

Tony Williams - Mt Barry Station

I first met Adam on the Oodnadatta Track near Edwards Creek in 1975. He was in a sedan motor car, towing a trailer. There were camels in the trailer. We were tailing brumbies nearby, when Adam's car became bogged in the sandy creek. We went over to assist them and out jumped Adam. He was tall, wiry looking and had a long ponytail mid way down his back. He might have even had a beard. Once we helped them out of the bog, they proceeded down towards William Creek and we went back to the brumbies.

Soon after that Adam and Linnie appeared again in Oodnadatta and started working for Mr and Mrs Pecanek at Oodnadatta Stores. Adam was driving the mail run to Mt Barry, Evelyn Downs and Arckaringa, then up to Todmorden and Lambina. Linnie was working at the Store.

Some time later Adam and Linnie opened up a small café which was the old butcher shop. They could see that there was a demand for this type of service in Oodnadatta. They called it The Tucker Box selling takeaway food and soft drinks in the afternoons. Then Adam built a small shed near where the Pink Roadhouse is today. He repaired and serviced locals' cars and motor bikes.

In the late 70s Adam used to run Motorkhanas out at the clay pan near Oodnadatta. It gave everyone a chance to let off a bit of steam - riding motor bikes and revving cars and yes, there was an occasional rollover. On one occasion in the blindfold Texas Barrel car race the Secretary's table was cleaned up by a car.

In the early 80s, about the time, or soon after the trains stopped running to Oodnadatta, Adam and Linnie started piecing together the famous Pink Roadhouse. It was built over several years.

Out came the pink paint. It was on everything - Roadhouse cars, tools - pink signs everywhere growing like mushrooms

as Adam painted them!! People were saying "what a shocking colour", but it turned out to be a great marketing tool.

The Pink roadhouse grew in character and so did Adam and Linnie's ability to run a successful business, offering services for travellers, station people and all the local people. You could see that this man had a plan.

It was around this time, too, that baby Plates were arriving on the scene.

Adam took on the role of spokesperson for the Outback and Oodnadatta as well as Chair of the Progress Association - lobbying for better roads and services to Oodnadatta and the surrounding district. He often challenged authority and ruffled a few feathers along the way. He used the media well to put over his point of view. It was around this time that Adam successfully lobbied to name the road from Marla to Marree, the Oodnadatta track - as we know it today.

He was always trying to make the Outback a safer destination for travellers. In the 90s he accessed, through the Oodnadatta Progress Association, government monies to erect UHF repeater towers. With assistance and financial support from station people, 4 repeaters were installed in the area. These gave communication access to a wide range of people.

He also ran trucks, carting general freight and cattle. Not always did the freight or stock arrive in pristine condition. On one occasion a door on the back of the trailer came open and several head of stock were later seen in the Glendambo area - somewhat the worse for wear. He would also often be seen wearing rubber thongs whilst loading and unloading trucks which made people shudder.

Adam would quite often call into Mt Barry on his way back from Adelaide and drop off a newspaper or two, have a coffee

then ring Linnie to let her know when he would be home - he would always keep in contact with Linnie regarding his travel movements.

Adam and Linnie have long been the backbone of Oodnadatta working as the team at the Pink Roadhouse. There has always been care and concern for all people and especially the indigenous population of Oodnadatta.

Adam always had an opinion on any subject, which quite often fired up some lively debate. This was especially so if you talked about appropriate tyre pressures to run on outback roads.

Running a Roadhouse on the northeast side of the Neales River often created a few challenges after heavy rains and flood events. Adam often had to run vehicles over closed roads to get perishable food into Oodnadatta. On one occasion he made a floating barge to carry food and mail across the Neales River.

Adam had a weird sense of humour at times and some people did not know how to take him. An example of this sense of humour can be found in the bottom left hand corner of his famous "Travel the Oodnadatta Track" mud map. You have a look when you can.

The last time I saw Adam he and I were running the closing bar shift at the Oodnadatta Bronco Branding in July. Adam was a life member of the Oodnadatta Race and Horse Sports Club.

Adam - your passion, persistence and sheer hard work have made the outback of SA a better place to live in and travel to.

Tony Williams  
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## Cooper Pedy Street and Road Names



Part 14 in a series - by Sue Britt

Where did the name of your street come from?

### Brewster Street

Jack and Edna Brewster were storekeepers in the 1950's and 60's. Their first shop was over in Crowders Gully, part of the complex of dugouts that has since become the Old Timers Mine. Their store was on the hill where Jenny Gough lives now. The holes in Jenny's kitchen wall once held the supports for the shelving of groceries and other goods. Brewsters lived below in what is now the museum. It was Jack Brewster's tunnelling that joined previously separate dugouts into one.

The Brewsters' second store was on what is now Hutchison Street. The Wilson's had a store where the Desert Cave now stands. Jack and Edna set up their store opposite them. Then, when the Wilsons' moved their store to the top of the hill, where the Opal Inn bottle shop now stands, the Brewsters followed.

Their third store "stood out like Bleak House on the very top of the plateau." (Chauvel) At night, when the sound of an approaching car could be heard for miles, Mrs Brewster would go out with a lantern to flag them down. Brewsters had accommodation behind their store on offer and also a dugout in Crowders Gully. As Edna was a very short woman, the only thing the driver would see after the lantern was the top of her head and a pair of eyes peering in the window. Later Jack put a light up that could be seen 16 miles away.

Two people who rented the old dugout were Charles and Edna Chauvel. They described it in their book Walkabout published in 1959. "Mrs Brewster had a dugout to let in Brewsters' Gully on the side of a ridge called The Gridiron.

It had been their first home when they came to Cooper Pedy many years ago, and we drove with her in and out of the twisting dunes of mullock and white mounds of dust, to pull up before a gaping cavity in the hillside. About four feet inside the cavity was a chunk of rusty corrugated iron which served as a door, and painted haphazardly on it in white To Let."



The Brewsters posed (centre) in front of their store with customers.



The Brewsters made a Christmas tree for the Aboriginal children.

George Wilson remembers that Edna and Jack were hard workers. "If they could make 2 bob, they'd make 2 bob." They used to fight a lot though. Edna was a feisty little woman with a quick temper. Sometimes after an argument with her husband, she would threaten to leave. She'd pack her belongings and drag her portmanteau up to the road where she'd sit all day looking for a ride out of town. As the traffic in those days averaged maybe 3 or 4 cars a week, she never found a ride. Eventually she'd cool down and drag her port' back inside.

George told about a memorable trip to Kingoonya. Both stores, Wilsons and Brewsters, used to drive their Bedford trucks to Kingoonya once a week to pick up their stores. Jack was a big drinker when he got the chance and he used to drive with the pedal to the floor. One day when both trucks were there picking up their supplies from the train, they were approached by some people who wanted rides to Cooper Pedy. The mail truck was full. Obliging the two store trucks shared out the extra load and George ended up in Brewster's truck. The arrangement was that Jack would go first and open the gates and Bert Wilson would follow and close the gates. About 50 miles out of Kingoonya, Jack rolled. People and goods went flying. Luckily no one was too badly hurt but every salt bush you'd kick would have a tin of salt meat in it. The only thing Jack was worried about was his new battery. The truck landed square on top of it. The battery was smashed but the 6 crockery plates that were under the seat survived the rollover unbroken.

Another time, both Jack and Edna were driving to Kingoonya. About 50 or 60 miles down the track, Edna says, "Jack, pull up quick! You missed a bump back there." At that point Jack had had enough so he put Edna in the back where she rode for the next 100 miles.

**Information from**  
Jenny Gough interview 4/8/12; George Wilson interview 13/8/12; Walkabout by Charles & Elsa Chauvel