How to search for South Australian Land Titles on-line

For those who are seriously interested in the history of land titles in South Australia, the instructions which follow, based on information provided by Anthony Schubert, Secretary of the Angaston & Penrice Historical Society, will be helpful. The steps may seem very cumbersome and tedious, but for those of us who remember travelling to the Adelaide city centre, finding a park, walking to the Building and pulling the heavy volumes from the shelves, the time ACTUALLY taken to undertake an online search would be considerably less. If you enjoy, or can cope with, computer technology, there is a treasury of information about land settlement awaiting your investigation.

Kingsley Ireland


Click on Access as a guest user in the banner at the top.

In the orange banner at the top of the next page, use your mouse cursor to hover over Image Search and you will see listed Title Image Search and Historical Name Index Search.

Click on Historical Name Index Search which takes you to the Search page. Suppose that you are searching for land purchased by Frank Girdham CHINNER sometime between 1904 and 1944. The listing only allows you to enter the first letter of the surname, in this case C, so it’s quick if you are searching for names beginning Ca but a pain for names beginning Cy or Cz.

Type in the First Character C (for Chinner); select the range 1904-44 from the Year list which drops down when you click on the downward pointing arrow head, and leave the Type as Private. Now click on Search.

This produces a list of Search Results from Page 1 to Page 50 of 882. These are the page numbers for entries in the Index. Clicking on Select opens up a scanned page of entries. Page 1 has entries from CABELL to CABOT and Page 50 has entries from CAMPBELL Mary Helen to CAMPBELL Phyllis. It’s just like looking up words in a dictionary and clearly CHINNER will be quite a few pages on.

Clicking on Next at the top or bottom of the Search Results page brings up the next 50 pages. Check every now and again by clicking on Select until you get to the name you’re looking for.
interested in. In this case, it will be the Search Results for 251-300. In the right-hand column, find Page 290, and click on Select at the left end of this row.

The page includes listings for Frank Girdham CHINNER, the first of which shows a property in the Hundred of Moorooroo T 516590 with CT title 809/176.

Make a note of this number and go back by clicking the left arrow at the top of the webpage until you see the orange banner again with Image Search at the top. This time use your mouse to select Title Image Search. This takes you to the Title Image Search page.

Register CT (Certificate of Title) is already shown, which is what you want. Then enter 809 for Volume and 176 for Folio and click Search. This next webpage shows Image Details.

Ignore Customer Reference and click the small box above I acknowledge that ... then on Confirm Order. This takes you to a page which will allow you to Download as PDF the Certificate of Title for Volume 809 Folio 176.

The PDF shows a “Balance Certificate of Title from Volume 647 Folio 99” for Arthur Frederick Salter and a map of the property. On the second page is a note showing Transfer Number 516590 to George William and Frank Girdham Chinner which confirms this is the title we are interested in. You can now go back to Title Image Search and enter 647 for Volume and 99 for Folio in order to identify earlier or later titles for this land.

On the second page of the original Certificate of Title 809/176, you will note that it was later cancelled and new CTs issued: Volume 844 Folio 144 and then 143 and 145. If you enter these details in turn in Title Image Search, you will find CTs with details of more recent owners, change of ownership, mortgage details, etc.

If you need more help with this, go back to the webpage where you started and find a box headed How do I order a copy of a Certificate of Title? Under this is a box headed Historical Searching where you’ll find two tutorials which explain what to do:

- Historical name index searching
- Searching title history

Good luck.

The above procedure only applies to land held under The Real Property Act between 1858 and 1973. The General Registry Office and Old Systems land records are available at the Land Services Group, corner of Marion Road and Richmond Road, Netley, where there are alphabetical indices of records from 1842 to the present for land that does not fall under the Real Property Act. These records include those of early landowners and pioneer settlers.

Pioneers Association of SA July 2016