, FULL OF HORSE MANURE, AND THE BACK WINDOW COLLAPSED! ALL THE HORSE MANURE, FRESH AND SMELLY, FELL INTO THE CABIN, ALL IN AROUND MY NECK. THAT WAS AN INTERESTING DAY’.

Lee Prettejohn grew up in West Torrens and, with his family, conducted a nursery business in Brooklyn Park for many years. He learnt the trade hands-on and grafted the first tomato in Australia.

The family have also been heavily involved in sport. Lee played, and is still coaching, basketball, with five granddaughters playing top level in Australia and overseas.

He is uncle to three-time Olympic rower Sally Newmarch. He was a key member on the management team of the West Torrens Football Club.



He is still a popular radio identity and everybody's go-to green thumb.

Lee and his wife Judi are now also involved in the wine tourism industry in the Barossa Valley.

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Family background - Worthley family

Maternal grandparents and great grandparents

Frederick Irwin Worthley was born in Hindmarsh 6 July 1890, the 6th son of 11 children.

His parents Richard and Mary were married 23 May 1881 at Medindie, S.A.

- Richard Colin Worthley (born Buckland, Devon, England, 25 July 1856; died 6 March 1925, North Adelaide)
- Mary Grace Kellow (born St Cleer, Cornwall, England, Dec 1858; died 29 Aug 1924, Hindmarsh)

Louisa Annie Whitehorn was born Carlton, Victoria, 1893.

Her parents Alfred and Eleanor were married in 1891 in Victoria.

- Alfred Benjamin Whitehorn (born Holborn, London, January 1870; died 14 October 1950, 28 Brown Street, Adelaide)
- Eleanor J. Harding (born Finsbury, Middlesex, March 1868; died 6 February 1955 Nailsworth)

Frederick Worthley married Louisa Whitehorn 25 July 1914 and they had two children.

1. **Nell Mavis, born Torrensvile, 2 May 1915 - 30 Oct 1999**
2. Frederick Walter, born Torrensvile, 16 July 1919 - 23 May 2008.

Frederick and his son Frederick worked together as metal manufacturers in the 1930s based on Port Road at Hindmarsh. In 1939 the pair made the news as they were accused, but acquitted of, knowingly receiving stolen goods being nine ingots of tin, belonging to the Australian United Steam Navigation Co. Ltd.

The family lived at 31 Huntriss Street in Torrensvile, before moving to *Beverley*, 40 Anzac Highway, Everard Park around 1940.



Beverley, 40 Anzac Highway, Everard Park, 2019 [Streetview]

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Frederick Irwin Worthley was a horse trainer at Morphettsville. Lee recalls the horses next door to the house on Anzac Highway and as a young child going to Grandma and Grandpa Worthleys every Sunday night for tea.

Nell's brother Fred married Doreen Pigou on 16 January 1943.

1. John Frederick, born 15 February 1944
2. Brian Leslie, born 17 April 1946
(name changed to Allen Leslie)
3. Margaret, born 16 Jun 1949.

WORTHLEY (Doreen Pigou).—On Feb. 15, at Calvary, to Doreen and Fred—a son (John Frederick). Thanking Dr. Sweeney and nursing sisters.

Advertiser, 16 Feb 1944 p8

WORTHLEY (nee Pigou).—On April 17, at Calvary, to Doreen and Fred—a son (Brian Leslie). Both well.

Chronicle, 25 Apr 1946, p16



Doreen and Fred Worthley, circa 2007

Frederick died aged 63, at his home in Everard Park on 14 May 1954.

Louisa died aged 81, on 14 December 1974.

WORTHLEY.—On May 14, Frederick Irwin, dearly loved father of Nel and Gordon, grandpa of Lee, Gail, and Geoff.
WORTHLEY.—On May 14, Frederick Irwin, dearly loved father of Fred and Doreen, grandpa of John Allen and Margaret.
WORTHLEY.—On May 14, at his home, "Beverley," 40 Anzac Highway, Everard Park, Frederick Irwin, dearly beloved husband of Lou and loving father of Nell and Fred. Aged 63 years. Thy will be done.

News 14 May 1954, p 27

Death Of Owner
Mr. Frederick I Worthley, who died on Friday at the age of 63, was widely known as an owner of racehorses.
He won the Onkaparinga Cup in 1950 with Worando, and more recently other races with Desmond and Helisha.

Advertiser, 18 May 1954, p15

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Mother - Nell Mavis Worthley (2 May 1915 – 30 Oct 1999)



South Australian News 25 May 1936



Nell Worthley on left, 1930s



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Family background - Prettejohn family

Paternal Great Great Grandparents - Nathaniel and Mary Prettejohn

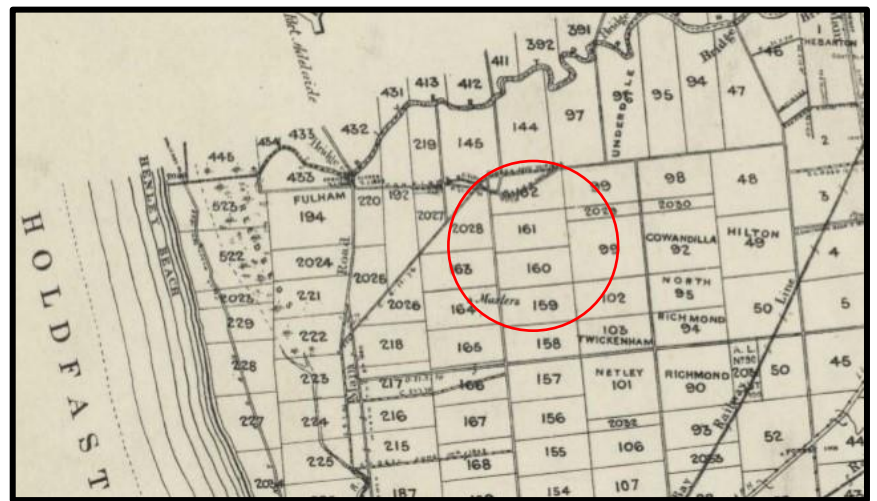
Sometimes spelt 'Prettyjohn' the Prettejohn ancestry is suggested to be from two names joined together, a French lady called Prette and a Scottish man called John and that became Prettejohn.

Nathaniel & Mary (née Gillard) Prettejohn, with four children, left Devon in 1839, on the *Orissa* and arrived in South Australia in 1840.

Their children were:

1. Mary Jane (1830-1857)
2. Philip (1832-1879)
3. Nathaniel (1834-1905)
4. Elizabeth Anne Gillard (1836-1844)

They settled in District A, Section 161, Brooklyn Park on a farm of three acres. It was enclosed by posts and rails, and 'included a house, stockyard and a well sixteen feet deep containing three feet of water.'



JOHN O'GROAT TAVERN,
HINDLEY-STREET.

NATHANIEL PRETTIJOHN begs to inform his numerous friends and the public that he has succeeded to the above house, where the old customers will find all those conveniences (a good stock-pen, stables, and refreshments) for which this house has been so long famed; and, as extensive alterations are being made, he will be able to give much additional accommodation. As an old colonist, he hopes to have a great share of their patronage.

N. P. begs to inform his Busn friends that his stock-yards and stables are extensive, his beds a good number; and, as his farm is near, he has at all times a quantity of hay and fodder for horses and cattle.

The wines, spirits, &c. &c., will be of the best quality.

☛ An ordinary every day at one o'clock.

BALL.

THE first Monthly Ball will take place at the "John O'Groat Tavern," Hindley-street, on Wednesday (This Day.)

Tickets, one shilling each for gentlemen, to be obtained at the bar.

South Australian Register 1 April 1846

Nathaniel, after obtaining a liquor license in March 1845, established the *John O'Groat Tavern* in Hindley Street in 1846.

Two further sons were born in South Australia:

5. John Gillard (1842-1883)
6. Peter Gillard (1846-1922).

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Paternal Great Grandparents - John and Caroline Prettejohn

John Gillard Prettejohn (25 April 1842 – 6 December 1883) on 13 October 1854, married Caroline Eliza Hyne (27 September 1845 – 11 September 1890).

Their ninth child was Harry Gillard Prettejohn.

Paternal Grandparents - Harry and Florence Prettejohn

Harry Gillard Prettejohn (29 April 1880 - 7 November 1937) married 5 October 1904 in the Hilton Baptist Church, Florence May Holman (14 April 1881 - 14 December 1914).

| 1880 | | District of Adelaide | |
|---|-----|---|-----------------------------------|
| Name | Sex | Name and Surname of Father | Name and Maiden Surname of Mother |
| Harry Gillard Prettejohn | M | John Gillard Prettejohn | Caroline Eliza Hyne |
| Born at the General Registry Office, this 7th day of June 1880. | | Signed and sealed by the Registrar, J. H. K. Prettejohn | |

BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES REGISTRATION OFFICE
ADELAIDE.
I hereby certify that the above particulars are contained in an Entry in the Register kept in this Office in the State of South Australia. Given under my hand and seal this 22nd day of MAY, 2000

Registrar

Harry Gillard Prettejohn, birth certificate, 1880 [D&H Prettejohn]



Harry Gillard Prettejohn



Florence May Holman

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Harry and Florence had 3 sons.

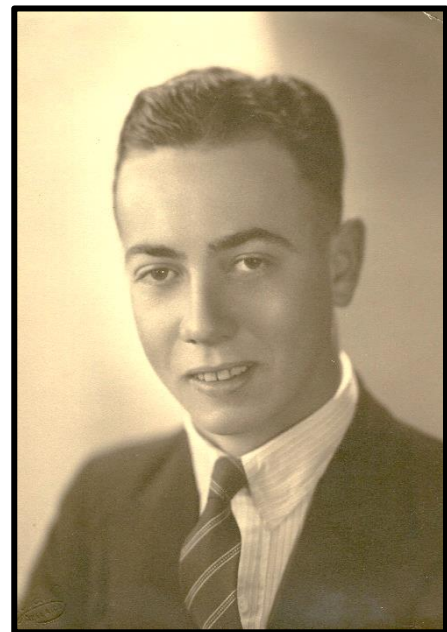
1. Stanley Gillard (born Lurline Street, 21 October 1905 – 31 March 1977)
2. **Gordon William (born Bagot Avenue, West Adelaide, 26 November 1907)**
3. Wilfred Holman (born Bagot Avenue, West Adelaide, 15 January 1913 – 21 June 1991)



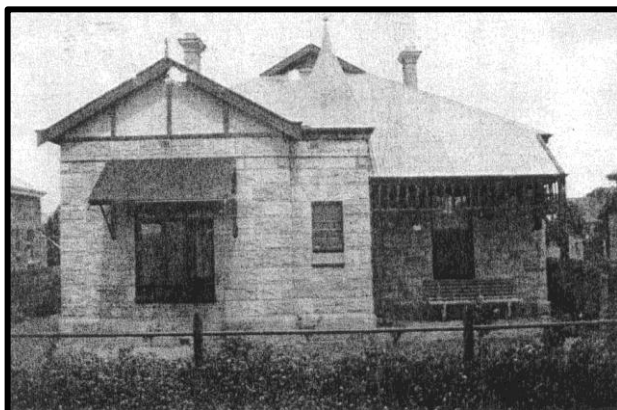
*Wilfred, Stanley and Gordon Circa 1917
[ancestrylibrary.com.au]*

After Florence's death Harry married Chrissie Julia Butterfield (30 November 1880 - 13 July 1969) on 2 March 1918 at the Brooklyn Park Methodist Church.

Harry and Chrissie had one son.
Frank Harry (born Gertrude Street, Brooklyn Park, 15 April 1919, died on 21 September 2004).



*Frank Harry Prettejohn
[ancestrylibrary.com.au]*



The Prettejohn family lived in Gertrude Street, Lockleys.

*4 Gertrude Street, Brooklyn Park
[D&H Prettejohn]*

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Gordon Prettejohn
[ancestrylibrary.com.au]



Wilfred Prettejohn
[ancestrylibrary.com.au]

Frank became an apprentice painter to Mr. Johnston, Master Painter / House Decorator. Around 1946 he started his own painting business known as *F. H. Prettejohn - Painter Decorator*.



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Parents - Gordon and Nell Prettejohn



Wedding of Nell Worthley to Gordon Prettejohn, 1938 [ancestrylibrary.com.au]

Nell Mavis Worthley married Gordon William Prettejohn on 17 December 1938 at Holy Trinity Church, Adelaide. Their first home together was 294 Beach Road, Underdale.



294 Henley Beach Road, Underdale, 2009 [Streetview]

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Many market gardens and nurseries took advantage of the areas well drained, alluvial soils from years when the Torrens River flooded. Around 1947 when Gordon was working for Les Smart at Smart's nursery and learning the trade, he bought four blocks for a nursery from Bill Stanford who was a renown local nurseryman.

Around the same time, he bought a stall in the Central Market in Adelaide.



Circa 1950s [WTHS Lockleys Budget]



West Maps Public, 1947

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| * Gertrude st—E side | |
| L side from Hnly Bch rd | |
| Constance st | |
| 3 | Lawrie, A. J., bldr |
| 7 | Smart, L. R., nsymn |
| 11 | Prettyjohn, G. W. |
| 13 | Taylor, C. A. |
| 15 | King, A., traveller |
| 17 | Bateman, R. C. |
| 19 | Wharton, F., clerk |
| 25 | Mickan, H. A. |
| 29 | Beer, H. W. |
| Lipsett ter | |
| Gertrude st—W side | |
| R side from Hnly Bch rd | |
| 2 | Ingemells, Rev. E. |
| 4 | Prettyjohn, Mrs. C. J. |
| 6 | Taylor, A. J., msn |
| 8 | Jackson, W. |
| | Prettyjohn, — nsymn |
| 18 | Stanford, G., grdnr |
| 22 | Anderson, L., grdnr |
| 24 | Statton, A. K. |
| 26 | Lane, Mrs. E. |
| 28 | Fisher, S. |
| 30 | Smart, L. R., grdnr |
| Lipsett ter | |

Sands and McDougall directory, 1947

Gordon and Nell had 3 children.

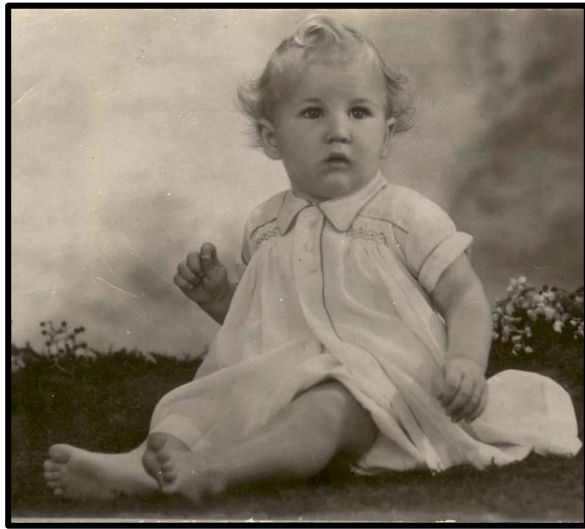
1. **Lee Gordon, born 3 April 1940 at St Ives Hospital, Torrensville**
2. **Gail Margaret, born 15 February 1944, Torrensville;**
died 12 January 2022
- married Robert Newmarch
- (Todd, Sally)
- Sally represented Australia at 3 Olympic Games in rowing (Atlanta 1996, Sydney 2000, Athens 2004)
3. **Geoffrey Ross, born 10 December 1951, Henley & Grange Hospital**
- married Heather Murtie (Erin, Carrie)
- married Susan Burns (née Stokes) (Susan's children Ashley, Sara)



Lee and Gail, 1947

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Lee Gordon Prettejohn, 1941



Nell and Lee, 1941

Gordon died at the age of 50 on the 18 Sep 1957.

In 1959 Nell married Lawrence Edward William Mosel (born 1911), Laurie died 19 Oct 1996 at West Beach.



Laurie Mosel, 1995



Nell and Gail, 1999

Nell died 31 October 1999 aged 84.

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Gail, Geoff, Lee and Nell, 1999



Lee, Gail and Geoff, 1999



Lee, niece Sally, and Geoff, 1999

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Growing Up

The family lived in Underdale, at 294 Henley Beach Road, which was close to the corner of Holbrooks Road.



(Henley) Beach Road to Holbrooks Road corner, 1949 [West Maps Public]

Lee recalls that it was noisy and that there were plenty of accidents on the corner. He remembers the tram that went down the middle of the road.



Tram, Henley Beach Road, Torrensville, circa 1950

[WTHS LH0101-17]

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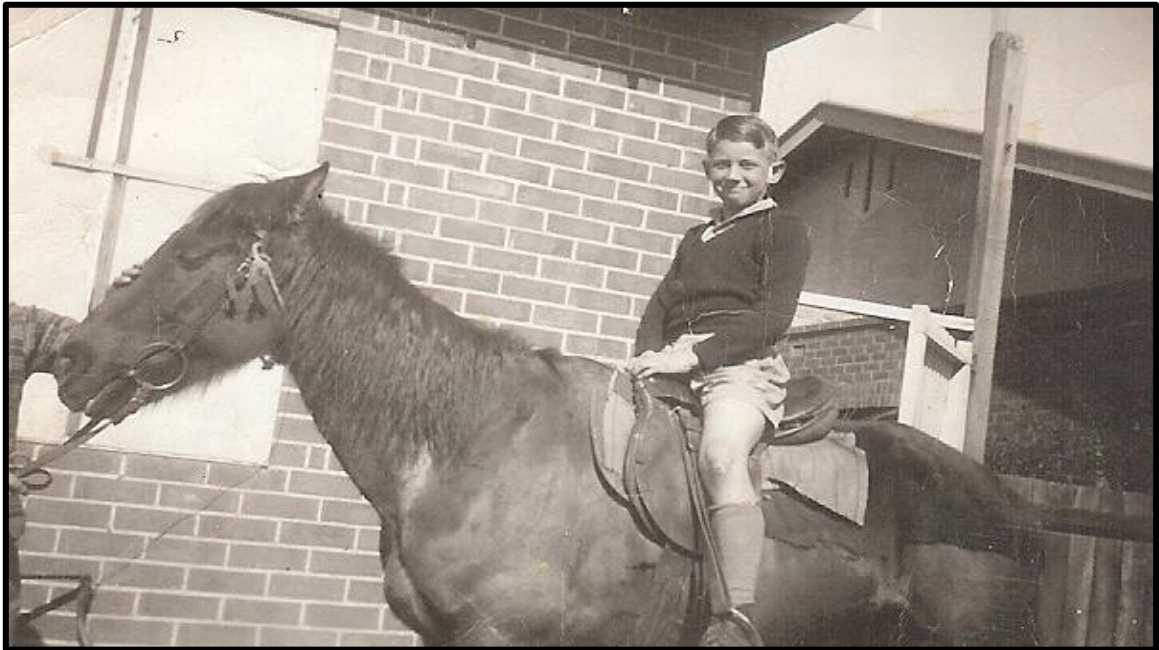
Many of the children of the time would play cricket or kick a ball on the roads around their home. Lee recalls that they always played in the backyard because Holbrooks Road and Henley Beach Road were main roads.

We had a lot of games that we would play.

I was very athletic. I enjoyed being active, especially once I started school. I enjoyed all ball games.



Gail and Lee at Adelaide Zoo, circa 1948



Lee, circa 1950

Education

St Gabriel's Kindergarten

Lee went to St Gabriel's Kindergarten in Howard Street, Underdale.

Everyone hung their bags up on coat hangers as we went into kindy, and quite often we'd go through each other's bags and eat the other person's lunch before they had a chance to get to it. I got hauled over the coals a couple of times for doing it, but others were doing it to me. We all did it.

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Lockleys Primary School

From 1946 Lee attended the Lockleys Primary School, riding his bike to school along the Henley Beach Road. *There weren't a lot of cars back then, no bike lanes, but that was the thing in those days. We all rode bikes.*

I loved school, mostly playing basketball or kicking a football on the oval. The oval was in May Terrace, across the road from the school. Playing marbles was also popular.



Lockleys Primary School, circa 1948, grade 3 (Lee circled 2nd row, 4th from right))



Lockleys Primary School, circa 1951 (Lee circled, middle back row with spotted jumper)

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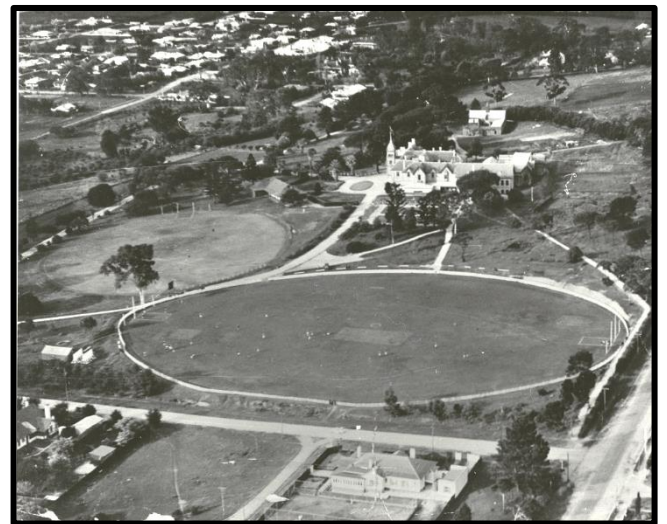


Lockleys Primary School, circa 1952 (Lee circled, 2nd row from top, 3rd from right)

Scotch College 1953-1956

Even though his secondary schooling was across the other side of town at Scotch College, Torrens Park, Lee continued to ride his bike, which would take 45 minutes. If the weather was bad, he would take the tram.

I used to cut across Marion Road and through the back streets to Unley, then straight up Unley Road, go past Walford Girls. That always gave me a bit of pep to keep going. Keeping an eye out for the girls.



Scotch College 1938 SLSA B-36050

I mostly enjoyed school, but they started to teach me French. I didn't like that. And I could never understand Algebra but was alright with Arithmetic.

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The family nursery

In 1956, I was still at Scotch College when Dad became ill. I was encouraged to leave school, but I first worked for the Adelaide Steamship Company for about three or four months, because Dad and Mum didn't want to push me straight into the nursery.

I did a couple of other jobs; I was still raw and just out of school. Within a year of leaving school, I went to work in the nursery. Dad passed away at the age of 50 in 1958. He had Tuberculosis and had a haemorrhage. It was very sad.

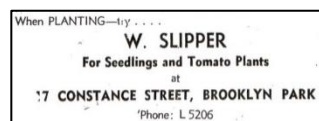
Nell took over the nursery with help from Glenn Churchett who had been Gordon's right-hand man in the nursery. Lee started to learn the trade from him, following this vocation which was foreseen from a young age.



Prettejohn's Nursery, Gertrude Street, Lockleys, 1979 [WTHS LH0590-10]

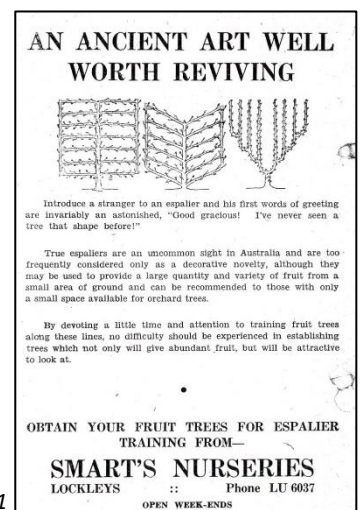
There was definitely competition between the local nurseries, but we all got on well and would meet once a month and promote our seedlings.

Bill Slipper, Doug Smart and Prettejohn's were three that used to meet on a regular basis and promote whatever we could to the public. We worked together.



Lockleys Budget, 2 Aug 1948

Lockleys Budget, 1 May 1951



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'Taking it on the chin'

Lee would go with a Ute to Jackson's Bakery off Port Road at Brompton to collect horse manure from their stables. It would be sieved, spread over the nursery bed and kept damp until the seedlings grew.

Jackson's Bakery Hocking st Brompton
Jackson's Bakery Ltd 17-31 Coglin st Brompton

Sands and McDougall directory, 1960

Horse manure is not a fertilizer, horse manure is a mulch. That's the secret. But you've got to be careful nowadays with horse manure because you don't know where it's from and what's been injected into the horses, like racehorses. But back in those days, the old-fashioned horse manure from bakeries was perfect.

We got ours from Jackson's Bakery. This was owned by Wayne Jackson's father, who was a West Torrens footballer and then then the big boss CEO of the AFL.

I remember driving back to the nursery one day with the Ute packed to the brim, full of horse manure, and the back window collapsed! All the horse manure, fresh and smelly, fell into the cabin, all in around my neck. That was an interesting day. Never forget it.

Seedlings in paper bundles

Once the seedlings grew to about three or four inches tall, they would be dug out in handfuls of 20-30 and wrapped in pages of paper torn out from old editions of the Women's Weekly.

The nursery grew a lot of flowers and vegetables seedlings. This was before the use of punnets and plastic containers, they were bundled and wrapped in paper for sale.

A lot of people grew their own vegetables back then, like onions, tomatoes and cabbages. Tomatoes were a big seller. If you wanted to add colour to your garden, you grew petunias or pansies.

I used to go to Gordon and Gotch and pick up old Women's Weekly's, tear them up, and use the pages to wrap the bundles of seedlings, ready to sell at our Adelaide Central Market stall.



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Grand Prix Colour

A real highlight for Lee and the Prettejohn Nursery was the provision of all the colour for the ten years that the Formula One Grand Prix was held in Adelaide from 1985 to 1995.



Petunias in the grandstand near the chicane, 1992 Adelaide Grand Prix [Facebook]

I would grow troughs and troughs of petunias for all the corporate areas. I loved it. We had a contract to grow all the colour and green life. We used to bring five Pantech's of green life from Queensland into the nursery. We'd create a nursery at the end of Wakefield Street near the track and it's still there now.

They've just used it for the recent car race. But we used to do that and have all the green life and colour there and put it out into all the corporate boxes. I'm proud of it. I do miss that, and the contact.

To grow those plants for the Grand Prix, and then to have South Australian Tennis use them at around about Christmas time was special. I'd do a cutback and bring the plants on again. And then in late January Les Burdett from Adelaide Oval would also want colour for the Test.

We had the contract to ourselves. I had a great connection with Burdett and a great connection with SA Tennis. And we had a contract for the Formula One. It was very special.

I grew a lot of colour for those three events. My pride and joy.

After I sold the Gertrude Street nursery in 2000, I used a place in Malurus Avenue, Carlien and Barry Hunt's mum Connie's place. She had a big backyard, and I grew all the petunias in her backyard.

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1992 Prettejohn floral displays at S.A Tennis events



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The Central Market

In those days the market only opened Tuesday, Friday, Friday night and Saturday morning till about 1:00. Every Monday we would do bundles ready for Tuesday's market, and on Thursdays, we would do fresh bundles for Friday and Saturday.

Everyone used to go to the Central Market and get their plants and seedlings. Bunnings, and those other big retail outlets, didn't exist.



Central Market, 1992, daughters Kirsten and Sandy

There were other nurseries with Central Market stalls, Bill Tucker, Frank Safin, Bill Holton, and Dave Thomson (father of ABC's Gardening Australia presenter Sophie). They were all in competition with each other.

Seedlings in paper bundles did not last so at the end of the day what wasn't sold was thrown on the compost heap to decompose and reuse in soil again.



Lee Prettejohn, Central Market 1995 [SLSA B7086]

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LEGEF Grafted Tomatoes

There was nowhere to study this industry, it was all hands on. I attended conferences with people from nurseries all over Australia. You could talk to other nurserymen from your own state and other states and learn from them. I remember I grafted the first grafted tomato in Australia. I learnt how to graft from someone at a conference.



'LEGEF' Grafted tomatoes



One LEGEF plant –
6 feet (1.8 metres) high
10 feet (3 metres) wide
produced 80lb (36 kg) of fruit

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The nursery beds were 60-feet long and four feet wide. There would be a path either side, the bed would be raked, and the seed sown.



Prettejohns Nursery, production

In the late 1980s the demand for housing increased in the western suburbs, land became more valuable and with the increase in rates and taxes, the nurseries closed, and the land was sold for residential housing.

We folded about the same time as Slippers in 2000. Smarts hung on for a bit longer.

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Living Colour Nursery

Lee's brother, Geoff and his wife Susan, along with Susan's son Ashley Burns, now run Living Colour Nursery in the northern suburb of Edinburgh, near the Air Force base.

This is a large wholesale nursery which supplies Bunnings, garden centres and chain stores. The operation is large, employing 80 to 90 staff.

[Indaily 1 April 2020]



Located at Penfield, Living Colour Nursery is South Australia's largest grower of veggie seedlings.

Nursery triples production to get veggie seedlings back on shelves

South Australia's largest wholesale nursery is working overtime to restock the shelves of garden centres wiped clean by a customer rush to grow home produce amid coronavirus concerns.

Ben Kelly



In the past fortnight, Living Colour Nursery's Geoff Prettejohn and Ashley Burns have seen an exponential increase in the demand for veggie seedlings.

LIVING COLOUR NURSERY
PTY LTD

SPECIALISTS
IN
SEEDLINGS, FLOWERING ANNUALS,
PERENNIALS, LANDSCAPING PLANTS
AND PACKS

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A.B.N. 78 669 470 220
72 Belchambers Road, PENFIELD SA 5121
PO Box 41, ELIZABETH SA 5112
Phone: (08) 8287 1366 Fax: (08) 8287 0380
www.livingcolournursery.com.au

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Gardening expert on Radio 5AA

The biggest problem for customers buying through Bunnings, supermarkets and chain stores, is that the shop assistants in those places don't have the knowledge and expert advice about plants.

Lee's extensive knowledge and expertise is often sought from home gardeners. From around 1990 to early 2022, about 32 years, he spoke on Radio 5AA, with Mike Keelan on his weekly gardening show.

The callers would be connected with 'Lee Prettejohn in the Green Room' for advice. He was renowned as the gardening guru who would solve their problems.

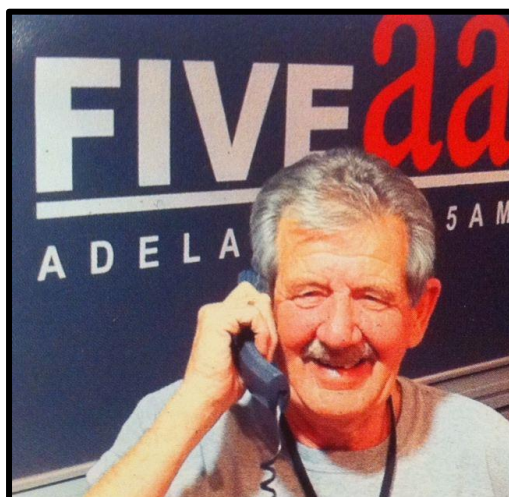


1998 5AA Michael Keelen, Neil Humphries, Lee Prettejohn

Michael and I got together many years ago. We were both in the industry and met through industry shows. When he started at 5AA, he asked me to join him. That was in the 'Green Room.'

I knew a lot about vegetables and flowers, but I was also learning a lot about trees and shrubs. I learnt by reading books and talking to Michael about issues. I took a lot of green room calls off-air. In two hours I'd take up to about 70 calls. There'd be a queue of calls.

The program was sponsored by Yates, I would recommend their seeds and Seasol for home gardeners.



FiveAA, 2013 [Facebook]

I still had the stall in the Central Market, so people would come and chat to me, ask for advice and buy some seedlings. There were some spin offs. People would come into the market and say to the girls who were running the stall, "Oh, I listened to Lee on the radio, I need to talk to Lee because I need his advice." Being on the radio was a promotion for the business.

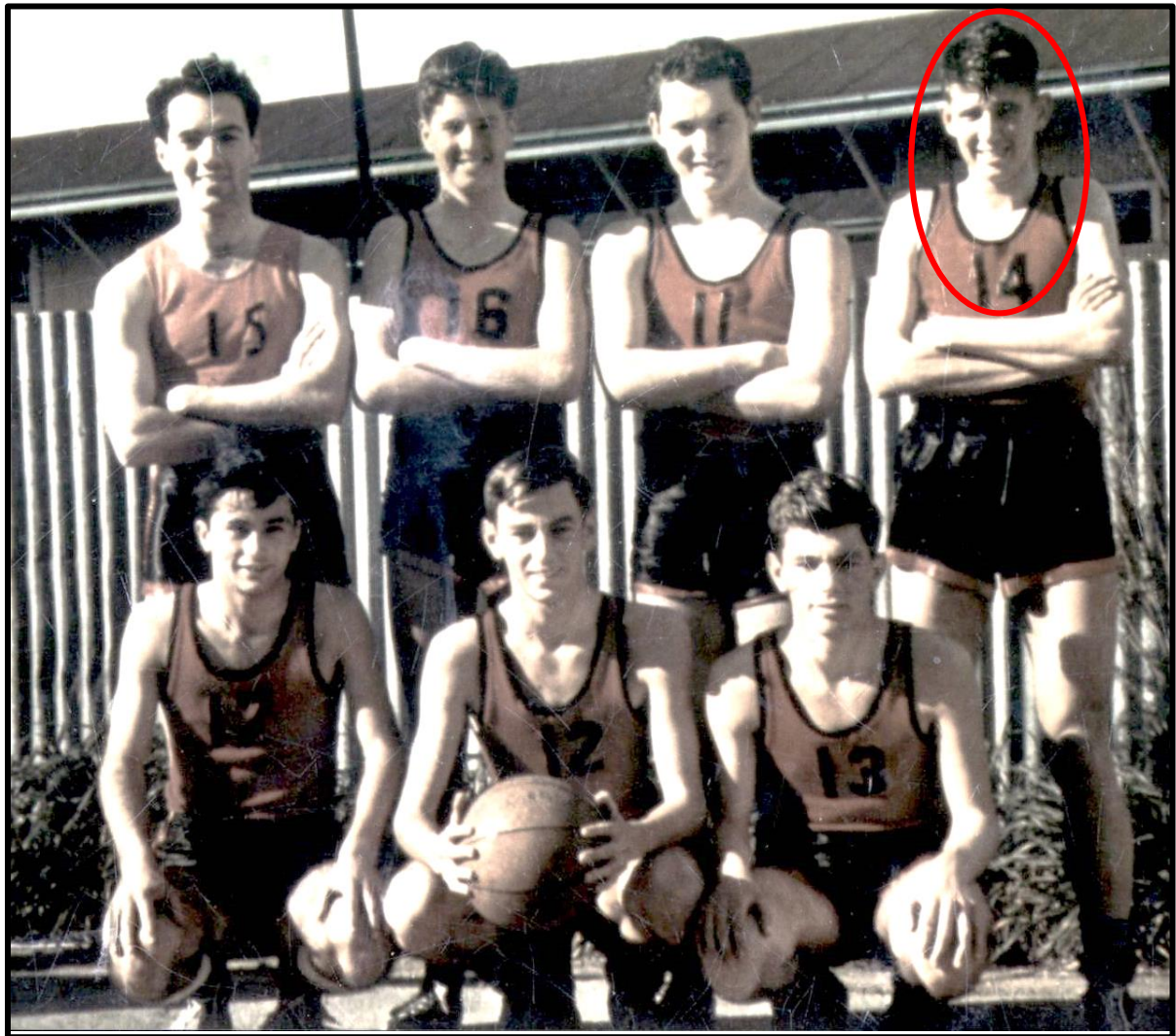
I still go on the radio once a month, but now it's by phone.

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Leisure and Sport

Lee spent many leisure hours at events run by the Brooklyn Park Church of Christ Youth Group. *I had a wonderful time with the boys at Brooklyn Park, as dancing with girls was a bit of a 'no-no'. Basketball games were a large part of the group's activities focus.*



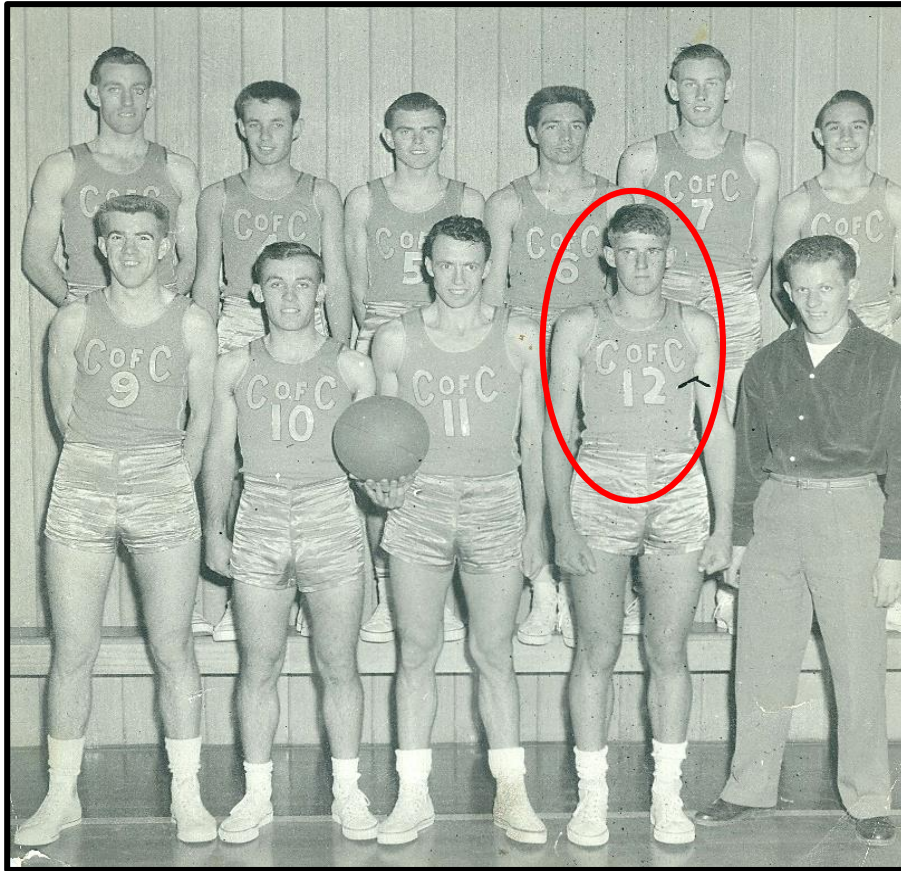
Brooklyn Park Church of Christ basketball team
Standing: Minister Rex Chamberlain (15), Gary Coombs (16) Jeff Abbott (11), Lee Prettejohn (14),
Squatting: Graham Parry (17), Julian Radcliffe (12) Ashley Radcliffe (13)

Lee recalls that the Minister, Rex Chamberlain was quite young, and he played in the team.

Barry Specht was a member at the church, and he was also a top district basketballer and a very good long shooter. He had led the Brooklyn Park team playing basketball against other church teams, and he instigated a lot of the games at the Church of Christ in Brooklyn Park. The first year the team was formed they won the grand final beating Blackwood.

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SA Churches basketball team circa 1957

5 Scott Davie,

10 Barry Specht, 11 John Pritchford, 12 Lee Prettejohn

After junior basketball at the church, Lee played for the West Torrens Basketball Club.

Barry Specht was one of the leaders of the Club, and Lee became a West Torrens Junior basketballer playing in Metro A which was the top level. *I won a Metro best and fairest award in the competition.*

Lee was a good shooter both long and fast break lay-ups. Some of the other players of this era that Lee recalls were names like Arthur Newly, John Coady and Brian Hennig.

We had some good teams and good players. Barry set the example. We used to ride our bikes to Maylands and Unley and Forestville to play basketball.

We'd play our game and then we'd ride home to Brooklyn Park and thought nothing of the distance. It wasn't until my late teens that I got my first car, which was an Austin 7. I wish I had one now!

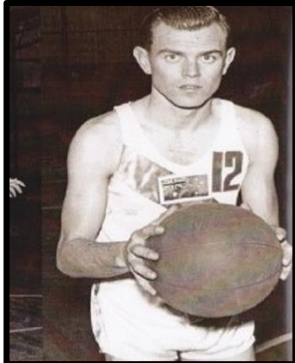


Barry Specht 1961 SA team
[botinagy.com]

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My father passed away in 1958 and we had a grand final against Blackwood two days later.



Scott Davie
[olympedia.org]

Scott Davie, who went to the 1964 Olympics, was playing for Blackwood. We beat them by two points. I scored 32 points and Scott Davie got 32, but we were two points ahead at the end, and won the grand final.

Two years later, playing with Barry Specht in 1960, they both made the news for their play in the opening match of the Churches of Christ Men's Basketball Association, A grade game.

Blackwood lose by 4 pts.

Last Saturday, April 30, marked the opening of the S.A. Churches of Christ Men's Basketball Association "A" Grade minor round, in which Blackwood were narrowly defeated by Brooklyn Park.

Although Blackwood almost completely shut out two of Brooklyn's (West Torrens district) players, Barry Specht and Lee Prettejohn, they could not stop State centre John Pitchford. As in last season, Blackwood's passing again let them down.

The scores were: Brooklyn Park, 43; Blackwood, 39.

Scorers: S. Davie, 20; R. Brown, 9; A. Tindale and C. Crago each 5.

1 p.m. on Forrestville C. of C. court.

MODEL AERO CLUB

Last Sunday we flew at National Park on an oval which proved rather small. This did not show up, unfortunately, till John Mathias' "Blue Pants" stunter suffered extensive damage from an overhanging bough.

This Sunday all members are asked to meet at 1 p.m., with an extra tool in their equipment—a large shovel—at the rear of the Golden Fleece Service Station on Shepherds Hill Road. After a little hard work normal flying will commence.

The Coromandel 6 May 1960, p11



South Australia's powerful Church of Christ team get together for a photo shoot.

Back Row: Barry Hannaford, Bary Specht, Bruce Ninnis, Dean Whitford, John Harris, Graham Jones, Malcolm Tredrea,

Front row: Scott Davie, Lee Prettejohn, Brian Whitford, John Pitchford

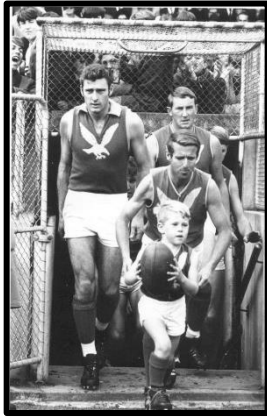
*Circa 1958/59
[Facebook]*

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West Torrens Football Club

In the 1970s, Lee was involved with the West Torrens Football Club.



Son, Andrew, leading out the team, circa 1968

I was team manager 1977 to 1979 and on the West Torrens committee from 1970 to 1980.



Wayne Jackson

Wayne Jackson was the president of West Torrens. I was a member on the social committee running Sportsman's Nights and other social and fund-raising events. Wayne came up to me one Thursday night and said, "Neil Kerley is coming to Torrens. Would you be his team manager?" I was flattered, responding with "Bloody oath I would." Kerls was fantastic. We got on well.

As a Team Manager, during the week on training nights, and on game days, Lee would make sure all the players were on the track and ready to train when Neil was ready to go.

Everything had to be organized. Everything had to be spot on for Kerls to walk in and give his speech, whether it was training or a game.

Kerls was well respected by the club, but interestingly, he didn't tolerate people on the management committee who wanted to tell him how to do his job. He didn't want to talk to the committee. He would freely talk to me and ask my opinions, but if there was a need to discuss anything with the committee, he would use me as the messenger.

I remember one particular time, Kerls said, "I want the players to get together without their wives and put on a keg." So, we did this in my shed at home, all the players came in, and they had a lovely Sunday afternoon, just talking to each other over a beer.

Kerls wasn't a great lover of softies. He wanted hard men to play football, and he felt schoolteachers could be too soft, and yet, there were a couple of really good teachers in the team. He was very direct. You had to play hard. If you didn't go for the hard ball, you weren't in the team next week.

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Kevin McSporran [SANFL]

I was friendly with a guy in Port Augusta called Kevin McSporran, he was a great basketballer and great cricketer. I said to Kerls one day, "There's a guy up in Port Augusta. Will you have a look at him?" He said, "Yeah, bring him down as long as he can come to training, I'll look at him."

Kerls put him in a trial game. Kevin blitzed them. And again, in another trial, he blitzed them. Kerls just said, "If you keep playing like that, I don't care whether you come down or not for training."

That's the type of guy he was. Kerls said to him "You prove to me that you can get the hard ball and play good football and I'll support you." Kevin McSporran was one of Kerley's favourite players.

Kerls wouldn't go to the bar with just anyone. He hated being cornered by people talking rubbish in his ear. He would say, "Come on, come with me and I'll buy you a drink." So, I'd go to the bar with him and keep him talking, it stopped supporters or committee people getting in his ear.

One of my other jobs was to look after his wife Barb, if he left to do something, I'd have to make sure Barb was okay. I loved working with him. I found him very direct, very forthright, but if you did the right thing by him, you had a friend for life. I found him very loyal. But I'm a loyal person, too.



Barbara and Neil Kerley [indaily.com.au]

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In 1980 I was on the committee, and some of the committee felt Kerley wasn't doing enough with the juniors, that he was concentrating on the seniors. They put a proposal to him and said, "You've got to do more work with the juniors and if you agree to it, we'll give you another contract." He said, "I haven't got the time. I'm doing so much with the seniors." Because he didn't agree to do more work in the junior development area, he was sacked.

In 1981, Kerls went back to Westies with Doug Thomas and coached there. In 1983 he took West Adelaide top in a thrilling final against Sturt.



Grand Final 1983.

West Adelaide players Mark Dreher, Ian Borchard, Neil Kerley, Leon Grosser, Dirk de Yong [SLSA B 75522/62]

Kerls got involved with the America's Cup and he went to Perth where he guided the fitness and training program of the Australian Crew and helped them in training for the America's Cup.

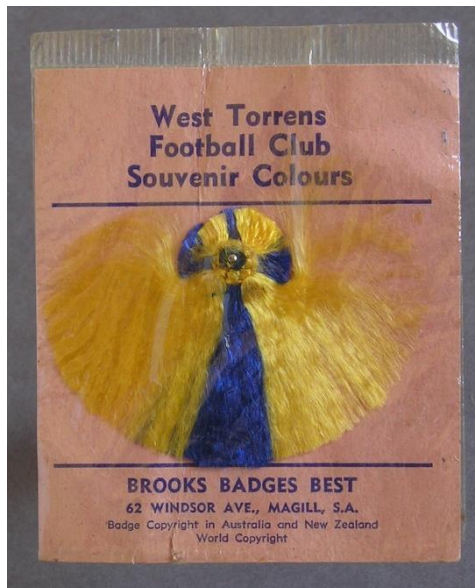
When Woodville amalgamated with West Torrens in 1990 the management requirements changed which included the removal of Lee's role and other West Torrens officials. This caused Lee some conflict and, as a result, a loss of interest and passion for the club.

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Football now

Every three or four months now, Johnny Graham, one of the ex-West Torrens Boys, arranges a get together at the oval, and all the old West Torrens players and officials get together. They get 200 people there every three months. It's a good reunion. All the Eagles people get together.



1962 [digital.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au]



Lindsay Head's 1966 West Torrens Guernsey on display at the State Library of South Australia (2022)

I now follow the Crows. I'm a mad Crow. I'm a foundation member and proud of it. I love watching the Crows. I'm certainly not a Port Power fan. Far from it. I'm 82 now, so I'm finding it more difficult to drive there on a Saturday night and come home late. So, I sit home and watch it at home. It's all right on a Saturday afternoon game but driving home after a night game is not so appealing when you're living in the Barossa Valley.

Comparing the football games from the 1970s to now, I think the game is much quicker now. The handball is used a lot more now. Back then you just went in hard and got the hard ball and kicked it. If you didn't get the hard ball, you weren't on the field. And you don't see a drop kick now. But gee, I remember some of the dropkicks. And the place kicks. I think I prefer the current style, the quickness to play on, but it's getting too rough, too physical.

I worry that it is too rough and physical for the women's games. They need to be taught to tackle properly to avoid injuries.

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Basketball coaching

Don Collins was one of the first coaches at West Torrens who was also a champion state lawn bowler. Don came from the Henley area and was a Woollacott Medallist.

The Woollacott Medal was donated by the Basketball Association of South Australia on behalf of Noel Woollacott's Emporium. Noel Woollacott was killed in action during World War II.

Originally given to the Best and Fairest player in the District competition, the Noel Woollacott Trophy eventually evolved into the Woollacott Medal and was upgraded to Fairest and Most Brilliant in the early 1970s.

Mitch McConnell was another local boy that I had dealings with. They were really exciting days. Barry Specht, and Barry's father, Fred, both coached at West Torrens. They taught me heaps.

I ruptured an ACL when playing, so I started coaching. I coached Woodville for a while, and then I started to coach juniors and coached Under 16s at North Adelaide for nine years 1976 to 1985. The team won a number of championships for North Adelaide.



North Adelaide Under 16s 1982, daughter Kirsten on left of Lee in middle row.

Lee also coached the South Australian under 16 girls team for five years from 1979, with the team winning the Australian Championship in 1981, and runners-up on three other occasions.

In 1986 he coached the Noarlunga City Tigers, senior women, in the Australian National League. He was awarded the Coach of the Year Award.

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Lee went on to coach 10 to 12-year-old children one-on-one in the basic skills and fundamentals of the game. He coached his grandchildren and is still coaching in the Barossa Valley.

I enjoyed giving them a good grounding. In order to improve and to develop into really top players they need to get all the basics right at a young age. I'm still doing it now in the Barossa. I try to develop the kids to use left and right hands to shoot and dribble.

To advance in the sport unfortunately they've got to leave the Barossa Valley and go to some of the district clubs in Adelaide to get further coaching. I get them up to a certain standard and then I channel them towards West Adelaide. It means they need their parental support because the parents have got to drive them back and forth. Because my granddaughters play, I tend to watch a lot of girls' basketball now.

Basketball's in the blood

By Liz Alderslade

Never has there been a prouder grandfather than Lee Prettejohn of Tanunda who has all five of his grandchildren playing in high level basketball.

The sport is definitely strong in the family with Lee's own experience in coaching and playing basketball spanning many years.

Four of his five granddaughters came up to the Barossa to visit him on Thursday and to have a family basketball training together.

Lee said, "I am an old basketball retired state coach. I keep an eye on my five granddaughters.

"[These four] are only here for a few days. They come up and quite often we come to the court and do a bit of one on one training before they go their different ways all over the world."

While Lee coaches the girls through their family training, Judi, Lee's wife, is the supporting coach on the side lines.

The accolades for his granddaughters are ever increasing, Elissa Brett, 17, is enrolled at the Institute of Sport in Canberra for Basketball; Aimee, 20, and Kelsey Brett, 20, both are going to America to play college basketball, Aimee in Kansas, the Kelsey in Texas; and Holly has recently come back to Australia after teaching basketball at Camp America.

Lee's fifth granddaughter, Rubi Porter, 16, headed over to Belarus last week to play for the U17 Australian Basketball team in the FIBA U17 Women's Basketball World Cup.

In April, Rubi was in Geelong for the National Championships in the Under 18 State team, which is how she got scouted for the Australian team to play in the World Cup.

Other exciting news for her year, Rubi has been chosen to play in Argentina this October in the Youth Olympics for three on three basketball.



That passion for the sport has clearly been passed down from grandfather to children to grandchildren.

"Two of my daughters and my son were all into basketball. There is basketball in our blood. I have coached basketball and played basketball all my life," said Lee.

Lee and his wife, Judi's children, Sandy Porter, Kirsten Brett and Andrew Prettejohn, were all involved with basketball in some form.

Sandy specifically played in the Australia

squad, went to the Institute of Sport and had a stint in America for basketball when she was younger.

Kelsey said she really enjoys training with her grandad when she can and believed he has been a great role model for her.

"It's the best. We love coming to the courts with them. We love playing basketball. I have made a lot of friends through it. We have bonded together over it," said Kelsey.

Kelsey's twin, Aimee, has very similar

feelings to her sister about the role Lee has played in their lives.

"He was a big influence on us for basketball. He has always been like pushing us, training us and helping us get better and giving us advice. He has been the best," said Aimee.

"It is such a big part of our family, we love playing basketball together."

Lee went over to Belarus this week to support his youngest granddaughter in her time at the world cup.

The Leader, 18 July 2018, p20

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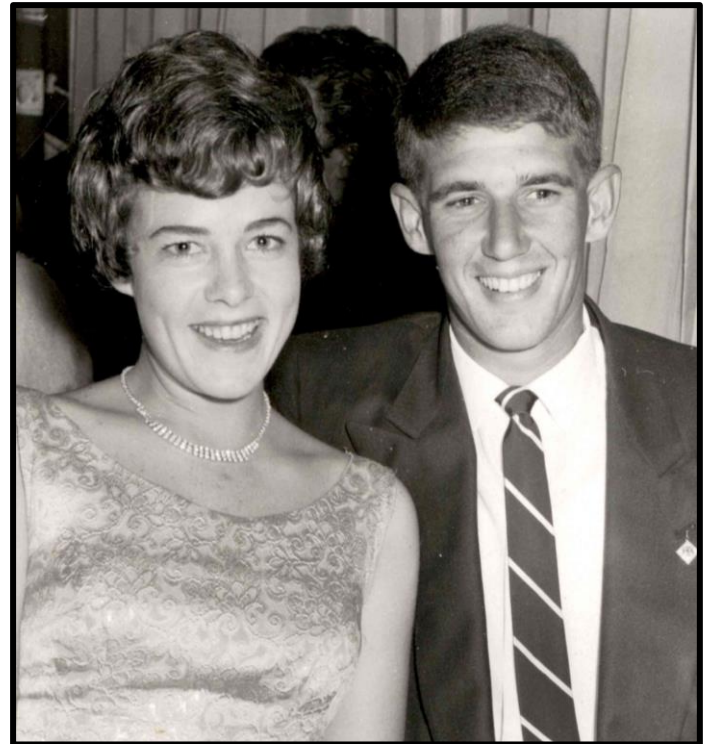
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Family

Lee married Marion Eglinton in 1961.



Lee and Marion Prettejohn, wedding 1961



Marion and Lee, circa 1960

Lee and Marion had three children.

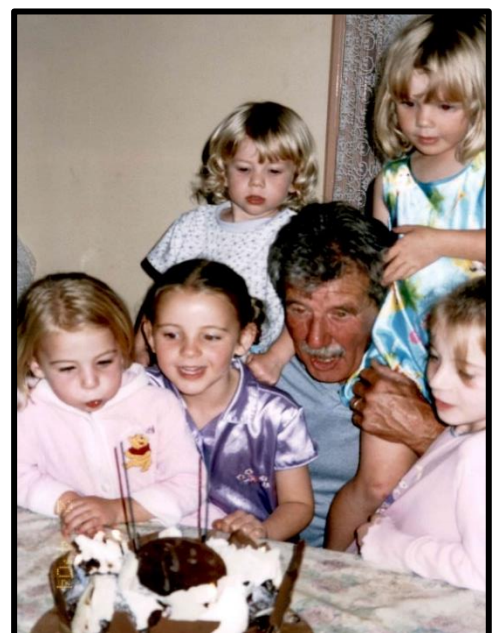
1. Sandra Gaye (1962) married Gavan Porter.
2. Andrew Lee (1964)
3. Kirsten Ann (1968) married Grant Brett.

Marion, my first wife, passed away in 1990 from cancer, when she was only 50.

Sandy is my oldest daughter with two children, Ruby and Holly.

Andrew, my son, lives in the Barossa Valley.

Kirsten had twin girls, Aimee and Kelsey, and then another girl Elissa.



Lee with his 5 granddaughters, 2002

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I have five granddaughters who have all played basketball, and all represented South Australia in under 16s, under 18s, and under 20s. Four of them went to America and played college in America. Elissa is still there in a fifth year at Bowling Green, Ohio. Kelsey is playing for Forestville in top league here and Aimee is in Mandurah in Western Australia. Ruby is in Bendigo playing basketball for Bendigo Spirits.

I coached them when they were youngsters, and we had a lot of fun developing their skills. That's what I've been concentrating on.

We have been to see them play all around the world, we go everywhere to keep an eye on them and check them out.



Aimee Brett (b. 1998) USA College, Arizona ; Adelaide Lightning; Forestville Eagles, SA U16/18/20



Kelsey Brett (b. 1998) USA College, Hutchinson CC, Newberry Wolves ; Forestville Eagles, SA U16/18/20



Elissa Brett (b. 2000) AIS; USA College, Bowling Green (5 years), SA U16/18/20



*Ruby Porter (b. 2001)
USA College, Nebraska;
Aust 3 on3 Argentina;
U17 Belarus; Darwin Salties,
SA U16/18/20*

*Holly Porter (b. 2000)
USA Summer Camp,
SA U16/18/20*



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Lee married Judi Lewis in May 2004. Judi was initially nursing at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and later at the Lyell McEwin Hospital.

Judi's children are Matthew, Scott and Emma, they each have 2 children.

Matthew has Evelyn and Samuel, Scott has Alila and Kade, Emma has Ada and Bridget.



Lee and Judi Prettejohn, 8 October 2020 [escape.com.au]

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Barossa Tourism (2004-2021)

When I sold the nursery and the land in Gertrude Street, I bought a Bed and Breakfast in the Barossa Valley called Barossa House, with Judi, my second wife.



Judi and I operated the Bed and Breakfast and then we found a need to do wine tours because people that were staying there wanted to go out to the wineries but didn't want to drive.

In 2011 we bought one vehicle to start Barossa Boutique Wine Tours, and within 12 months, we had four vehicles taking guests and visitors to the various wineries.



Judi looked after the finances for the B&B and the tour business. She also hosted some of the wine tours. She did this at the same time as working as a registered nurse at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, travelling back and forth between jobs.

We sold Barossa House Bed and Breakfast after about 10 years, but kept the wine tour business going until April 2021 and then we sold that.

We are now semi-retired and live in Tanunda. We are still taking Barossa wine tours once a week.

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On reflection

I think I've lived a pretty full life. I've enjoyed life. I've dabbled in a lot of things, the nursery, basketball, football, family, and tourism.

I vividly remember how we used to go to the West Torrens Football Club for a meal after every Saturday home game, and then other times we would go to Napoli's Pizza Bar or Lee How Fook Chinese Restaurant on Grange Road. We'd always go to one of those for dinner Saturday nights. They were good, fun times.

I loved the nursery; it was something special. I love growing plants, especially vegetables and flowers. I loved colour.

Our family have always enjoyed holidays to Coffin Bay and spending days fishing. I love that all my children are still going over there now with their families.



I am still very much involved in most of the things that have been a big part of my life.

It is a testament to loving what you do for a job and making a success of it.



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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 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 history. It allows us all the chance to reflect on the past and to preserve those memories into the future.

This interview was conducted 5th December 2022 by Graham Parry, member of the West Torrens Historical Society. The opinions and views expressed in this interview, and documented in this transcript, are not necessarily the views and opinions of the interviewer, the West Torrens Historical Society, nor the City of West Torrens Council, and therefore neither the Society nor Council accepts responsibility for any comments or opinions expressed by the person being interviewed.

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